

# **SB2679**

# **Testimony**



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759  
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921  
e-mail [info@hfbf.org](mailto:info@hfbf.org); [www.hfbf.org](http://www.hfbf.org)

January 28, 2014

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

TESTIMONY ON SB 2679  
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS TO THE KAMUEAL  
VACUUM COOLING PLANT

Room 229  
2:45 PM

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kouchi, and Members of the Committee:

I am Christopher Manfredi, President of the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation (HFBF). Organized since 1948, the HFBF is comprised of 1,832 farm family members statewide, and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interest of our diverse agricultural community.

**HFBF strongly supports SB 2679** which appropriates funds for the planning and designing phase II renovations to the Kamuela vacuum cooling plant.

Effective post harvest handling of produce is critical for maintaining product integrity between the farm and markets. Vacuum cooling is a proven effective means to increase the shelf life of wide variety of produce. A centralized facility in conjunction with a consolidation, deconsolidation, inspection, biosecurity facility provides a centralized and efficient service center for produce farmers in the Kamuela region.

The Kamuela Vacuum Cooling Plant is in need of improvements. The plant is decades old and the cooling equipment requires replacement. The Waimea area is the major producer of Hawaii-grown leafy green vegetables and peppers. Improving this facility will enable the continued production and consolidation of agricultural commodities from the Waimea region of the island of Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

**From:** [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov)  
**To:** [AGL Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [amybrinker@mac.com](mailto:amybrinker@mac.com)  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB2679 on Jan 28, 2014 14:45PM  
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**SB2679**

Submitted on: 1/24/2014

Testimony for AGL on Jan 28, 2014 14:45PM in Conference Room 229

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Amy Brinker	Individual	Support	No

Comments: In the 2010 Report to the Legislature on optimizing the use of the Kamuela plant (link below), it was suggested that upgrades include renewable energy infrastructure, such as PV. I would like to see the language amended include a requirement to incorporate renewables and energy efficiency retrofits in order to reduce dependence on fossil fuels, environmental impacts, and the short- and long-term costs of operations and maintenance. <http://hdoa.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/KVC-Report-12.7.09-FINAL.pdf>

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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Please support HI SB 2679 because allocating funds for capital improvements to the Kamuela Vacuum Cooling Plant will improve agricultural viability and energy efficiency on the Big Island. Energy costs cripple farmers, and the State has a vested interest in supporting the growth and sustainability of diversified agriculture. Supporting improvements at this facility will secure the region's agricultural activity as well as decrease agriculture's carbon footprint. Mahalo.