

SB 512

Appropriates funds to develop and operate the Hawaii one program to provide conservation plans online.

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

SHAN S. TSUTSUI
Lt. Governor



SCOTT E. ENRIGHT
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
Deputy to the Chairperson

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

TESTIMONY OF SCOTT E. ENRIGHT
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON WATER AND LAND AND AGRICULTURE

February 2, 2015
2:50 P.M.
ROOM 224

SENATE BILL NO. 512
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairpersons Thielen and Ruderman and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 512 that would require the Department of Agriculture to implement and operate a program to provide conservation plans online that will be developed by non-governmental organizations. The Department supports the intent of the bill and 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 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 of the opinion that it 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 program 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 program.

Thank you for this opportunity to present our testimony.



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

February 2, 2014

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

TESTIMONY ON SB 512
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Room 224
2:50 PM

Aloha Chair Ruderman, Chair Thielen, Vice Chair Riviere, Vice Chair Galuteria, and Members of the Committees:

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 stands in strong support of SB 512.

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 lower cost and wait-times, and increase the number of agricultural producers who undertake conservation planning for the long-term success of their farms and the health of the environment, including watersheds.

There is a backlog of requests for technical assistance and there are a limited number of conservation planners, largely due to Federal and State budget cuts. The Hawaii One plan will provide an efficient tool that farmers can use to help create a preliminary plan that will significantly reduce the amount of time necessary to complete conservation plans.

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 grubbing and grading 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.



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

P O Box 437199 Kamuela HI 96743
Phone (808) 885-5599 • Fax (808) 887-1607
e-mail: HCattlemens@hawaii.rr.com

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND
Monday February 2, 2015 2:50 p.m. Room 224

SB 512 RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Appropriates funds to develop and operate the Hawaii one program to provide conservation plans online.

Chair Ruderman, Chair Thielen, Vice Chairs and Members of the Committee:

My name is Alan Gottlieb, and I am a rancher and the Government Affairs Chairperson for the Hawaii Cattlemen's Council. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc. (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the five county level Cattlemen's Associations. Our 130+ member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of approximately 25% of the State's total land mass.

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council supports SB 512.

The preamble of the bill very accurately points out the dilemma for conservation plans; they are very important for conservation of our resources, but they are very hard to come by for many small farmers and ranchers.

While an on-line system like the Proposed Hawaii One is not a silver bullet, it can be a tool that many land users can utilize to help prepare a conservation plan. Funds requested in this bill will help to leverage funds already raised and committed to implement a system similar to one which works very well for Idaho.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify on this important matter.



SENATE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE AND WATER AND LAND
Monday, February 2, 2015 – 2:50 p.m. – Room 224

Ulupono Initiative Strongly Supports SB 512 with an Amendment, Relating to Agriculture

Dear Chair Ruderman, Vice Chair Riviere, Chair Thielen, Vice Chair Galuteria 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 with an Amendment, 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 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

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i

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. While past challenges plagued an important project, today is a different story. Due to the recent technological upgrades by the State, there is sufficient server space within the Department of Agriculture, if necessary. 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.

SB 512, as currently written, provides \$70,000 in both fiscal year 2015 – 2016 and fiscal year 2016 – 2017 for a total of \$140,000 over two years. However, only the \$70,000 for fiscal year 2015 – 2016 is necessary to complete the projected costs of the Hawai'i One buildout.

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

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

SB 512, Relating to Agriculture
Senate AGL/WTL Committee
Monday, February 2, 2015
2:50 pm
Conference Room 224

Testimony by: Larry Jeffs
Position: Support

Chair Suderman and Chair Thielen, and Members of the Senate AGL and WTL 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.

Michael Greenough

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, February 01, 2015 5:51 PM
To: AGL Testimony
Cc: nwalshjones@aol.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB512 on Feb 2, 2015 14:50PM

SB512

Submitted on: 2/1/2015
Testimony for AGL/WTL on Feb 2, 2015 14:50PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nancy Jones	Hydroponics Alternatives LLC	Support	No

Comments: I fully support this measure to establish the Hawaii One program, which will allow more Hawaii farmers the ability to obtain online conservation plans -- or at least begin the process. Too many farmers languish without conservation plans because the USDA's NRCS is so very short-staffed. This is a program that worked in Idaho and clearly could be tailored to meet the needs of Hawaii farmers. We respectfully ask that you support this measure and pass it out of your committee. Thank you for this opportunity to present comments supporting this measure.

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.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

Michael Greenough

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 02, 2015 3:50 AM
To: AGL Testimony
Cc: jean.brokish@oahurcd.org
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB512 on Feb 2, 2015 14:50PM*

SB512

Submitted on: 2/2/2015

Testimony for AGL/WTL on Feb 2, 2015 14:50PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jean Brokish	Oahu Resource Conservation & Development Council	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.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

Michael Greenough

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, February 01, 2015 12:24 PM
To: AGL Testimony
Cc: ahmai@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB512 on Feb 2, 2015 14:50PM*

SB512

Submitted on: 2/1/2015

Testimony for AGL/WTL on Feb 2, 2015 14:50PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Karen Ah Mai	Hawaii Association of Conservation Districts	Support	Yes

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.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

Michael Greenough

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, February 01, 2015 9:37 AM
To: AGL Testimony
Cc: gottlieb@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB512 on Feb 2, 2015 14:50PM
Attachments: SB 512 Hawaii One 2015 Senate AGL-WTL.pdf

SB512

Submitted on: 2/1/2015

Testimony for AGL/WTL on Feb 2, 2015 14:50PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alan Gottlieb	Hawaii Cattlemen's Council	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.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

Michael Greenough

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, January 31, 2015 10:56 PM
To: AGL Testimony
Cc: 2da1wahine@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB512 on Feb 2, 2015 14:50PM

SB512

Submitted on: 1/31/2015

Testimony for AGL/WTL on Feb 2, 2015 14:50PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sandra Herndon	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Thank you for bringing this forward.

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.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

Michael Greenough

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, January 30, 2015 6:30 PM
To: AGL Testimony
Cc: ken.h.kakesako@hawaii.gov
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB512 on Feb 2, 2015 14:50PM
Attachments: SB 512_AGR_2-2-15_WTL-AGL.doc

SB512

Submitted on: 1/30/2015

Testimony for AGL/WTL on Feb 2, 2015 14:50PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ken Kakesako	Individual	Comments Only	Yes

Comments: 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.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

Michael Greenough

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 02, 2015 6:48 AM
To: AGL Testimony
Cc: terez.amato@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB512 on Feb 2, 2015 14:50PM

SB512

Submitted on: 2/2/2015

Testimony for AGL/WTL on Feb 2, 2015 14:50PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Terez Amato Lindsey	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I support SB512 only so much that it will make the process easier for local food producing farmers to be in compliance with conservation plan laws.

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.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov