

DAVID Y. IGE  
Governor

SHAN S. TSUTSUI  
Lt. Governor



State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

SCOTT E. ENRIGHT  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF SCOTT E. ENRIGHT  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**

April 2, 2015  
9:30 A.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 211

HOUSE BILL NO. 503 HD 1  
RELATING DROUGHT MITIGATION

Chairperson Tokuda and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 503 HD1. The purpose of this bill is to appropriate funds for drought mitigation projects in each of the counties. The department supports the intent of this bill provided it does not impact the initiatives set forth in our executive biennium budget.

The effects of drought on agriculture can be devastating. With the possibility of drought lasting for years, crop yields can fall dramatically and farms can close. In 2004, the Commission on Water Resource Management assisted in the creation of drought committees in each county. The committees then came up with prioritized, potential projects, including reservoir construction, to implement in order to mitigate the effects of drought. This request represents recognition of the importance and need for these projects.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of  
CARTY S. CHANG  
Interim Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committee on  
WAYS AND MEANS**

**Thursday, April 2, 2015  
9:30 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211**

**In Consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 503, HOUSE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO DROUGHT MITIGATION**

House Bill 503, House Draft 1 proposes to provide an unspecified amount of general revenues for drought mitigation measures and projects in each county of the State for Fiscal Year 2016-2017. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports the intent of this measure, provided that it does not negatively impact priorities within the Executive Biennium Budget request.**

The Department recognizes the need to mitigate the effects of drought and this need is acknowledged in the Hawaii Drought Plan. Droughts have severely affected Hawaii in the past, and as part of a natural climate cycle, droughts will impact the State in the future. In addition to agriculture and livestock industries, drought-induced impacts will also affect other sectors of the community, such as water supply, business, the environment, and public health and safety.

The Department concurs with the importance of drought planning and the effective implementation of mitigation measures and strategies. Should this Committee program funding for drought mitigation projects in each county, the Department strongly suggests that this funding be provided directly to the respective counties in order to streamline and expedite the implementation of drought mitigation projects.

**CARTY S. CHANG**  
INTERIM CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

**DANIEL S. QUINN**  
INTERIM FIRST DEPUTY

**W. ROY HARDY**  
ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS



March 31, 2015

Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair  
Senator Ronald D. Kouchi, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

**Testimony in Support of HB 503, HD1 Relating to Drought Mitigation (Appropriates Funds for County Drought Mitigation Projects and Measures).**

**Thursday, April 2, 2015, 9:30 a.m., in Conference Room 211**

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF) is a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers and a utility company. LURF's mission is to advocate for reasonable, rational and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural and cultural resources, and public health and safety.

LURF appreciates the opportunity to express its **support of HB 503, HD1**, and of the various agricultural stakeholder groups who defend the goals of viable agricultural operations and the conservation and protection of agriculture, including important agricultural lands in Hawaii. The bill confirms the need for collaboration amongst diverse sectors of the community - business, government, and agricultural stakeholders - and the importance for them to work together cooperatively to improve the economic viability of the State's agricultural industry.

**HB 503, HD1.** This bill proposes to appropriate funds out of the State's general revenues as may be necessary for fiscal year 2016-2017 for drought mitigation projects and measures in each county of the State.

**LURF's Position.** The purpose of this bill is to implement drought mitigation measures and strategies developed by each of the four counties and laid out in the Hawaii drought plan. The goal of the plan is to develop coordinated emergency response mechanisms and outline steps toward reducing the effects of future drought occurrences which continue to adversely affect farms and ranches in the State, hindering the ability to produce quality products consistently throughout the year. Agricultural lands require a constant supply of water to support and maintain productivity. In order to ensure that local agricultural producers may

continue to rely on a dependable supply of water for crops, as well as research and development operations, sufficient funding is necessary to mitigate the impact of droughts.

Local farmers and ranchers who rely on secure water supplies to service their agricultural lands, consider such drought mitigation projects and strategies critical to conduct their agricultural operations and to sustain their businesses. These agricultural stakeholders believe measures such as HB 503, HD1 will greatly assist by providing funding necessary to implement improvements for the long-term betterment of the State's agricultural industry, and are relying on legislation such as this to help them work toward the expansion of diversified agriculture and promote the agricultural self-sufficiency of the State.

For the above reasons, LURF **supports HB 503, HD1**, and respectfully urges your favorable consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in support of this matter.

**In Support of HB 503**  
**Relating to Drought Mitigation**  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**  
**April 2, 2015, 9:30 a.m. in Conference Room 224**

Aloha Chair Tokuda and members of the Ways and Means Committee.

My name is Bennette Misalucha, Executive Director of the Hawaii Crop Improvement Association. HCIA is a Hawaii-based non-profit organization that Promotes ag biotech to help farmers and communities succeed. Through education, Collaboration and advocacy, we work to ensure a safe and sustainable food supply, Support responsible farming practices and build a healthy state economy.

HCIA is in support of the intent of HB 503.

Water is so essential to Agriculture' s operations and it was imperative for all of the islands to develop its own drought mitigation plan that could address short term and long term needs.

We assert that the implementation of these plans will benefit all of Hawaii' s farming communities.

This bill will provide the funding resources necessary to implement these strategies, without which the mitigation plans cannot move forward.

We respectfully ask for the Committee' s support of HB 503.

Mahalo for your kind consideration.



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

April 2, 2015

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

TESTIMONY ON HB 503 HD 1  
RELATING TO DROUGHT MITIGATION

Room 211  
9:30 AM

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kouchi, and Members of the Committee:

I am Christopher Manfredi, President of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,932 farm family members statewide, and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

**HFB is in strong support of HB 503, HD 1.** Various areas of Hawaii, especially agricultural sectors have been severely impacted by drought over consecutive years. As we enter 2015, 100% of the State is already in an "abnormally dry" or "moderate drought" state as reported by the U.S. Drought Monitor. (Attached at end of document)

As Hawaii seeks to increase its level of self-sufficiency, droughts provide one of our most significant threats. Farmers are pragmatic and adjust plantings based on historical weather trends and outlooks. The likelihood of drought and reduced access to water mean less acres planted. Planting without assurance of harvest does not make business sense. Those with perennial crops such as orchards face losses if water is not available at critical times such as during fruiting. Without adequate water, trees pull water to ensure survival, resulting in poor fruit formation. Droughts force ranchers to reduce herd size, in extreme cases, breeding stock, negatively impacting future years.

Hawaii has faced multiyear droughts and long term forecasts predict droughts separated by extreme rainfall events. These rainfall events, unlike the typical trade showers are short-lived and without preparatory measures to capture the water, can cause damage and runoff into the ocean. These storm events are not conducive to infiltration to the watershed, thereby restoring springs or groundwater supplies, rather are more likely to cause erosion and property damage.



In 2007 a similar drought mitigation measure was passed, providing Counties resources to implement drought mitigation measures. A good example of the use of funds is the improvement of the Kula Ag Park reservoir by the County of Maui.

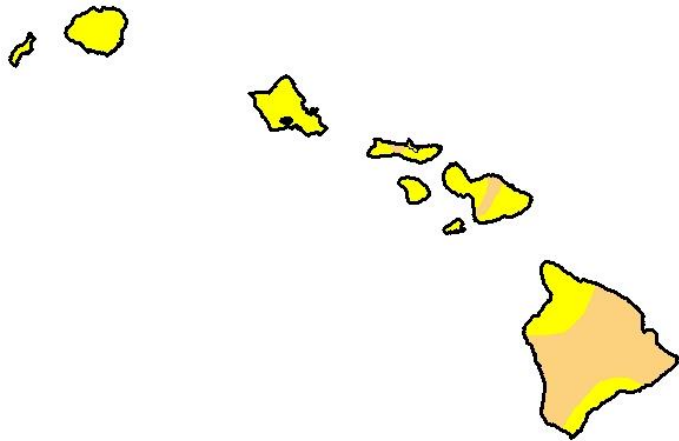
Funds were used for relining a reservoir; coupled with investments by the County to improve pumping reliability, the measure has reduced water losses critical during drought periods and made more water available to Ag park farmers. Additionally, a portion of the money was also utilized to develop a storm water capture plan. The resultant report provides the basis for engineering design as funding becomes available. These projects need to continue.

Droughts are often forgotten as rainfall periods occur. Yet, preparation is needed ahead of droughts – after the start of a drought, it is too late. A Drought Council was created within the Water Commission to address priorities for the various Counties. An update of these projects is needed coupled with funding to better prepare agriculture for inevitable future droughts.

We appreciate the committee’s steadfast support of agriculture and respectfully request your strong support of this measure.

**U.S. Drought Monitor  
Hawaii**

**February 3, 2015**  
(Released Thursday, Feb. 5, 2015)  
Valid 7 a.m. EST



*Drought Conditions (Percent Area)*

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
<b>Current</b>	0.00	100.00	46.63	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Last Week</b> <i>1/27/2015</i>	0.00	100.00	46.63	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>3 Months Ago</b> <i>11/4/2014</i>	92.67	7.33	2.72	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Start of Calendar Year</b> <i>12/31/2014</i>	67.97	32.03	2.76	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Start of Water Year</b> <i>9/30/2014</i>	0.00	100.00	2.68	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>One Year Ago</b> <i>2/4/2014</i>	41.24	58.76	22.20	2.91	0.42	0.00

*Intensity:*

- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

*The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.*

**Author:**  
Brian Fuchs  
National Drought Mitigation Center



<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>





Email: [communications@ulupono.com](mailto:communications@ulupono.com)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS  
Thursday, April 2, 2015 — 9:30 a.m. — Room 211

**Ulupono Initiative Strongly Supports HB 503 HD 1, Relating to Drought Mitigation**

Dear Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kouchi, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kyle Datta and I am General Partner of the Ulupono Initiative, a Hawai'i-based impact investment company that strives to improve the quality of life for the people of Hawai'i by working toward solutions that create more locally grown food, increase clean, renewable energy, and waste reduction. We believe that self-sufficiency is essential to our future prosperity, and will help shape a future where economic progress and mission-focused impact can work hand in hand.

**Ulupono strongly supports HB 503 HD 1**, which provides funds for county drought mitigation projects, because it aligns with our goal of providing more locally produced food. Hawai'i's agricultural industry relies on a constant supply of water, but in times of drought, farmers and ranchers often struggle to keep their businesses alive. In 2004, county drought mitigation plans were formed but have not yet been funded. In recent years, the state has suffered through severe drought conditions, which heavily impacts our local agricultural communities. As climate change continues to contribute to increased droughts, it becomes more important for the Legislature to fund drought mitigation measures.

As Hawai'i's local food issues become more complex and challenging, organizations need additional resources and support to address and overcome them. We appreciate this committee's efforts to look at policies that support local food production.

We believe that by collaborating we can help produce more local food, support an economically strong homegrown agriculture industry, which strengthens our community with fresh, healthy food. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Kyle Datta  
General Partner

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*