

DAVID Y. IGE  
Governor

SHAN S. TSUTSUI  
Lt. Governor



State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
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Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512  
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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 FINANCE**

April 1, 2016  
1:00 P.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 308

**SENATE BILL NO. 2217 SD2  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chairperson Luke 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.





**East Kauai  
Water Users' Cooperative**

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

March 30, 2016

TO: Committee on Finance  
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair

RE: **Testimony on SB 2217 SD2 (HSCR 1131-16) Relating to Agriculture  
April 1, 2016, Conference Room 308**

Chairperson Luke 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 for the operation and maintenance 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.

Beside the shortfall in operation and maintenance, 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



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April 1, 2016

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON SB 2217, SD2  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Room 308  
1:00 PM

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and Members of the Committee:

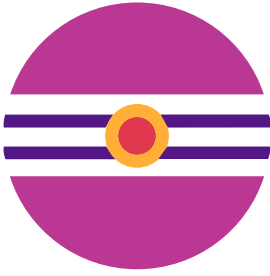
I am Randy Cabral, President of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,900 farm family members statewide, and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interest of our diverse agricultural community.

**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.



## **Saiva Siddhanta Church**

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

March 30, 2016

Committee on Finance  
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair

### **Testimony on SB 2217 SD2 (HSCR 1131-16) Relating to Agriculture April 1, 2016, Conference Room 308**

Chairperson Luke 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.

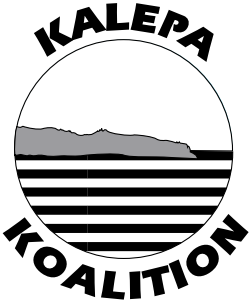
The agriculture industry remains an essential component of Hawaii's economic landscape and is only possible with a reliable supply of water. The East Kauai system can irrigate 4,000 acres of productive farm land which has in past years produced millions of dollars worth of sugar cane. Its multiple reservoirs 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 for operation and maintenance and well as on-going repairs to a 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



**Kalepa Koalition**

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

March 30, 2016

TO: Committee on Agriculture  
Committee on Finance  
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair

**RE: Testimony on SB 2217 SD2 (HSCR 1131-16) Relating to Agriculture  
April 1, 2016, Conference Room 308**

Chairperson Luke 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

**LARRY JEFTS FARMS, LLC  
PO BOX 27  
KUNIA, HAWAII 96759  
(808) 688-2892**

SB2217sd2, Relating to Agriculture  
House FIN Hearing – Fri. April 1, 2016 – 1:00 pm  
Written Testimony by: Larry Jefts  
Position: Support

Chair Luke, and Members of the House FIN Committee:

I am Larry Jefts, owner and operator of Larry Jefts Farms, LLC, which is part of our family-run business of farms on Oahu and Molokai, under the administrative umbrella of Sugarland Growers, Inc. We have more than 35 years of Hawaii farm experience on Molokai and Oahu.

Water systems, on any island, are vital to farmers and ranchers and many water systems have fallen in disrepair with the demise of large plantation owners. The East Kauai Water User's Cooperative, a volunteer group, has operated the East Kauai Irrigation System for more than nine years which has kept water flowing to farmers and ranchers.

Your support of SB2217sd2, which seeks to appropriate funds for the operation, repair, maintenance, and improvement of the East Kauai irrigation system by the East Kauai Water Users' Cooperative is appreciated.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.