

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 HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE**

March 17, 2016  
8:30 A.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 312

SENATE BILL NO. 2217 SD2  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairperson Tsuji and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2217 SD2. The purpose of this bill is to appropriate funds for the operation, repair, maintenance, and improvement of the East Kauai irrigation system by the East Kauai Water Users' Cooperative. The department supports the intent of this bill provided that it does not impact the priorities submitted in the department's executive budget, and defers to the cooperative to identify an appropriate funding figure.

Water is a vital component in order for agriculture to flourish. Well-kept irrigation systems are necessary to provide much needed water to agriculturalists across the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**COUNTY COUNCIL**

Mel Rapozo, Chair  
Ross Kagawa, Vice Chair  
Mason K. Chock  
Gary L. Hooser  
Arryl Kaneshiro  
KipuKai Kualii  
JoAnn A. Yukimura



**OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK**

Jade K. Fountain-Tanigawa, County Clerk  
Scott K. Sato, Deputy County Clerk

Telephone (808) 241-4188  
Fax (808) 241-6349  
Email [cokcouncil@kauai.gov](mailto:cokcouncil@kauai.gov)

**Council Services Division**  
4396 Rice Street, Suite 209  
Lihu'e, Kaua'i, Hawai'i 96766

March 16, 2016

**TESTIMONY OF JOANN A. YUKIMURA  
COUNCILMEMBER, KAUA'I COUNTY COUNCIL  
ON  
SB 2217, SD2, RELATING TO AGRICULTURE  
House Committee on Agriculture  
Thursday, March 17, 2016  
8:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 312**

Dear Chair Tsuji and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2217, SD2, Relating to Agriculture. My testimony is submitted as an individual member of the Kaua'i County Council.

This measure appropriates funds for the operation, repair, maintenance, and improvement of the East Kaua'i irrigation system by the East Kaua'i Water Users' Cooperative. A reliable irrigation system is the lifeline of Kaua'i's agricultural community. Appropriating funds for the East Kaua'i Irrigation System will ensure that agricultural crops receive a steady and dependable supply of water, and that the irrigation systems are repaired, properly maintained, and improved to meet the agricultural water requirements, especially during periods of extended water droughts.

For the reasons stated above, I urge the House Committee on Agriculture to support this measure. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Council Services Staff at (808) 241-4188.

Sincerely,

JOANN A. YUKIMURA  
Councilmember, Kaua'i County Council

AMK:cy



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)

March 17, 2016

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

TESTIMONY ON SB 2217, SD2  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Room 211  
1:40 PM

Aloha Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Onishi, and Members of the Committee:

I am Randy Cabral, President of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,900 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.

**HFB strongly supports SB 2217, SD2**, which appropriates funds for the operation, repair, maintenance, and improvement of the East Kauai Water Irrigation System by the East Kauai Irrigation Users' Cooperative irrigation systems.

The East Kauai Water Users' Cooperative, a volunteer group, has operated the East Kauai Irrigation System for more than nine years, servicing more than 12,500 acres of agricultural land. Without the volunteer effort of the cooperative, the 21-mile irrigation system would have been abandoned and Kauai farmers left without water.

The repair and maintenance of our irrigation systems is critical. Our farmers and ranchers depend on these irrigation systems for their operations. Water availability is a basic necessity needed by farmers and ranchers to maintain and expand their production, particularly in times of drought. Having a reliable water supply is a key factor when Hawaii's farmers and ranchers are making decisions to start new or to expand existing operations.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 15, 2016 12:11 PM  
**To:** AGRtestimony  
**Cc:** gottlieb@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for SB2217 on Mar 17, 2016 08:30AM\*

**SB2217**

Submitted on: 3/15/2016

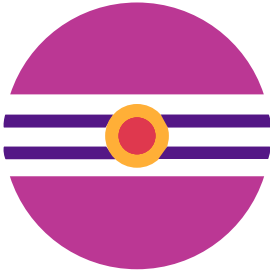
Testimony for AGR on Mar 17, 2016 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Alan Gottlieb	Ponoholo Ranch	Support	No

Comments:

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## **Saiva Siddhanta Church**

Kauai's Hindu Monastery  
107 Kaholalele Road  
Kapaa, Hawaii 96746-9304•USA  
Phone: (808) 822-3012

March 16, 2016

Committee on Agriculture  
Rep. Clift Tsuji, Chair  
Rep. Richard H.K. Onishi, Vice Chair

### **Testimony on SB 2217 SD2 Relating to Agriculture March 17, 2016, Conference Room 312**

Chairperson Tsuji and Members of Committees:

We are writing today in favor of SB2217. We are a founder member of the East Kauai Water Users' Cooperative Board of Directors and understand the vital importance of these ditch systems for agriculture in each part of Kauai.

We are writing today in favor of SB2217. We are current users of this water system and a founder member of the East Kauai Water Users' Cooperative Board of Directors. The water supplied by the system is very important to the Church for both its 70 acres of fee-simple land Wailua Homesteads and its 300+ acres on Kalepa lands now held by the Church under a 35-year license agreement with ADC.

The agriculture industry remains an essential component of Hawaii's economic landscape and is only possible with a reliable supply of water. The East Kauai system can irrigate 4,000 acres of productive farm land which has in past years produced millions of dollars worth of sugar cane. Its multiple reservoirs and 30 plus miles of ditch are an irreplaceable State-owned resource valued by experts at hundreds of millions of dollars.

The State is amply justified in providing partial support to the system which enjoys a strong volunteer effort.

We urge your committee to back the community's grass roots efforts to preserve and operate this system through the East Kauai Water Users' Cooperative.

Saiva Siddhanta Church

*Acharya Arumuganathaswami*

Acharya Arumuganathaswami  
Farm Manager



**East Kauai  
Water Users' Cooperative**

4334 Rice Street, Suite 202  
Lihue, Kauai Hawaii 96766  
Phone: 808-246-6962  
Fax: 808-245-3277

March 16, 2016

TO: Committee on Agriculture  
Rep. Clift Tsuji, Chair  
Rep. Richard H.K. Onishi, Vice Chair

RE: **Testimony on SB 2217 SD2 Relating to Agriculture  
March 17, 2016, Conference Room 312**

Chairperson Tsuji and Members of Committees:

My name is Jerry Ornellas and I support SB2217. I am the president of the East Kauai Water Users' Cooperative which has managed the State-owned reservoir and ditch system in the Kapaa/Kalepa area for the past 14 years.

The bill is intended to supply needed cash support to our system which receives more than \$150,000 per year in volunteer labor, fees and donations.

Over the last four years, the State has invested strategically in the system, most notably with the completed renovation and upgrade of Wailua Reservoir, the renovation of Upper Kapahi Reservoir now underway and Aahoaka reservoir, which should begin soon.

There remain important repairs which must be tended to least they become major issues down the road. Our system provides irrigation water to a number of farmers, ranchers and householders in the Kapaa and Kalepa areas. It is critical to a dynamic homegrown agriculture industry on Kauai's East Side.

I respectfully ask that you pass this bill.

**East Kauai Water Users' Cooperative**

Jerry Ornellas, President



**Kalepa Koalition**

5868 Kini Place  
Kapaa, Hawaii 96746  
Phone/Fax: 808-639-0152

March 16, 2016

TO: Committee on Agriculture  
Rep. Clift Tsuji, Chair  
Rep. Richard H.K. Onishi, Vice Chair

**RE: Testimony on SB 2217 SD2 Relating to Agriculture  
March 17, 2016, Conference Room 312**

Chairperson Tsuji and Members of Committees:

My name is Les Milnes and I support HB1345. I am the president of the Kalepa Koalition, an Hawaii agricultural cooperative of the farmers and ranchers who hold long-term licenses on 6,500 acres of State land behind Kalepa Ridge on Kauai and under the administration of ADC.

The East Kauai Water Cooperative System services a large portion of the Kalepa lands; most of the farmers, ranches and the huge Green Energy Team biomass project on a 1,000 acres utilize the system through Hanamaulu Ditch or off the Upper and Lower Aahoaka Reservoirs.

Last year, ADC received funding for the renovation of the Upper and Lower Aahoaka reservoirs, and this work should begin in 2016. The passage of bill SB2217 will assure multiple parcel holders, including the island's largest banana farmer, with a reliable source of water year round.

I respectfully request that this bill be passed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Les Milnes".

Leslie P. Milnes, President  
Kalepa Koalition

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 15, 2016 5:42 AM  
**To:** AGRtestimony  
**Cc:** gordines@kauaiflowers.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for SB2217 on Mar 17, 2016 08:30AM\*

**SB2217**

Submitted on: 3/15/2016

Testimony for AGR on Mar 17, 2016 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
John R. Gordines	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 15, 2016 2:03 PM  
**To:** AGRtestimony  
**Cc:** info@steelgrass.org  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB2217 on Mar 17, 2016 08:30AM

**SB2217**

Submitted on: 3/15/2016

Testimony for AGR on Mar 17, 2016 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Tony Lydgate	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I am writing as a Kauai family farmer in support of SB 2217. The East Kauai Water Coop plays a critical role in maintaining the extensive system of ditches and tunnels that have sustained agriculture in our part of the island for over a hundred years. Countless man-hours went into the construction of these water improvements, and it is essential for the ag future of not just East Kauai but our entire island that they be maintained. The East Kauai Coop is the only group in a position to do this important work, and our farm family urges you to provide the support they need.

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 16, 2016 2:56 PM  
**To:** AGRtestimony  
**Cc:** dylanarm@hawaii.edu  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for SB2217 on Mar 17, 2016 08:30AM\*

**SB2217**

Submitted on: 3/16/2016

Testimony for AGR on Mar 17, 2016 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dylan Armstrong	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 16, 2016 10:33 AM  
**To:** AGRtestimony  
**Cc:** laurieho1@hawaiiantel.net  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB2217 on Mar 17, 2016 08:30AM

**SB2217**

Submitted on: 3/16/2016

Testimony for AGR on Mar 17, 2016 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Laurie Ho	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Aloha and Mahalo for allowing me to submit written testimony today. I STRONGLY support SB 2217 SD2. It is my belief that without a source of irrigation water Kauai's Agriculture sector will suffer yet another set back for holding on to "agriculture" here on Kauai. Please support the East Kauai Water Users' Cooperative in their efforts to maintain and enhance Kauai's agricultural sector of our island's economy. Without water . . . no agriculture . . . with out agriculture . . . no local food production!

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