

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 SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

**FEBRUARY 24, 2022
10:00 A.M.
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE**

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

Chairperson Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2615 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.

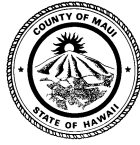
Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Council Chair
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez

Presiding Officer Pro Tempore
Tasha Kama

Councilmembers
Gabe Johnson
Kelly Takaya King
Michael J. Molina
Tamara Paltin
Shane M. Sinenci
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura



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

February 22, 2022

TO: Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Alice L. Lee
Council Chair 

DATE: February 22, 2022

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT OF SB 2615, 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.

ocs:proj:legis:22legis:testimony:sb2615_paf22-018(57)a_jbf

SB-2615

Submitted on: 2/21/2022 8:44:00 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/24/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SUPPORT SB 2615 RELATING TO THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.