



LATE

April 3, 2018

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Testimony in Support of HB 2101, HD1, SD1, Relating to the Hawaii Association of Conservation Districts (Appropriates funds to the Department of Land and Natural Resources [DLNR] for the operational expenses and staffing costs of the Hawaii Association of Conservation Districts [HACD]).

WAM Hearing: Wednesday, April 4, 2018, 10:30 a.m., in Conf Rm 211

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF) is a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers and a utility company. LURF's mission is to advocate for reasonable, rational and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural and cultural resources, and public health and safety.

LURF appreciates the opportunity to express its **support of HB 2101, HD1, SD1.**

HB 2101, HD1, SD1. This bill proposes to appropriate funds to the DLNR for the operational expenses and staffing costs of the HACD.

LURF's Position. Members of LURF are participants with HACD, which is composed of sixteen districts representing every community on all major islands of Hawaii. Testimony has been presented to the Legislature confirming that the HACDs are authorized by law to operate as government subdivisions to educate the public and construct and maintain conservation projects and programs in Hawaii and that the HACDs have worked to improve Hawaii's environment and economy through collaborative efforts with partners and government agencies that have brought millions of dollars to Hawaii to improve farm practices, reduce erosion, improve ocean and drinking water quality, fight invasive species, improve public safety, protect property, conserve water, and strengthen the economy. LURF also understands that the HACDs also provide educational and community support for conservation awareness, participate in resource conservation and development projects with high school programs statewide, and also introduce conservation principles in elementary schools.

LURF understands that unfortunately, the HACDs do not have a base budget appropriation under DLNR's budget. Therefore, this measure provides the necessary funding for the HACDs to continue their important activities.

For the above reasons, LURF **supports HB 2101, HD1, SD1** and respectfully urges your favorable consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding this matter.



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

LATE

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

DATE: Wednesday, April 4, 2018
TIME: 10:30 A.M.
PLACE: Conference Room 211

HB 2101, HD1, SD1 – RELATING TO THE HAWAII ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS.

Makes an appropriation to the Department of Land and Natural Resources for the operational expenses and staffing costs of the Hawaii Association of Conservation Districts. (SD1)

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Dale Sandlin, and I am Managing Director of 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 140+ 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** HB 2101, HD1, SD1 as this bill provides critical funding for a vital component of agriculture in Hawaii.

The 16 Soil and Water Conservation Districts in Hawaii work with farmers and ranchers to protect and promote good soil and water management practices in the state.

While these Districts are a quasi-governmental board under the Department of Land & Natural Resources, they remain staffed through volunteer District Directors and are severely underfunded by the State. They often receive little assistance and support in their work to provide a vital resource for the people of Hawaii.

We ask that this committee support this bill, as it provides the funding the Districts need to continue their service.

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



LATE

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2018 10:45:44 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/4/2018 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Michelle Watkins
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April 4, 2018

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

TESTIMONY ON
HB 2101, HD1, SD1: RELATING TO HAWAII ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION
DISTRICTS

Room 211
10:30 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

I am Michelle Watkins, Executive Director of the Hawaii Association of Conservation Districts. HACD is comprised of 16 Hawaii Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs). With the first District organized in 1948, the SWCDs are mandated by HRS §180 and comprised of volunteer directors. Many of the SWCD directors are also farmers and ranchers. They have a great understanding of the various issues related to agriculture, land use, conservation and the importance of servicing our communities.

I strongly support HB2101, HD1, SD1, providing funding for staffing and operations of HACD. HACD greatly appreciates the support provided by the legislature and the long standing contribution by the State of Hawaii to the SWCDs.

HACD and the 16 Hawaii SWCDs are a prime example of a successful partnership between the State, County, Federal and private partnerships, with funding requested by DLNR that represent the State's share of this unique partnership. **Funding is used to assist in the delivery of \$7 million in federal funds annually to farmers and ranchers.**

Public/Private Partnership for FY2017

- **Federal** (cash and in kind): \$520K **State:** \$332K **County:** \$500K
- SWCD board members and volunteers donate in excess of 17,500 hours annually.
 - Multiply this out by a nominal \$25/hr consulting rate and this adds \$437.5k to the value of the partnerships;
- State funding (332K) then becomes a modest investment, leveraging every volunteered hour, State, County and Federal dollar to over \$1.789 million of agricultural based services.

Resource conservation and Protection Projects (examples)

A conservation plan (similar to a blueprint for a house) is a blueprint for managing ranches, farms and conservation lands. This plan not only helps the owner of the plan, but also helps to protect neighboring properties from runoff and streams from being polluted by inadvertent practices.

By assisting farmers and ranchers with technical support and in developing and processing conservation plans, the SWCDs help to address such issues as erosion, grading and grubbing, runoff, and water quality in general. We also help to provide outreach and help educate our youth and the educators who teach them. Assisting the members in our community is a priority for HACD and the SWCDs, which benefits everyone throughout the state.

Increased need of services due to division of large ag lands; Previously, SWCDs could cover thousands of acres of ag lands under a single conservation plan managed by an individual cooperator. Now with the end of sugar and pine, those large acreages are being divided and sold, and/or leased, to many individuals. This increase of parcels, require an increase in conservation plans to be created for each one.

In addition to assisting farmers, ranchers and landowners prepare and implement conservation plans; the organization seeks funding and implements projects across the State. Examples include:

- On Maui, Water Source Development for the Community, e.g. Kahakapao Reservoirs
- On Kauai, Assisted DLNR in the Permitting and Construction Phase of the Hanalei Project
- On Hawaii, watershed-based plans like the Waiulaula Watershed Management project
- On Oahu, EPA-funded 319(h) Water Quality Projects, such as the Ala Wai Watershed Project to control and reduce soil erosion, and prevent and reduce sediment reaching the ocean waters
- On Molokai, the Moomomi Watershed Project with the same objectives

Increased need of services due to extremes in weather conditions; SWCDs actively implement programs to protect and restore communities from natural disasters. Forecasts indicate extreme drought and flooding in future years. Examples of implemented projects include:

- Lahaina Temporary Flood Control Project
- Funding to haul water to drought impacted farmers and ranchers.

The investment by the State of Hawaii is a critical component to enable our SWCDs to continue their programs, as listed above, and will be leveraged with Federal and County funds to help make the greatest impact. With all of our SWCD Directors being volunteers, we hope that the Legislature can see the value and importance that our program has made on our Island communities. We sincerely appreciate your time and respectfully request your **support in passing HB 2101, HD1.**

Should you have any questions, please contact me at 808-214-5388.

I appreciate this opportunity to provide input on this important matter.

LATE

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2018 11:26:38 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/4/2018 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joan Gannon	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2018 11:17:23 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/4/2018 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
petra zoeller	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2018 1:15:09 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/4/2018 10:30:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mary Robblee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please pass this measure. For the sake of our security in that we really do need to be able to feed ourselves, please pass this. Parts of Puerto Rick are still suffering without any power, they still have roads covered with debris (one of the staff members in this office just did a USDA detail in Puerto Rick documenting damage to the agricultural industry and she reported this...she just got back today after being there for 4 months). With the federal government cannot help the people of Puerto Rico, and it is much closer to the mainland than us, we are (in a word) screwed if we suffer a significant natural disaster while under the current administration. Did you hear him talk about the characteristic of islands being surrounded by water? That is who we will be counting on to help us. Like I said, we are screwed.

LATE

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2018 2:30:55 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/4/2018 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Isabelle Olivit	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-2101-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2018 8:50:26 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/4/2018 10:30:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kate Martel	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

The Soil and Water conservation districts are vitally important to support Hawaii's farmers and growers with educational programs, individualized soil analysis and advice to support the soil and Hawaii's food sustainability.