

**DAVID Y. IGE**  
Governor

**JOSH GREEN**  
Lt. Governor



**PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER**  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

**MORRIS ATTA**  
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
1428 South King Street  
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**TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO- GEISER**  
**CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

**APRIL 14, 2021**

**1:00 P.M.**

**Via VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE NO. 752**

**SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE MOLOKA'I  
IRRIGATION SYSTEM WATER USERS ADVISORY BOARD, GUBERNATORIAL  
NOMINEE, NATHANIEL OSWALD, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 6-30-2025.**

Chairperson Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Governor's Message No. 752 nominating Nathaniel Oswald to the Moloka'i Irrigation System Water Users Advisory Board.

The department strongly supports his nomination. Mr. Oswald has been in the agricultural industry on Moloka'i since 1997. He is the owner of Oswald Nursery Management in Kaunakakai. Prior to this, he has more than 25 years of experience in row crop nursery management. Mr. Oswald is the President of the Moloka'i County Farm Bureau, as well as the Chair of the Moloka'i Middle School Community Council.



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Mr. Oswald will be a great asset to the board.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

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

GM752, Nathaniel Oswald, Gubernatorial Nominee to the  
Molokai Irrigation System Water Users Advisory Board

Senate AEN Hearing  
Wednesday, April 14, 2021 - 1:00 pm

Testimony By: Larry Jeffs  
Position: Support

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, and Members of the Senate AEN Committee:

I am Larry Jeffs, owner and operator of Larry Jeffs Farms, LLC. We have more than 42 years of Hawaii farm experience on Molokai and Oahu. I am a volunteer director, serving as Chair of the West Oahu Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). I have been an officer of the Hawaii Farm Bureau for many years.

Nathaniel Oswald has provided leadership to the Molokai agricultural community as President of the Molokai County Hawaii Farm Bureau. Through his professional experience with seed and row crop nursery management, he has established his business there, Oswald Nursery Management, LLC.

He is a Molokai resident, as well as someone with expertise in on-island crop management. Mr. Oswald is qualified to advise the HDOA on matters of concern to users of the system; support improvements to the irrigation facilities; participate in the system's long-range planning, and, most importantly, serve as a liaison between the users and the HDOA.

Your support of Nathaniel Oswald's nomination is appreciated.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



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April 14, 2021

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**TESTIMONY ON GM 752**

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Molokai Irrigation System Water Users Advisory Board, Gubernatorial Nominee, NATHANIEL OSWALD, for a term to expire 06-30-2025.

Videoconference  
1:00 PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 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.

**HFB strongly supports** the nomination of Mr. Nathaniel Oswald to the Molokai Irrigation System Water Users Advisory Board.

As the current President of the Molokai County Farm Bureau, Mr. Oswald works on a wide variety of policy issues concerning the needs, challenges, and opportunities faced by farmers on Molokai. Mr. Oswald has extensive background and understanding of agriculture will be asset to the Molokai Irrigation System Water Users Advisory Board.

Mr. Oswald has been involved in agriculture for over 25 years on Molokai. He currently operates a small nursery management operation on the Molokai.

HFB respectfully requests your strong support of Mr. Nathaniel Oswald's appointment to the Molokai Irrigation System Water Users Advisory Board.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our unconditional support for Mr. Oswald.

**GM-752**

Submitted on: 3/30/2021 10:00:22 AM

Testimony for AEN on 4/14/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Keomailani Hanapi Hirata	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support Nathaniel Oswald

**GM-752**

Submitted on: 4/8/2021 8:10:38 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/14/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Rosie F Davis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I support

Mahalo

Senator Mike Gabbard  
Chair, Agriculture and Environment  
sengabbard@capitol.hawaii.gov

Re: Nomination to the Molokai Irrigation System Water Users Advisory Board  
**GM752\_Mr.Oswald Advise and Consent Questionnaire**

Dear Senator Gabbard,

*Thank you for your letter and notification of my nomination. I am excited at the opportunity to see if I am able to fill this role, and make a positive impact on our community.*

**1. Why do you wish to be a member of the Advisory Board?**

As a grower for the last 25 years on Molokai, I have firsthand experience on how precious our water resources are, and how important conservation considerations impact its users. It is paramount for a farmer to understand how we access and maintain this resource, and to explore ways to maintain sustainable access. This, in tandem with planning at the same time, make sure we are poised to have plans for growth or shrinkage as we look to the future.

Being able to offer input and also gain insight on how the MIS operates is important for me and other users.

**2. How do you perceive the role and responsibilities of a member of the Advisory Board?**

My expectations of this role are to attend meetings, offer input based on research and experience, hear others and find solutions, and share findings with appropriate channels.

**3. Given your understanding of the role and responsibilities of a member of the Advisory Board, why do you believe you are qualified for the position?**

My motivation first and foremost is to help build and maintain a foundation for the future. My family and community are very important to me. To be able to ensure my children, and children's children understand the importance of our water and resources drive my passion for learning more and leading change.

**4. What do you hope to accomplish during your term of service?**

Listen to others first. The understanding that my service would be in its freshman form means that I need to be open to absorbing and understanding how things work before attempting to move the needle. In my experience, collaboration and teamwork to achieve goals sets precedence for a solid foundation.

**5. Name three qualities that best describe you and would make you stand out. How would these qualities benefit the Advisory Board?**

I strive to be involved in my community, and have served on several boards and committees.

- I serve on the Molokai School Community Council.
- Serving as current President of the Molokai Chapter Farm Bureau.
- I am being considered as a member for the new County level DOA as a steering committee member.
- Creator of an annual Keiki Fishing Tournament that works with NOAA to teach catch and release techniques (10<sup>th</sup> year and counting).
- I am a member of a local music group that donates our talents to local fundraisers and churches.

- I have helped in several local fundraisers to support our youth in sports and education.
- Grown produce and donated to our local elders.
- Assisted the Maui Community College in sharing farming techniques and business strategy to students.
- Attended People Leader Learning Series training levels 1-6.

My interest is in long term solutions rather than short term gains.

- It's important to look ahead and see what challenges our current, and next generations may come across. Leading by example and working with community, then showing follow through to see combined goals come to fruition.

I have worked in agriculture my entire life, starting as a field laborer and working my way up to a successful nursery farm owner.

- I have built my career by putting in time and being humble. From my first days working on my hands and knees cutting weeds out of nursery, to my current challenges navigating and building a successful farm that offers employment for over twenty people, has helped define who I am.
- I have been offered leadership positions on other islands in the past for large seed companies. I have turned them down with the main reason being my love for this island and its people. My goals in life are not to see how much money I can make, but rather how I can positively impact those around me. Hawaii is truly a special place and deserves the best stewardship we can offer.

**5. Can you foresee any possible conflicts of interest that could arise during your service on the Advisory Board?**

I do not participate on social media much, or have the ability to travel during certain growth stages. It could prove challenging to leave a crop untended.

*Thank you again for your consideration, and thank you for your service in the State Senate.*

**Respectfully,**

Nathaniel Oswald  
Oswald Nursery Management, LLC.  
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Kaunakakai, Hawaii 96748  
1-808-646-0807  
[nloswa@gmail.com](mailto:nloswa@gmail.com)