

SB 2217

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

SHAN S. TSUTSUI
Lt. Governor



State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
1428 South King Street
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 COMMITTEES ON AND AGRICULTURE AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS**

February 3, 2016
2:45 P.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 224

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

Chairperson Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2217. 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 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. Efficient and reliable irrigation systems transport this resource to where it can be effectively used best. These systems are called upon to provide billions of gallons of agricultural water every year. 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.





UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Water, Land, and Agriculture
Wednesday, February 3, 2016 at 2:45 pm

By

Robert Bley-Vroman, Chancellor

And

Maria Gallo, Dean

And

J. Kenneth Grace, Associate Dean

College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 2217 - RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, and members of the Senate Committee on Water, Land, and Agriculture, thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 2217, which appropriates funds for the operation, repair, maintenance, and improvement of the East Kaua'i Water Users' Cooperative irrigation systems.

This irrigation system has been maintained by the volunteer efforts of the East Kaua'i Water Users' Cooperative – farmers and clients of the extension services provided by the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR), University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

Maintenance of this system and of all the irrigation systems throughout the state is essential to the livelihood of our farmers, and to food security in Hawai'i. Many of these systems are in precarious condition, and efforts of the Department of Agriculture, the Cooperative, and other water users who voluntarily contribute to their repair must be supported.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of Kaua'i farmers for passage of SB 2217.



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February 3, 2016

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, AND AGRICULTURE

TESTIMONY ON SB 2217
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Room 224
2:45 PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, 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 appropriating 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.



Kalepa Koalition

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

February 2, 2016

TO: Committee on Water, Land and Agriculture
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair

**RE: Testimony on SB 2217 Relating to Agriculture
February 3, 2016, Conference Room 224**

Chairperson Gabbard 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.

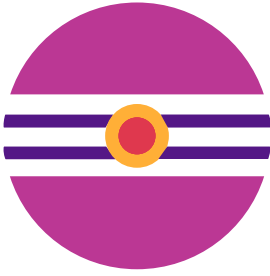
The East Kauai Water Cooperative System services a large portion of the Kalepa lands; most of the farmers, ranches and the huge Green Energy Team biomass project on a 1,000 acres utilize the system through Hanamaulu Ditch or off the Upper and Lower Aahoaka Reservoirs.

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



Saiva Siddhanta Church

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

February 2, 2016

Committee on Water, Land and Agriculture
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair

Testimony on SB 2217 Relating to Agriculture February 3, 2016, Conference Room 224

Chairperson Gabbard 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

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

SB2217, Relating to Agriculture
Senate WLA Hearing – Weds. Feb 3. 2016 – 2:45pm
Testimony by: Larry Jeffs
Position: Support

Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Senate WLA Committee:

I am Larry Jeffs, owner and operator of Larry Jeffs 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.

Your support of SB2217, which appropriates 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.



**East Kauai
Water Users' Cooperative**

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Lihue, Kauai Hawaii 96766
Phone: 808-246-6962
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February 2, 2016

TO: Committee on Water, Land and Agriculture
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair

RE: **Testimony on SB 2217 Relating to Agriculture
February 3, 2016, Conference Room 224**

Chairperson Gabbard 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

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [WLA Testimony](#)
Cc: crystalkpaul@yahoo.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB2217 on Feb 3, 2016 14:45PM*
Date: Monday, February 01, 2016 6:39:43 PM

SB2217

Submitted on: 2/1/2016

Testimony for WLA on Feb 3, 2016 14:45PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Crystal Kia Paul	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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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