

**SB 684**

**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 AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT**

**JANUARY 30, 2017  
1:15 P.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 224**

**SENATE BILL NO. 684  
RELATING TO IRRIGATION**

Chairperson Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

Thank for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 684 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**  
235 S. Beretania Street, Room 205  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
Phone: (808) 586-0186 Fax: (808) 586-0189

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

**BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, AND AGRICULTURE**

Monday, January 30, 2017  
1:15 p.m.

**SENATE BILL NO. 684**  
**RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chairperson Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

My name is James Nakatani, Executive Director of the Agribusiness Development Corporation (“ADC”). The ADC strongly supports Senate Bill No. 684 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 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.

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 26, 2017 5:00 PM  
**To:** AEN Testimony  
**Cc:** swhalen@harc-hspa.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB684 on Jan 30, 2017 13:15PM

**SB684**

Submitted on: 1/26/2017

Testimony for AEN on Jan 30, 2017 13:15PM in Conference Room 224

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

Comments: The Waiahole Irrigation system is a sole and critical water source for many farms in Central Oahu. If one of the siphons fails it would take weeks to months for repair, shutting down and possible collapsing several farms in the area. There is currently no contingency plan in the case of drought or failure. This measure is critically important.

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 29, 2017 12:35 AM  
**To:** AEN Testimony  
**Cc:** legechair@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB684 on Jan 30, 2017 13:15PM

**SB684**

Submitted on: 1/29/2017

Testimony for AEN on Jan 30, 2017 13:15PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Simon Russell	Hawaii Farmers Union United	Support	Yes

Comments: Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Riviere and members of the Committee, HFUU strongly supports this legislation. Mahalo for hearing this measure, Simon Russell HFUU-Legislative Committee Chairman

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January 30, 2017

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**TESTIMONY ON SB 684**  
RELATING TO IRRIGATION

Room 224  
1:15 pm

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Riviere, 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 interests of our diverse agricultural community.

**The Hawaii Farm Bureau strongly supports SB 684**, which authorizes general obligation bonds to finance capital improvements to the Waiahole Irrigation System.

Since the demise of plantation operations across the islands, we have seen the erosion of irrigation systems. Ditches that carried water fell into disrepair with major leaks in the system, and in cases such as Kau, cracks in tunnels created enough losses that there is no longer significant flow of water. The Legislature continues to advocate for increased self-sufficiency and sustainability. Agriculture must play a key role in the process and for there to be agriculture, water is important.

The Waiahole Irrigation System was built about 100 years ago and continues to be a critical infrastructure system that provides water to thousands of acres of prime agricultural lands in central Oahu. The central plains of Oahu are one of the most highly productive and diversified agricultural region in the State.

The State Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) recognized the importance of the system to the State's future sustainability and now owns and operates the Waiahole Irrigation system. Being that the system is aging and needs constant repairs and maintenance, additional funds will allow ADC to improve the irrigation system by adding more reservoirs that will increase storage capacity and a back-up well for emergency situations when and if the system is ever compromised during a natural disaster.

We appreciate the ADC's forward thinking approach to ensure the long term sustainability of agriculture in the central Oahu region. Farmers and their crops cannot afford to wait until there's a problem before trying to fix it.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this measure.

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 28, 2017 10:16 PM  
**To:** AEN Testimony  
**Cc:** dale@hicattle.org  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for SB684 on Jan 30, 2017 13:15PM\*

**SB684**

Submitted on: 1/28/2017

Testimony for AEN on Jan 30, 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, January 29, 2017 2:30 PM  
**To:** AEN Testimony  
**Cc:** begoniabarry@gmail.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for SB684 on Jan 30, 2017 13:15PM\*

**SB684**

Submitted on: 1/29/2017

Testimony for AEN on Jan 30, 2017 13:15PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Barbara Barry	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 29, 2017 9:31 AM  
**To:** AEN Testimony  
**Cc:** alan.takemoto@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB684 on Jan 30, 2017 13:15PM

**SB684**

Submitted on: 1/29/2017

Testimony for AEN on Jan 30, 2017 13:15PM in Conference Room 224

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Doug Luka	Individual	Support	No

Comments: My name is Doug Luka, president of the South Oahu County Farm Bureau which represents farm family members from Hawaii Kai to Central Oahu. We are an affiliate of the Hawaii Farm Bureau. The Waiahole Irrigation System is a vital system that services many of our members in central Oahu. Continued improvements are needed for better efficiency and water security. Please support the passage of this measure.

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