

**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 SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**

February 26, 2015  
9:00 A.M.  
ROOM 211

**SENATE BILL NO. 512 SD1**  
**RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chairperson Tokuda and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 512, SD1 that would require the Department of Agriculture to establish a computer-based conservation planning tool named the Hawaii One Plan through a steering committee comprised of private organizations and State agencies, and an invitation to the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The Department offers the following comments.

Conservation plans are an important tool for farmers to use in order to maximize soil retention by implementing erosion and sediment control best management practices. Having the ability to create a preliminary conservation plan online, will assist small farmers to comply with government regulations and increase productivity of the farm.

The Department agrees that there is need for more conservation planning. The Department recently entered into a memorandum of understanding with DLNR to fund Hawaii Association of Conservation District (HACD) conservation planners to develop conservation plans and implement best management practices. For FY14, DOA



committed \$210,000 to this effort. Subject to availability of funds, we will continue to fund the conservation planners in this manner until HACD finds other funding.

Senate Bill No. 512, SD1 mentions an earlier effort to develop and establish a Hawaii One program based on the Idaho experience. This effort came to an end when DOA and DLNR were unable to find a permanent “host” server. Discussions with our Information Technology specialist confirm that we still do not have this capacity. Operation for the Hawaii One program also requires regular updates for Geographic Information System data, NRCS conservation program and rule updates, and updates to the assignment of management practices to resource concerns. The Department is not capable of implementing and operating the Hawaii One Program given our current resources and staffing.

The Department has been made aware of a grant-in-aid application being submitted by the Oahu Resource Conservation and Development Council (Oahu RC&D) for the development of a “Hawaii One” platform that mirrors the Hawaii One plan outlined in this bill. The Department has been in conversation with Executive Director Jean Brokish of Oahu RC&D and would support the funding of this grant-in-aid as a way to start the “Hawaii One” platform. The Department respectfully requests the Hawaii One Plan outlined in this bill be put on hold until RC&D’s “Hawaii One” platform is completed.

Thank you for this opportunity to present our testimony.



Cindy Goldstein, Ph. D  
Industry Relations Manager  
DuPont Pioneer  
Waialua Parent Seed, Kekaha Parent Seed  
Kunia Research Center, Waimea Research  
PO Box 520  
Waialua, HI 96791

SB 512 SD1 , Relating to Agriculture, Conservation  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Thursday, Feb 26, 2015  
Room 211 at 9:00 a.m.

Position: Support

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kouchi, and members of the Ways and Means Committee,

DuPont Pioneer is a seed company with farming operations in four locations in Hawaii. We carry out plant breeding work at our two Hawaii research sites to develop crops with improved characteristics, including greater insect and disease resistance, and higher yields. Our two parent seed locations multiply seeds to develop parents for new hybrids and varieties that are more productive for farmers in the US and around the world.

We strongly support SB512, SD1; providing funding and proposing a steering committee structure that will enable development of conservation plans for many more farmers across the State of Hawaii. This bill appropriates funds for an important tool farmers can use to more easily and efficiently gather data and enter information for a conservation plan. The requested appropriation would provide funding for the Hawaii One project to move forward, resulting in an online conservation planning tool option that does not currently exist.

Hawaii One is modeled after an effective tool already implemented in Idaho. Farmers using an online planning tool can carry gather information needed for their conservation plan and shorten the amount of time it takes to complete the plan. There is a need for this type of planning tool, with many farmers wanting to have a plan written, and low capacity to provide the planning services desired. A large number of Hawaii farmers are at the end of a long waiting list for conservation planning by the federal agency that writes these plans, with priority given to applications from farms that are part of federal farm bill funding programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this bill that appropriates funds to develop and operate the Hawaii One program, to enable farmers across the state to prepare conservation plans more easily and efficiently.

**SB512**

Submitted on: 2/24/2015

Testimony for WAM on Feb 26, 2015 09:00AM in Conference Room 211

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Stephanie A Whalen	HARC	Support	No

Comments: Hawaii 1 will help reduce the cost to farmers who need conservation plans which are required by all land owners including the state.

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**SB512**

Submitted on: 2/25/2015

Testimony for WAM on Feb 26, 2015 09:00AM in Conference Room 211

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ronald Weidenbach	Hawaii Aquaculture & Aquaponics Association	Support	No

Comments: The Hawaii Aquaculture & Aquaponic Association strongly supports this measure which would facilitate a farmer's ability to obtain or update a Conservation Plan necessary for a number of compliance issues and for grading and grubbing permits for agricultural activities.

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## **HAWAII ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS**

### **Testimony in Strong Support of SB 512, SD 1** Appropriating Funds to Develop a Hawaii One Program That Provides Conservation Plans for Farmers

Chair Tokuda and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means,

I am Karen Ah Mai, chair of the South Oahu Soil and Water Conservation District and representing the Hawaii Association of Conservation Districts, made up of 16 districts across the state.

From Department of Agriculture statistics, there has been a 29% increase in the market value of agricultural products in the state in the 5-year period between 2007 and 2012. The economic value has grown from \$512 million to \$660 million. The trends indicate that the number of small farms is increasing, with many immigrant and first-generation producers.

With the US Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service and county engineers, we provide technical assistance to farmers on erosion control; nutrient, pest, and waste management; water quality and wetlands; air quality; endangered species; and cultural/historical concerns. This is accomplished through personal interaction by limited staffing, resulting in conservation plans that cover the myriad of concerns above.

We note, that on Oahu, the opening of new farmlands from the former Dole and Del Monte plantations has created more opportunities for sustainable agriculture. The pattern is similar on the Neighbor Islands. The demand for plans that address best agricultural practices and regulatory requirements far exceeds to capability to provide them. The waiting lists for assistance is already years long.

The Hawaii One program would streamline and simplify the process for the growing population of farmers, increase their efficiency, maintain the viability of agricultural lands, and, ultimately, contribute toward the economic viability of the state.

We strongly urge you to pass SB 512, SD 1.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**SB512**

Submitted on: 2/24/2015

Testimony for WAM on Feb 26, 2015 09:00AM in Conference Room 211

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Alan Gottlieb	Hawaii Cattlemen's Council	Support	No

Comments:

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February 26, 2014

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

TESTIMONY ON SB 512, SD1  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Room 211  
9:00 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 interest of our diverse agricultural community.

**HFB strongly supports SB 512, SD1.**

The Hawaii Farm Bureau understands the importance of protecting our soil and water for the benefit of Hawaii's agriculture industry and the people of Hawaii. We support efforts to develop the on-line conservation planning tool known as Hawaii One.

The Hawaii One plan will increase the number of agricultural producers who undertake conservation planning for the long-term success of their farms. There is a backlog of requests for planning assistance and there are a limited number of planners. The Hawaii One plan will provide a tool that farmers can use to create a preliminary plan that will significantly reduce the amount of time that it takes to complete a conservation plan.

We believe that one of the greatest benefits of the Hawaii One plan is that it will increase the number of farmers complying with local ordinances governing grading and grubbing activities. We also believe that as more farmers develop and implement conservation plans, they will become more efficient and productive.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



**SB512**

Submitted on: 2/24/2015

Testimony for WAM on Feb 26, 2015 09:00AM in Conference Room 211

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Simon Russell	Hawaii Farmers Union United	Support	No

Comments: Aloha Honorable Chair Tokuda and esteemed members of the Senate WAM committee, HFUU is in support of this measure. This bill will help ag land owners and farmers in the process of putting their land in conservation, which is often a prerequisite for federal NRCS monies, a major source of revenue for many of our farmers across the state. Mahalo for your support for this important measure, Simon Russell Hawaii Farmers Union United Vice President and Legislative Committee Chairman

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**SB512**

Submitted on: 2/24/2015

Testimony for WAM on Feb 26, 2015 09:00AM in Conference Room 211

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
David Z. Arakawa	Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii	Support	No

Comments: The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii SUPPORTS SB 512,SD1, which establishes the Hawaii One Plan Steering Committee. Appropriates funds to develop and operate the Hawaii One Program to provide conservation plans online. (SD1)

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

SB 512sd1, Relating to Agriculture  
Senate WAM Committee  
Thursday, February 26, 2015  
9:00 am  
Conference Room 211

Testimony by: Larry Jeffs  
Position: Support

Chair Tokuda, and Members of the Senate WAM 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 had more than 35 years of Hawaii farm experience on Molokai and Oahu. I am a volunteer director for the West Oahu Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD).

Your support of the Hawaii One Program is urged. There has been much talk and support of improving Hawaii's capacity to grow food for local consumption. Within that discussion, concerns about preservation of our natural resources are often expressed.

The Hawaii One Program is a modest tool that will go far toward increasing the capacity of Hawaii farmers. Establishing the Hawaii One Program will help more of the 7,000 farms obtain basic conservation plans and better manage soil erosion, thus further protecting land and water resources. Future incremental development to the Hawaii One Plan could address wildlife and pesticide management.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.

**SB512**

Submitted on: 2/24/2015

Testimony for WAM on Feb 26, 2015 09:00AM in Conference Room 211

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Warren Watanabe	Maui County Farm Bureau	Support	No

Comments:

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Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Thursday, February 26, 2015 – 9:00am – Room 211

**Support for SB512, Relating to Agriculture**

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

The Oahu Resource Conservation and Development Council (Oahu RC&D) is a non-profit organization that works with farmers to improve management of soil and water resources. We strongly support the development and delivery of the “Hawaii One” on-line conservation planning tool that will improve the way farmers, land managers and agricultural professionals access conservation planning services.

Each county in Hawaii outlines permit requirements for grading, grubbing and stockpiling activities. Language exempting agricultural lands from the permit requirement is included in each County’s charter, provided that activities on the land are in accordance with a conservation program (conservation plan) acceptable to the local soil and water conservation district board.

For many years conservation plans have been developed by the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Recent budget cuts and shifts in priorities have led to a 20% reduction in work force among local offices, leaving NRCS unable to meet the demand for conservation plans that are not tied directly to a Farm Bill Program. FY13 data from NRCS indicate that just 170 new conservation plans were developed by NRCS for farm operations across the state (roughly 2.5% of Hawaii’s 7000 farms).

Hawaii One utilizes NRCS’s science and standards, and provides a user-friendly on-line method for farmers, land managers and agricultural professionals to identify resource concerns using guided questions and a built-in map, and then allows them to select conservation practices from a list of appropriate solutions. A farmer or agricultural professional using Hawaii One to develop a conservation plan will find it focused and efficient, and will have a conservation plan ready for review by the soil and water conservation district in just a few hours, as opposed to waiting weeks, months or ever years.

Hawaii One can feasibly double (perhaps even triple) the number of farms under conservation plan within five years, dramatically increasing the number of people with access to conservation information, and increasing the opportunities for small farmers who typically have other employment, and are therefore unable to meet with NRCS during normal business hours. Furthermore, an on-line tool can readily integrate other internet-based resources that assist farmers in reaching their productivity goals.

The total cost for the build-out and implementation of a Hawai‘i One program is ~\$125,000. More than \$45,000 in private and public funds have been secured. This bill requests the State of Hawai‘i allocate \$70,000 (56% of the buildout cost for the Hawai‘i One program). The State’s contribution will strengthen this public-private partnership and support Hawaii agriculture through better conservation planning.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.

Respectfully,



Jean Brokish, Executive Director



SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS  
Thursday, February 26, 2015 – 9:00 a.m. – Room 211

**Ulupono Initiative Strongly Supports SB 512 SD 1, Relating to Agriculture**

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

My name is Brandon Lee and I am the policy and public-private partnership associate of the Ulupono Initiative, a Hawai'i-based impact investment firm 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 renewable energy, and reduce/recycle waste. Ulupono invests in projects that have the potential to create large-scale, innovative change.

**Ulupono strongly supports SB 512 SD 1**, which appropriates \$70,000 for the development of an online "Hawai'i One" program that helps to provide conservation plans for our local farmers and ranchers.

A conservation plan is similar to a business or strategic plan that helps land users (e.g. farmers) manage land profitably while protecting natural resources. Developing a conservation plan requires careful evaluation of site conditions, and then recommending activities to mitigate any negative impacts. For example, a farm may have a steep slope that experiences soil erosion during heavy rains. A conservation plan would document the existing conditions and recommend one or more of the following conservation practices: a diversion to direct water away from the exposed slope, cover crops to cover and protect the soil, planting across the slope, or a grassed channel to convey runoff safely down the slope. The actual practice(s) recommended are based on the farmer's input and related site constraints.

A conservation plan ensures long-term productivity and profitability, supports compliance with local regulations, and may provide access to federal cost-share programs. Conservation planning also helps landowners, communities, and agricultural professionals (government and private sector) work together to identify resources and accomplish multiple objectives that are best for the land, water, and people.

The funding will resolve a critical bottleneck that is preventing our farmers from accessing much needed federal funding for the USDA Soil Conservation Service. Farmers are required to have an approved Conservation Plan in order to access federal Farm Bill funds and to be in compliance with local grading/grubbing ordinances. However, the number of people qualified to write conservation plans in Hawai'i is not sufficient to meet the need. This leaves many Hawai'i farmers, who may have relatively small operations, waiting 2-4 years

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*



to receive a conservation plan. Without an approved conservation plan, farmers are technically out of compliance with local regulations, leaving them subject to significant penalties if those rules are enforced.

The development of an online interface for farmers and other agricultural professionals to input much of the data for a conservation plan will save both time and money for all parties involved. The State of Idaho developed an online program for conservation plans called Idaho One Plan. Through offering a similar tool to Hawai'i's farmers, this online program will help the roughly 87.5% of Hawai'i farmers, and 60% of agricultural land, who do not have a conservation plan to obtain one. The local version of the online conservation planning tool will be modeled on successful tenets of the Idaho One Plan and is tentatively known as "Hawai'i One."

In 2008, realizing the need for a better process to help farmers obtain conservation plans, the Department of Agriculture and Department of Land and Natural Resources collaborated to develop an online conservation plan application. However, the departments were unsuccessful due to insufficient server space and the subsequent recession, which forced funding cuts to both departments, including 40% for the Department of Agriculture. Wanting to help solve a problem for farmers, many organizations have stepped up to help make Hawai'i One a reality.

In 2013, Ulupono Initiative granted \$111,500 to train more conservation plan analysts, build industry support for a Hawai'i One program, and provide partial funding for the Hawai'i One program buildout. Of the Ulupono grant funds, \$30,000 is allocated for the Hawai'i One buildout. At this time, an additional \$12,500 has been pledged from the Department of Health – Clean Water Branch, \$2,800 from Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and \$11,000 has been tentatively pledged from the City and County of Honolulu's Office of Economic Development to build out the Hawai'i One program. Furthermore, there is also political support from farmers, agricultural organizations, government agencies, University of Hawai'i's College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, and local soil and water conservation districts. The total cost for the build-out and implementation of a Hawai'i One program is ~\$125,300. Therefore, this bill requests the State of Hawai'i allocate \$70,000 (56% of the buildout cost for the Hawai'i One program) to pay for the remaining expenditures. An investment by the State would provide an excellent public-private partnership for this much-needed program that can provide customized information to farmers about how to improve their operations economically and environmentally.

We believe that working together 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,



Brandon Lee  
Policy and Public-Private Partnership Associate

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



**SB512**

Submitted on: 2/25/2015

Testimony for WAM on Feb 26, 2015 09:00AM in Conference Room 211

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Leslie Takayama	Waiakea Soil & Water Conservation District	Support	No

Comments:

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**SB512**

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<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Harry von Holt	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

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**SB512**

Submitted on: 2/24/2015

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<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Javier Mendez-Alvarez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**SB512**

Submitted on: 2/24/2015

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

Comments: It is with great satisfaction that this bill has come along so far. It is a bill that addresses a gaping hole in the ability of our farmers to open up land for food production. Please continue to do the right thing by approving this bill for the financing it will need to become a reality. There has already been ag industry buy-in with the Ulupono Initiative contributing startup funds and then work done by Oahu RC & D to solicit the support needed to make this a reality. Thank you for your efforts so far and please continue to push this bill forward. It is in the best interest of all agriculture in Hawaii. Mahalo.

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**SB512**

Submitted on: 2/25/2015

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<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
M. Watkins	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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Richard McCormack  
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SB 512 SD1 , Relating to Agriculture, Conservation  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Thursday, Feb 26, 2015  
Room 211 at 9:00 a.m.

Position: Support

Chair Tokuda and Vice Chair Kouchi, and members of the committees,

I am in strong support of this bill, supporting the Hawaii One program to provide an online conservation planning tool. This has the potential to help farmers across the state develop their conservation plans more easily and efficiently.

I have been personally involved in conservation planning efforts in Hawaii for over 20 years and this funding is desperately needed.

Thank you for opportunity to provide testimony in support of this bill that supports conservation planning for the farmer.

**SB512**

Submitted on: 2/25/2015

Testimony for WAM on Feb 26, 2015 09:00AM in Conference Room 211

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Taylor Kellerman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Wesley M Nohara	Individual	Support	No

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