

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
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

MARCH 16, 2022

10:00 A.M.

CONFERENCE ROOM 325 & VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**SENATE BILL NO. 2615 SD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chairperson Hashem and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2615 SD1 which establishes two positions on the Board of Agriculture ("Board") and specifies one shall be a resident of the island of Moloka`i and one shall be a resident of the island of Lana`i. The department supports the intent of the measure provided it does not adversely impact the Department's priorities in the Executive Supplemental Budget request.

It appears that this measure seeks to ensure representation of the of the Moloka`i and Lana`i agricultural communities on the Board by establishing positions that are geographically based. The Board was established with members from each of the four Counties to address that concern from its inception. Historically, the Board member representing Maui County has represented the interests of the entire county, including Moloka`i and Lana`i. Additionally, a member in one of the at-large positions on the board at this time is very knowledgeable of controlled environment agriculture on Lana`i which is an example of agricultural technology and innovation at its highest level in Hawai`i. The same member also has a diverse experience of agricultural production and



food systems on the Island of Hawai`i. Currently any person as a resident of Moloka`i or Lana`i can also apply to be considered and nominated as an at-large member of the Board of Agriculture.

Within the department there is an exclusive opportunity for residents of Moloka`i to have a voice and decision-making vote as a member of the Moloka`i Irrigation System Water Users Advisory Board for the Moloka`i irrigation system water service. It has been a challenge for the department to fill vacant advisory board positions with Moloka`i residents. The department recently completed the 2020 Update to the Hawai`i Statewide Agricultural Land Use Baseline that reported a significant increase in diversified crop acreage on Lana`i. In 2021, Moloka`i experienced specific challenges to animal health and climate change. Adding two members to the board of agriculture to represent Moloka`i and Lana`i provides the desired diversity in statewide representation of knowledge and perspectives for providing broad operating policies for the department.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
Wednesday, March 17, 2022, 10:00 A.M.
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
SB 2615 SD1 RELATING TO AGRICULTURE
WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and Members of the Committee:

Pūlama Lānaʻi is a land and resource management company, a cultural steward, and a community builder. Today, Lānaʻi is being redefined as a sustainable community. Pūlama Lānaʻi is helping to shape the future of our island by creating new opportunities driven by agriculture, resource management, conservation and more. We strive to enhance and perpetuate the island's diverse species and fragile ecosystem through game management, natural species preservation, watershed management, erosion control, coastal resources and fisheries management, invasive species control and conservation education. Pūlama Lānaʻi brings an integrated and comprehensive approach to protect and manage Lānaʻi's natural resources. Bound by a strong sense of community, we are committed to building infrastructure and expanding essential services to improve the lives of Lānaʻi residents.

Pūlama Lānaʻi is in **support of SB 2615 SD1**, which amends the current statute to establish a Board seat on the State of Hawaiʻi Department of Agriculture for the islands of Lānaʻi and Molokaʻi. Each island community has its own unique biocultural landscape, which recognizes the pervasive interactions between biological and cultural phenomena. As such, having a broad representation from each island will provide each island to have a voice at the table when establishing operating policies for the Department of Agriculture, which is dedicated to the preservation and productive use of agricultural resources so as to assure a healthy and adequate food supply for Hawaii's people, providing employment, maintaining a favorable balance of trade, and preserving the aesthetic quality of the Hawaiʻi.

Pūlama Lānaʻi is very interested in the policies that will govern agricultural resources on Lānaʻi. Pūlama Lānaʻi constructed a hydroponic operation on Lānaʻi called Sensei Farms. In 2020, Sensei Farms provided fresh produce to the residents and businesses on Lānaʻi and began exporting fresh produce to the neighbor island markets. Sensei Farms grows assorted leafy greens and vine-grown tomatoes more sustainably indoors, using 90 percent less water than traditional farms. The six hydroponic greenhouses in production are powered by an off-grid solar and battery facility, decreasing our dependence on fossil fuel and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. As we move forward to building a more sustainable future, policies that affect our island matter. Being part of the decision making process is vital.

We respectfully request that you favorably vote to move SB 2615 SD1 forward for consideration.

SB-2615-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2022 10:25:25 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/16/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Negus Manna	RED SEA HAWAII CONNECTION LLC	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha

I strongly support S.B. 2615 Relating to the Board of Agriculture, which found that each of the islands of the State has different water resources, and therefore unique agricultural issues. I agree with the that the complex needs of each island's agricultural community would be better addressed by proper representation on the board of agriculture.

Maui County needs qualified professionals with experience in the Hawaii agricultural sector to lead the Department. It is important to make sure that these positions are filled by professionals that know our County's issues and have the experience and background to lead us to a more sustainable and food secure agricultural system. I respectfully ask that you pass S.B. 2615 and provide the proper representation on the board of agriculture for Lana'i and Moloka'i.

Mahalo,

Negus Manna

Red Sea Hawaii Connection LLC

Lana'i City, Lana'i



COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
Wednesday, March 16, 2022, 10:00 A.M.
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
SB 2615 SD1 RELATING TO AGRICULTURE
WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and Members of the Committee:

Sensei Ag Farm Lānaʻi is on a mission to grow food locally indoors for all the islands; starting with leafy greens and tomatoes, our goal is to nourish and provide the most deliciously nutritious produce for all Hawaiian families. We choose to grow in greenhouses because in today's unpredictable environment, growing indoors gives our plants the best chance of success, we do this, each day, with aloha and with the goal of growing the best produce for our island communities. At Sensei Ag Farm Lānaʻi we understand the importance of supporting a sustainable community, focusing on precision agriculture tools, optimal growing environment, ensuring the consistency, quality, food safety, and taste of our produce; at the same time taking care of the environment, efficient use of water and electricity, at Sensei Ag Farm Lānaʻi, we grow all our products in six solar-powered greenhouses.

Sensei Ag Farm Lānaʻi is in **support of SB 2615 SD1**, which amends the current statute to establish a Board seat on the State of Hawaiʻi Department of Agriculture for the islands of Lānaʻi and Molokaʻi. This brings the opportunity of having a broad representation from each island, a voice at the table when establishing operating policies for the Department of Agriculture, assuring a healthy and adequate food supply for Hawaii's people, providing employment, and maintaining a favorable balance of trade.

Sensei Ag believes that policies that can influence and shape our local community matter. Being part of the decision-making process is crucial.

We respectfully request that you favorably vote to move SB 2615 SD1 forward for consideration.

SB-2615-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2022 10:59:09 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/16/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Faith Tuipulotu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I totally support SB 2615 SD1.

SB-2615-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2022 11:40:47 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/16/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dana Keawe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

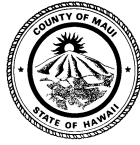
support

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Director of Council Services
Traci N. T. Fujita, Esq.

Deputy Director of Council Services
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.MauiCounty.us

March 15, 2022

TO: Honorable Mark J. Hashem, Chair
House Committee on Agriculture

FROM: Alice L. Lee
Council Chair

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Alice L. Lee", is written over the printed name and title.

DATE: March 15, 2022

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT OF SB 2615, SD1, RELATING TO THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of this important measure. The purpose of this measure is to change the composition of the Board of Agriculture by providing representation from the islands of Molokai and Lanai. The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I **SUPPORT** this measure for the following reasons:

1. Each of the islands of the State has different water resources, and therefore unique agricultural issues.
2. Amending the composition of the Board of Agriculture by providing representation from the islands of Molokai and Lanai better addresses the complex needs of each island's agricultural community.

For the foregoing reasons, I **SUPPORT** this measure.

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SB-2615-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2022 10:51:16 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/16/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Fairfax Reilly	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT: LANA'I AND MOLOKA'I NEED REPRESENTATIVES:

LAND OWNERSHIP AND ACCESS TO WATER RESOURCES ARE SO CRITICAL AND UNIQUE BOTH ISLANDS NEED REPRESENTATION. SMALL FARMERS ON LEASED LAND AND SERVED BY A PRIVATE WATER SYSTEM CREATE CHALLENGES. MAHALO

SB-2615-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2022 12:16:17 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/16/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelly King	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a councilmember for the tri-isle county of Maui, we have always made representation from Lanai and Molokai a priority. They are both islands with much agricultural potential, so I urge you to include members from these communities on the Board of Agriculture!

Mahalo nui,

Kelly T. King

SB-2615-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/16/2022 12:43:15 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/16/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Azuma Chrupalyk	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The working group shall be nominated from the people of that community.