

**HB 643**

DAVID Y. IGE  
Governor

SHAN S. TSUTSUI  
Lt. Governor



State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
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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 AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT**

**MARCH 15, 2017  
1:15 P.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 224**

**SENATE BILL NO. 643  
RELATING TO IRRIGATION**

Chairperson Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

Thank for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 643 which authorizes general obligation bonds to finance capital improvements to the Waiahole Irrigation System. The Department strongly supports this measure.

Water is the lifeblood of agriculture. Efficient and reliable irrigation systems transport this resource to where it can be effectively used best. The State's irrigation systems are called upon to provide billions of gallons of agricultural water every year. The Waiahole Irrigation System, run by the Agribusiness Development Corporation, services the many agriculturalists in Oahu's central plain. This measure seeks to provide vital infrastructure funding for the Waiahole Irrigation System, which was built over a century ago, to ensure water security for Hawaii's local farmers.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**DAVID Y. IGE**  
Governor

**SHAN S. TSUTSUI**  
Lt. Governor



**JAMES J. NAKATANI**  
Executive Director

STATE OF HAWAII  
**AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**  
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**TESTIMONY OF JAMES J. NAKATANI**  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
**AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

**BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

Wednesday, March 15, 2017  
1:15 p.m.

**HOUSE BILL NO. 643**  
**RELATING TO IRRIGATION**

Chairperson Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

My name is James Nakatani, Executive Director of the Agribusiness Development Corporation (“ADC”). The ADC strongly supports House Bill No. 643 which provides additional funding for improvements to the Waiahole irrigation system.

The Waiahole irrigation system (“system”) was constructed in 1915 to irrigate thousands of acres of sugarcane. The system collects groundwater from the windward side of Oahu and transports the water via tunnels to the leeward side of Oahu, where it is conveyed through ditches and siphons by gravity flow. Currently, the system supplies vital irrigation water for lands between Waipio and Kunia.

The ADC seeks to improve the efficiency of the system to reduce water loss which can be attributed by several factors including seepage, leakage, soil

attributes, evaporation and transpiration, illegal withdraws, structure conditions, operational practices and climate patterns. The ADC's goal is to save 50 million gallons of fresh water annually and ensure water availability for farming.

The additional funding will go towards building more water storage capacity and a backup well system to ensure water security for farming in the central plains of Oahu should the system become temporarily inoperable. Constructing additional reservoirs at the upper end of the conveyance sections of the system will increase the capacity of the system without additional water allocation. The additional reservoirs will also provide storage so the amount of water in the delivery portion of the system can be more efficiently controlled. Additionally, a back-up well used for emergency purposes to fulfill water demand should water be unavailable or curtailed will greatly increase the security and reliability of the system.

In closing, the funding provided in this bill will enhance the implementation of the improvements to the system. Making these investments will ensure the system can deliver a reliable source of water in Central Oahu for the next 100 years.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and for your consideration of this bill.



March 9, 2017

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Gil Riviere, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

**Comments in Support of HB 643 Relating to Irrigation. (Authorizes the director of finance to issue general obligation bonds to finance capital improvements to the Waiahole Irrigation System.)**

**Wednesday, March 15, 2017 at 1:15 p.m. in CR 224**

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 643**, and of the various agricultural stakeholder groups who defend the goals of viable agricultural operations and the conservation and protection of agriculture, including important agricultural lands (IAL) in Hawaii.

**HB 643.** This bill authorizes the director of finance to issue general obligation bonds to finance capital improvements to the Waiahole Irrigation System to ensure a dependable supply of water for Hawaii's crops.

**LURF's Position.** The purpose of this measure is to provide funding needed for improvements to the Waiahole Irrigation System, one of the most important irrigation systems in the State, which services many agricultural producers in central Oahu. Since large amounts of prime agricultural lands and irrigation systems became available for conversion to diversified agriculture because of the plantation closures in the 1990s, the State has had the opportunity to strengthen and expand Hawaii's diversified agriculture industry. Agricultural lands, however, require significant quantities of water to support and maintain productivity. In order to ensure that local agricultural producers may continue to receive a dependable supply of water for crops, as well as research and development

operations, sufficient funding is necessary to improve, repair and maintain Hawaii's irrigation systems.

Local farmers and ranchers who rely on irrigation systems to service their agricultural lands consider such resources critical to conduct their agricultural operations and to sustain their businesses. These agricultural stakeholders believe measures such as HB 643 will greatly assist by providing funding necessary to make improvements to irrigation systems for the long-term betterment of the State's agricultural industry, and depend on legislation such as this to help them work toward the expansion of diversified agriculture; promote the agricultural self-sufficiency of the State; and to protect water as an important resource.

For the above reasons, LURF **supports HB 643**, and respectfully urges your favorable consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in support of this matter.

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Friday, March 10, 2017 4:37 PM  
**To:** AEN Testimony  
**Cc:** dale@hicattle.org  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HB643 on Mar 15, 2017 13:15PM\*

**HB643**

Submitted on: 3/10/2017

Testimony for AEN on Mar 15, 2017 13:15PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dale Sandlin	Hawaii Cattlemens Council	Support	No

Comments:

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 12, 2017 6:22 PM  
**To:** AEN Testimony  
**Cc:** director@bettercropshawaii.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HB643 on Mar 15, 2017 13:15PM\*

**HB643**

Submitted on: 3/12/2017

Testimony for AEN on Mar 15, 2017 13:15PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
BENNETTE MISALUCHA	Hawaii Crop Improvement Association	Support	Yes

**Comments:**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 14, 2017 11:10 AM  
**To:** AEN Testimony  
**Cc:** warrenmcfb@gmail.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HB643 on Mar 15, 2017 13:15PM\*

**HB643**

Submitted on: 3/14/2017

Testimony for AEN on Mar 15, 2017 13:15PM in Conference Room 224

<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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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 14, 2017 11:18 AM  
**To:** AEN Testimony  
**Cc:** alan.takemoto@monsanto.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HB643 on Mar 15, 2017 13:15PM

**HB643**

Submitted on: 3/14/2017

Testimony for AEN on Mar 15, 2017 13:15PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dan Clegg	Monsanto	Support	Yes

Comments: Chair Gabbard, We support this measure as Waiahole Irrigation System is critical to the viability of agriculture in central Oahu. Continued efforts to improve this system is important for agriculture water security now and into the future. Thank you, Dan Clegg Monsanto Hawaii Business Operations Lead

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