

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

JOSH GREEN
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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**TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

**TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 2022
8:30 A.M.
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2056, SD1
RELATING TO SOIL CLASSIFICATIONS**

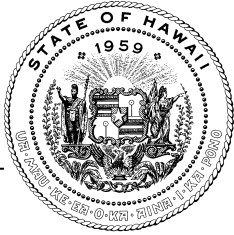
Chairperson Tarnas and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2056, SD1 that requires the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OP/SD) to conduct a study of the suitability of the State's current soil rating system as developed by the Land Study Bureau. OP/SD may seek the assistance of the Department of Agriculture, the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, the Land Use Commission, and the U. S. Department of Agriculture. There is an appropriation, and a report is required prior to the 2023 legislative session.

The Department supports this measure and otherwise defers to OP/SD. We look forward to participating in a comprehensive review of soil quality indexes such as the Land Study Bureau which have significant roles in land use regulation, identifying what agricultural production resources need to be protected, and help to optimize public and private investments that support food sustainability and overall local agricultural production.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important measure.





HAWAII STATE ENERGY OFFICE STATE OF HAWAII

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

SCOTT J. GLENN
CHIEF ENERGY OFFICER

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Testimony of
SCOTT J. GLENN, Chief Energy Officer

before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND

Tuesday, March 15, 2022
8:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 430 Via Videoconference

**SUPPORT
SB 2056 SD1
RELATING TO SOIL CLASSIFICATIONS.**

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Branco and Members of the Committee, the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) supports SB 2056, SD1, which requires the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) to conduct a study of the suitability of the State's current soil overall (master) productivity rating system classified by the Land Study Bureau's (LSB) detailed land classification. SB 2056, SD1, also requires a report to the Legislature and appropriates funds.

HSEO agrees with Section 1 of SB 2056, SD1, that the LSB system "reflects the agricultural activities of plantation sugar cane and pineapple production that dominated Hawaii agriculture at the time of the study" and may no longer be appropriate to guide Hawaii's food and agricultural sustainability goals. Further, SB 2056, SD1, references the U.S. Department of Agriculture's national soil classification system as an example of other methods that can be used to classify agricultural soils more appropriately.

Current state law (sections 205-2 and 205-4.5, Hawai'i Revised Statutes) directs the permissibility of solar energy projects on Agricultural land based on the land's LSB rating. However, in some cases the practical use of the lands for agriculture, or co-location of crops or livestock with solar energy projects, is greater or less than indicated by the soils alone. For example, although the soils in one area may have a productivity rating that is higher than another area the availability or lack of irrigation water may

encourage or constrain the actual productivities of the various sites. The degree to which these factors are captured (or not) in the current system deserves review.

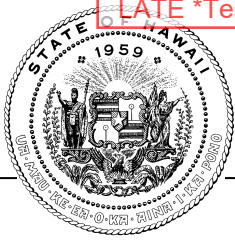
Therefore, HSEO believes that a study of the suitability of soil classification systems for the regulation of agricultural lands would contribute to a better understanding of Hawai'i's agricultural lands, systems, potential, and needs.

HSEO defers to the appropriate agency for administration and fiscal matters.

HSEO supports this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Supplemental Budget.

HSEO's comments are guided by its mission to promote energy efficiency, renewable energy, and clean transportation to help achieve a resilient, clean energy, decarbonized economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



LATE *Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

**STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF PLANNING
& SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS
DIRECTOR

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Statement of
MARY ALICE EVANS
Director, Office of Planning and Sustainable Development
before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND
Tuesday, March 15, 2022
8:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 430 & Videoconference
in consideration of
SB 2056 SD 1
RELATING TO SOIL CLASSIFICATIONS.

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Branco, and Members of the House Committee on Water & Land.

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) **strongly supports** SB 2056 SD1. This measure would appropriate funds and require OPSD to conduct a study of the different agricultural rating systems, including the Land Study Bureau productivity rating system, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) soil inventory and other relevant soils rating systems, and determine recommendations for the use of soil classification systems for the regulation of agricultural lands in the State. The measure also provides that OPSD may consult and work with the Department of Agriculture, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, the Land Use Commission, and with USDA.

The measure indicates that since 1972, a period of fifty (50) years, there has not been a comprehensive soil study or agricultural soil mapping. Further, the Land Study Bureau classification system was based on older style agricultural activities, such as plantation sugar cane and pineapple production. Since that time, plantations have closed, and the type of agriculture practiced within the State has changed significantly.

OPSD believes that a review of the soils rating system is timely and would help to assure that the administration and regulation by State and counties preserve the 'best' agricultural lands. This would help to meet the State's food sustainability goals and to enhance meeting current challenges in agricultural land usage and cultivation by helping to preserve the best agricultural lands in the State for future generations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
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EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 2056, S.D. 1

March 15, 2022
8:30 a.m.
Room 430 and Videoconference

RELATING TO SOIL CLASSIFICATIONS

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

Senate Bill No. 2056, S.D. 1, requires the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) to conduct a study of the suitability of soil classification systems used to regulate agricultural lands in the State; requires OPSD to submit a report to the Legislature; and appropriates an unspecified amount of general funds for FY 23 to conduct the study.

B&F notes that, with respect to the general fund appropriation in this bill, the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act requires that states receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II funds and Governor's Emergency Education Relief II funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and

- Higher education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

Further, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires that states receiving ARP ESSER funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

The U.S. Department of Education has issued rules governing how these maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements are to be administered. B&F will be working with the money committees of the Legislature to ensure that the State of Hawai'i complies with these ESSER MOE requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



LAND USE COMMISSION

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM
OFFICE OF PLANNING & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

DANIEL ORODENKER
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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March 14, 2022

Statement of
Daniel E. Orodener
Executive Officer
State Land Use Commission

Before the
House Committee on
Water and Land

Tuesday March 15, 2022
8:30 AM
State Capitol, Room 430 Virtual Video Conference

In consideration of
SB 2056 SD1
RELATING TO SOIL CLASSIFICATIONS

Chair Tarnas; Vice Chair Branco; and members of the House Committee on Water and Land:

The Land Use Commission supports the intent of SB 2056 SD1 requiring the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (“OPSD”) to conduct a study of the State’s current soil classification system done by the Land Study Bureau (“LSB”) and to determine whether this system or another classification system is best suited for the regulation of agricultural lands by the State and counties.

However, we are concerned that the study be driven by the proper data and that those who are most familiar with the inherent characteristics of Hawai'i’s soils and their relationship to practical farming and land use be involved with the development of any new set of classifications. Therefore, we offer the following suggested amendments below (in our attachment) in order to ensure that the proper expertise is brought to bear in this study:

Section 2 of the measure should be amended to add the State Department of Agriculture and the Land Use Commission as required collaborators in the study rather than being requested to assist as appropriate. We believe both the State Department of Agriculture and the Land Use Commission have both expertise and subject matter jurisdiction on regulatory matters within the State Agricultural District.

Section 3 of the measure should be amended to remove both the Department of Agriculture and the Land Use Commission from the list of entities to be requested for assistance if OPSD were to believe it appropriate.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

Attachment

Proposed SB2056 SD2

***Additions are **underlined** and deletions [bracketed]

SECTION 2. The office of planning and sustainable development, **the department of agriculture, and the land use commission** shall conduct a study of the suitability of soil classification systems, including the soil overall (master) productivity rating system and detailed land classification of the land study bureau, for the regulation of agricultural lands by the State and counties.

SECTION 3. In conducting the study required by this Act, the office of planning and sustainable development shall request, as appropriate, the assistance of the [department of agriculture,] college of tropical agriculture and human resources of the University of Hawaii at Manoa, [and the land use commission,] which shall cooperate and provide necessary resources as requested by the office of planning and sustainable development. The office of planning and sustainable development may further consult with the United States Department of Agriculture, if necessary.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Water and Land
Tuesday, March 15, 2022 at 8:30 a.m.

By

Nicholas Comerford, Dean
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources

And

Michael Bruno, PhD

Provost

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 2056 SD1 – RELATING TO SOIL CLASSIFICATIONS

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Branco, and members of the House Committee on Water and Land:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 2056 SD1 relating to soil classifications.

As a Soil Scientist and past surveyor in the National Cooperative Soil Survey, and having soil surveyed the foothills of Mount Rainier and the Skagit River Valley in Washington, Dean Comerford has understood the importance and use of soils information in land use planning and agriculture. The Web Soil Survey (<https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/HomePage.htm>) provides digitized soil maps and interpretive information. In addition, the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources has an on-going research project in the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Management that is evaluating crop suitability for current and climate change environments for a limited variety of crops across the state related to soil type and climate. These resources may be of use.

The University of Hawai'i supports SB 2056 SD1 and thank you for the opportunity to testify. We defer to the Office and Planning and Sustainable Development as to their determination of their ability and funding to accomplish the task.



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March 15, 2022

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND

TESTIMONY ON SB 2056, HD1
RELATING TO SOIL CLASSIFICATION

Conference Room 430 & Videoconference
8:30 AM

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Branco, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports SB 2056, SD1, which requires the office of planning and sustainable development to conduct a study of the suitability of the State's current soil overall (master) productivity rating system classified by the land study bureau's detailed land classification.

HFB recognizes and supports the need to review our current soil classification system. We also recognize that in the land category system used today, agriculture was originally the catchall land classification and that some lands included within the agricultural district were not necessarily considered optimal for agriculture. However, agriculture has significantly evolved. Soil classification is no longer the determinant of land good for agriculture. Greenhouses, hydroponics, aquaculture, and aquaponics are just a few of the many types of agriculture that can occur on *all* classes of land (A, B, C, D, E). Some of the best floriculture and hydroponic operations in Hawai'i are on C, D, and E lands. The total environment, including rainfall amount and timing, day and night-time temperatures, wind, and humidity each contribute to whether a particular region is suitable for a specific crop. In many cases, the soil type and even the existing terrain are not determinative of whether farming can exist and thrive.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.