



**SB1498**  
**RELATING TO THE PROTECTION OF TARO**  
**Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

February 28, 2023

10:00 AM

Room 211

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The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) offers its **STRONG SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS** to SB1498, which would improve protections for lo'i kalo and traditional Native Hawaiian wetland agricultural systems on undeveloped State lands. **OHA offers amendments to this measure that would extend these necessary protections beyond traditional wetland systems to include māla, traditional dryland agricultural cultivation systems, that were equally important to the production of food, and are now vulnerable to the same destructive practices that this measure's preamble makes note of.**

OHA respectfully asks the Legislature to include the following amendments, which include consideration for dryland taro lands in addition to the wetlands that have previously been considered:

Page 2, lines 11-18:

“Taro lands” means any undeveloped public lands of high productivity determination situated in the land use conservation district established pursuant to chapter 205 in wetland or dryland taro cultivation before statehood, or any undeveloped public lands that were traditional taro lands situated in the land use conservation district established pursuant to chapter 205 that retain historic structural evidence of loi kalo and mala, including auwai irrigation ditches, terraces, or walls.”

Page 10, lines 12-15:

- (B) Walls, terraces, or supporting structure for loi and mala taro fields in wetland and dryland taro cultivation before statehood and currently in use for taro cultivation;

Page 21, lines 7-11:

The board shall not disturb existing ancient taro-growing systems, ancient wetland or dryland taro lands, or structural



**SB1498**  
**RELATING TO THE PROTECTION OF TARO**  
**Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

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elements of ancient wetland or dryland taro-growing systems on undeveloped lands used for wetland or dryland cultivation before statehood and currently in use for wetland or dryland taro cultivation.

Page 22, lines 19-21, and page 23, lines 1-2:

- (5) Undeveloped lands and infrastructure used for wetland or dryland cultivation before statehood and currently in use for wetland or dryland cultivation, including ancient wetland or dryland taro lands and structural elements of ancient wetland taro-growing systems.

SB1498 carries out the obligation of the State to protect the “traditional and customary rights” of Native Hawaiians under Article XII, Section 7 of the Hawai‘i Constitution. As the principal public agency in the State responsible for the performance, development, and coordination of programs and activities relating to Native Hawaiians,<sup>1</sup> as well as a funder and supporter of the Taro Security and Purity Task Force, OHA appreciates the opportunity to offer its continued kōkua for the preservation and protection of Native Hawaiian historical and cultural resources and the traditional and customary practices maintained within.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify and to provide our mana‘o (thoughts) on this important measure that also affects food security in Hawai‘i – an issue impacting both Native Hawaiians and all of the peoples of Hawai‘i Nei. Mahalo nui loa!

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<sup>1</sup> HRS §10-3.

**SB-1498**

Submitted on: 2/25/2023 11:12:40 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Megan Fox	Testifying for Malama Kaua'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Taro is critical to our islands food sustainability



**Officers**

Kaipo Kekona  
State President

Anabella Bruch  
Vice-President

Maureen Datta  
Secretary

Reba Lopez  
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Kona, Hawai'i

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Haleakala, Maui

Kaiea Medeiros  
Mauna Kahalawai,  
Maui

Kaipo Kekona  
Lahaina, Maui

Rufina Kaauwai  
Molokai

Negus Manna  
Lāna'i

Brynn Foster  
North Shore, O'ahu

Christian Zuckerman  
Wai'anae, O'ahu

Ted Radovich  
Waimanalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura  
Honolulu, O'ahu

Ray Maki  
Kauai

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee,

The Hawaii Farmers Union United (HFUU) is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFUU supports SB1498.**

Taro is a traditional Hawaiian crop that has sustained Hawaii's people and culture for centuries. Preserving and protecting taro is a significant part of our cultural identity and our food security.

This bill recognizes the importance of taro by helping to protect and preserve taro-growing lands and also sets out a system for creating an inventory of taro lands and consulting with former members of the Taro Security and Purity Task Force in its creation. This will help ensure that these lands are preserved for generations to come. Additionally, the bill emphasizes the growth and perpetuation of traditional Hawaiian crops as a goal of the Hawaii State Planning Act, which further contributes to the preservation of the crop and reaffirms the significance of taro in Hawaiian culture. We strongly support this bill, and urge its passage.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kaipo Kekona, President HFUU/HFUF



# Food+ Policy Internship 2023

[food@purplemaia.org](mailto:food@purplemaia.org)

February 27, 2023

To: Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Subject: **SB 1498**, Relating to the protection of Taro

Food+ Policy strongly supports SB1498, which seeks to improve protections for wetland taro lands, aka lo'i kalo, and ancient wetland agricultural structures on undeveloped state-owned or -acquired lands. Unfortunately, this has become an issue because there were viable wetland taro lands and structures that were being destroyed by public and private development due to gaps in land use, historic preservation, planning laws, and policies.

Wetland taro lands are vital to the identity of Native Hawaiians. Most Native Hawaiians were displaced from their ancestral lands in the valleys when water was routed away during the sugar plantation era. Although they had their land, the loss of water resulted in a struggle to continue farming their land. By having wetland taro, it's much easier to pull the kalo to harvest and replant. To not have wetland taro and have to work with dry land taro is like losing workers because the work is much harder to have to use tools and intensive physical labor to grow dry land taro.

Furthermore, when ancient Hawaiian walls that outline the various wetland taro are destroyed due to development, that permanently destroys important historical and culturally significant structures that were built hundreds, if not thousands of years ago by the aboriginal people of Hawai'i. To destroy these structures and not protect them means the erasure of the identity of a people as well as the loss of valuable agricultural infrastructure that could shape Hawai'i's future.

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**The Food+ Policy internship** develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2023, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students from throughout the UH System. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.

Please we ask for you to pass SB1498 in order to protect Wetland Taro so the structures and vital wetland taro fields can stay intact and not be destroyed, built over, and erased from existence.

Mahalo,  
Kelsey Amos & the Food+ Policy Team  
#fixourfoodsystem



**Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Supports: SB1498**

Tuesday, February 28, 2023 10 a.m. Conference Room 211

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Members of the Committee,

HAPA supports SB1498 which prohibits the Board of Land and Natural Resources from disturbing or acquiring for development certain wetland taro growing lands. Establishes a taro lands classification for public lands. Permits structures for lo'i taro fields in the agricultural district. Establishes growth and perpetuation of traditional Hawaiian crops as a goal of the Hawai'i State Planning Act. Authorizes the Land Use Commission to create an inventory of taro lands and consult with former members of the Taro Security and Purity Task Force in the creation of the inventory.

This bill seeks to improve protections for wetland taro lands (lo'i kalo) and ancient wetland agricultural structures on undeveloped state-owned or -acquired lands. Wetland taro lands are vital to the identity of Native Hawaiians. When walls that outline the various wetland taro are destroyed due to development, that permanently destroys important historical and culturally significant structures that were built hundreds, if not thousands of years ago by the indigenous people of Hawaii. To destroy these structures and not protect them means the erasure of the identity of a people and the loss of important infrastructure for a food sovereign future.

We believe this measure is a great way to support a native cultural practice and Hawai'i's staple food. Supporting taro farmers will also help to keep native Hawaiian traditional and customary cultural practices & its vital agricultural knowledge alive.

Kalo is a valued landscape and is recognized as the State Plant. Kalo farmers need and deserve support to ensure taro farming continues to grow and expand into the future. This measure helps to incentivize farmers to grow taro, one of the healthiest staple starch foods available.

Please pass SB1498.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', written in a cursive style.

Anne Frederick  
Executive Director

**SB-1498**

Submitted on: 2/25/2023 11:08:12 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sunny Savage	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support!



**SB-1498**

Submitted on: 2/25/2023 4:37:26 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Will Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Wetlands are some of the most productive and biodiverse habitats on the planet. Wetlands protect beaches against erosion, recharge aquifers, provide flood alleviation, support endangered species, and sequester carbon. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, an acre of wetland can store 1–1.5 million gallons of floodwater.

The destruction of wetlands and waterways is a major concern because development in these areas leads to excessive flooding and inhibits the natural processes that filter sediments and nutrients from stormwater runoff before reaching coral reefs. The United Nations Millennium Ecosystem Assessment determined that environmental degradation is more prominent within wetlands than any other ecosystem on Earth and, therefore wetlands deserve greater protection.

In Hawai‘i, more than 31% of our coastal wetlands have been lost. Wetlands, by virtue of the functions and ecosystem services they provide, are far more precious than mere market values or commercial profits. Without wetlands, Hawai‘i would have to spend exorbitant amounts of money to replace wetland functions that protect the water supply, ocean water quality, and coral reefs; provide flood attenuation and storage; sequester carbon; and provide habitat for native plants and animals.

Furthermore, without wetlands to provide these ecosystem services, drinking and irrigation water will require more treatment, floods will become more devastating, storm surges from hurricanes will penetrate further mauka, coral reefs and fisheries will be damaged or destroyed, animals and plants will face disruption and extinction, climate change mitigation will be reduced, and food security and livelihoods will be threatened.

Surface water, ground water, floodplains, wetlands, and other features do not function as separate and isolated components of the watershed, but rather as a single, integrated natural system. Disruption of any part of this system can have long-term and far-reaching consequences on the functioning of the entire system as evidenced by disastrous recent flooding events. This Act will establish an ahupua‘a-based protection of wetlands and watersheds, and protect natural stormwater infrastructure. Please support this bill.

**SB-1498**

Submitted on: 2/26/2023 7:58:04 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
JarraeTehani Manasas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support SB1498 which seeks to improve protections for wetland taro lands, lo'i kala, and ancient wetland agricultural structures on undeveloped state-owned or aquired lands.

Wetland taro lands is vital to the identity of Native Hawaiians. When walls that outline the various wetland taro are destroyed due to development, that permanently destroys an important historical and culturally significant structures that were built hundreds to thousands of years ago by aboriginal people, the Native Hawaiians. To destroy these structures and not protect them means the erasure of the identity of a people and the loss of important infrastructure for a food sovereign future.

Mahalo for your time,

JarraeTehani Manasas, Kailua Kona Hawai'i

**SB-1498**

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 6:32:55 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ku Kahakalau	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. We are a family of native Hawaiian educators, social entrepreneurs and cultural practitioners growing taro for over three decades in Waipi‘o Valley on Hawai‘i Island. We strongly support SB1498 RELATING TO THE PROTECTION OF TARO, which prohibits the Board of Land and Natural Resources from disturbing or acquiring for development wetland taro-growing lands. This bill also establishes a taro lands classification for public lands and permits structures for loi taro fields in the agricultural district, which is extremely important since high water regularly prevents us from exiting our 5-acre taro patch complex in Waipi‘o. SB 1498 also establishes growth and perpetuation of traditional Hawaiian crops as a goal of the Hawai‘i State Planning Act and authorizes the Land Use Commission to create an inventory of taro lands and consult with former members of the Taro Security and Purity Task Force in the creation of the inventory.

We urge you to please support SB1498, which will help perpetuating wetland taro-growing, a unique and highly productive method of food production developed by our Hawaiian ancestors at a level found no where else on earth. Mahalo nui. Kū Kahakalau, Ph.D.

**SB-1498**

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 6:47:52 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kuike Kamakea-Ohelo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB1498.

na‘u,

Kū‘ike

**SB-1498**

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 7:24:26 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kara Kelay	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support SB1498. The protection of kalo is key to our survival.

**SB-1498**

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 8:30:15 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Daniel Bishop	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in Strong Support

Daniel Bishop

**SB-1498**

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 8:31:39 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
fred hofer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please protect the Lo'i

Protect the wetlands from development

Protect and support the traditional growing of kalo

Mahalo nui

Fred Hofer

**SB-1498**

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 8:42:20 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lynette Cruz	Testifying for Malama Makua	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is a wonderful bill! Absolutely support!



**SB-1498**

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 8:47:47 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Leimomi Khan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Fully support.

Like potato and rice are to the United States and the Asian populations, Taro is a necessary staple food for Native Hawaiians and the local population. Land and water devoted to producing Taro have dwindled over the years, making Poi, a product of Taro, extremely expensive at an average of \$7 a lb at its lowest, vs the costs of potato and rice that are significantly lower.

Protecting and conserving state agricultural lands for Hawai'i's future food security is critical. Kalo cultivation and taro production should be a priority of this effort as is recognized by this bill.

In a 2009 report entitled "E Ola Hou Ke Kalo; Hoi Hou Ka Aina Leia" (The Taro Lives; Abundance Returns to the Land), the Taro Security and Purity Task Force found that viable wetland taro production were being destroyed, severed, and built upon by private and public development because of gaps in land use, historic preservation, and planning laws and policies.

This bill would improve protections for wetland taro lands (lo'i kalo) and ancient wetland agricultural structures on undeveloped state-owned or -acquired lands. Please support SB1498.

**SB-1498**

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 9:03:35 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kris Bordessa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge you to support SB1498, which will help perpetuate wetland taro-growing, a unique and highly productive method of staple food production.

**SB-1498**

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 9:33:13 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lelaine Lau	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha and to whom it may concern at the BLNR:

I strongly support any measures to support, preserve and and protect the growing of kalo, given its importance and significance to the Kanaka Maoli, our host culture, which is being genocided in real time. We owe them that much.

We urge you to please support SB1498, which will help perpetuating wetland taro-growing, a unique and highly productive method of food production developed by Hawaiian ancestors at a level found no where else on earth.

Respectfully,

Lelaine

Aloha Chairs and members of the Ways and Means Committee;

I am testifying as former member of the Taro Security and Purity Task Force, and long-time member of 'Onipa'a Nā Hui Kalo, a recognized statewide organization of taro growers, in support with recommendations for changes in SB1498 Relating to the Protection Taro.

The Taro Security and Purity Task Force made clear recommendations regarding the description and protection of taro lands in 2010 and 2015. SB1498 is based upon those recommendations. This bill is also meant to bring several statutes into alignment to address conflicting definitions and status. The purpose of this bill is to provide opportunity to revive taro lands. Not just to protect existing or commercial taro lands but also to engage our communities in the production of kalo for family subsistence and local food self-sufficiency; both of which play a significant role in community well-being but are rarely counted. Taro growing sites that are managed by nonprofits multiply the positive impacts of lo'i kalo by connecting youth and families to this practice and providing education, health and wellness opportunities.

As such, I have concerns over the proposed definitions and point out a catch-22 in those definitions, along with a need to update the status of HRS 165-2 and 226-7 based on the need for the immense and growing contributions of non-commercial agriculture as viable forms of farming and the closure of sugar.

I make the following recommendations:

1. The definition of farming under HRS165-2 directly affects the way in which the definition of taro lands under HRS171-1 has been defined in SB1498, and, hence, needs to be included in this bill and clarified in order to support and be inclusive to other than commercial taro farm rehabilitation on state lands. I strongly recommend the addition of the following changes to HRS165-2, as follows:

**§165-2 Definitions.** As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires:

"Farming operation" means a commercial, subsistence, or education-based agricultural, silvicultural, or aquacultural facility or pursuit conducted, in whole or in part, including the care and production of livestock and livestock products, poultry and poultry products, apiary products, and plant and animal production for nonfood uses; the planting, cultivating, harvesting, and processing of crops; and the farming or ranching of any plant or animal species in a controlled salt, brackish, or freshwater environment. "Farming operation" includes but shall not be limited to:

- (1) Agricultural-based commercial, subsistence, or education-based operations as described in section [205-2 (d) (15) ]

2. Removing the “high productivity” requirement in the definition of taro lands and under D) fourth class taro lands under HRS171-1. The productivity of taro lands is directly affected by their location and water flows; hence the requirement of “high productivity” presents a catch-22 to all taro lands protection as even commercial taro lands with limited water flows may exhibit low productivity, and certainly declines in quality. If the state is serious about improving our local food security and our ability to source healthy staple starches locally, we must protect taro lands beyond those with only “high productivity” designations.

SECTION 2. Section 171-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new definition to be appropriately inserted and to read as follows: "Taro lands" means any undeveloped public lands ~~of high productivity determination~~ situated in the land use conservation district established pursuant to chapter 205 in wetland taro cultivation before statehood, or any undeveloped public lands that were traditional taro lands situated in the land use conservation district established pursuant to chapter 205 that retain historic structural evidence of loi kalo, including auwai irrigation ditches, terraces, or walls."

(D) Fourth class—Taro land ~~of high productivity determination limited to lands~~ in the conservation district and having cultural, social, economic, and food self-sufficiency value if preserved for wetland taro cultivation. District boundary amendment of fourth class taro lands shall be prohibited. Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, public lands classified as fourth class taro lands pursuant to this section shall not be subject to a district boundary amendment.

3. Under SECTION 4. Section 205-4.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, item (8) and SECTION 5. Section 206-7 the proposed language presents a catch-22 as it states that only those taro sites currently in cultivation are protected when the aim of this bill is to protect those lands both in cultivation now *and those with the potential for cultivation in the future*. On all islands one of the

challenges to potential rehabilitation of old lo‘i kalo is due to the destruction of ‘auwai systems as they cross multiple property boundaries and jurisdictions, particularly on Maui; hence, the need to protect these features whether or not they are currently in use.

- (8) Retention, restoration, rehabilitation, or improvement of:
- (A) Buildings or sites of historic or scenic interest; and
  - (B) Walls, terraces, or supporting structure for loi taro fields in wetland taro cultivation before statehood ~~and currently in use for wetland taro cultivation;~~

And,

SECTION 5. Section 206–7, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsections (a) and (b) to read as follows:

"(a) In declaring development areas, and acquiring land therein, the board of land and natural resources shall avoid disturbing existing uses that are in accord with the highest use permitted under any existing zoning ordinance in the political subdivision concerned. The board shall not disturb existing ancient taro-growing systems, ancient wetland taro lands, or structural elements of ancient wetland taro-growing systems on undeveloped lands used for wetland taro cultivation before statehood ~~and currently in use for wetland taro cultivation.~~

4. SECTION 6 calls on the Department of Planning to support the viability of Hawaii’s sugar and pineapple industry. The sugar industry no longer exists and the pineapple industry is no longer the priority it once was in the state. This goal should be redacted.

SECTION 6. Section 226–7, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

"(a) Planning for the State's economy with regard to agriculture shall be directed towards achievement of the following objectives:

~~(1) Viability of Hawaii's sugar and pineapple industries[.];~~

~~(2) Growth and development of diversified agriculture throughout the State[-];~~

~~(3) An agriculture industry that continues to constitute a dynamic and essential component of Hawaii's strategic, economic, and social well-being[.]; and~~

~~(4) Growth and perpetuation of traditional Hawaiian crops."~~

5. The Taro Security and Purity Task Force and taro farmers have asked the state to conduct an inventory of taro lands within their portfolios for more than a decade in the hopes of access to affordable taro lands to grow food, as well as to increase their protection with no response. The word "may" allows DLNR to continue to ignore that request and push it to the bottom of the priority list. We understand the challenges the agency faces in regards to staffing and budgets, however, the time has come for this to be addressed, whether in-house, by contract, or through community collaboration.

SECTION 7. The land use commission ~~may~~ shall create an inventory of taro lands, pursuant to chapter 91, Hawaii Revised Statutes,

The above recommended changes make this a better bill, and brings both DOA and DLNR statutes into alignment in support of better protecting taro lands and taking steps to make such lands available to new taro growers. As a long time kalo farmer, my hope with the passing of SB1498 is that we create more opportunities to grow our ability to feed ourselves and support new generations of kalo growers long into the future by protecting taro lands now. Please support SB1498 with the recommended changes.

Mahalo for your support!  
Penny Levin, taro farmer  
Wailuku, Maui

**SB-1498**

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 9:45:49 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dale Evans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

As the editor of CTAHR's production manual, "Taro - Mauka to Makai," and the author of "CTAHR and Taro," I have an intimate connection with this traditional crop. Although I'm not a taro grower. I have great sympathy for all those whose labor in field and loi to produce it. Any farming is a struggle these days in Hawaii, and kalo is the crop most emblematic of our land and Hawaiian cultural tradition. This bill is a welcome step toward protecting kalo lands, and I urge you to pass it. Thank you.



**LATE**

**SB-1498**

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 11:59:25 AM  
Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mary Kok	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB1498

**LATE**

**SB-1498**

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 4:18:19 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jesse Kealiinohomoku	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz and the Senate Committe for Ways and Means,

Im writing in strong support for SB1498 to protect Taro Lands. First off, it is a shame that we have to request a hearing to have conversation about protecting taro lands. It is our kuamo‘o, our backbone of the Hawaiian culture. What are we, the people of Hawaii, without Taro, without Haloa? It is important that the state of Hawaii stop making the same mistake thats been made countless times over. Which is not supporting important players in the food system like taro farmers. Moreover, how can we achieve food system sustainability when we cannot support taro farmers? A highly nutritious crop that has grown very well here in the Hawaiian Islands for centuries.

Though there are countless reasons why we should protect taro lands, it is most important that we assure this culturally preferenced food, that is low calorie and highly nutritious, stays around for many generations to come. So that my keiki and their keiki will be able to touch, taste and feel what their ancestors practiced. By prohibiting the Board of Land and Natural Resources from disturbing or acquiring for development on taro-growing lands, It is our collective hope that is belived to add safety and protection to our beloved taro lands.

Thank you for your time,

Jesse Mikasobe-Kealiinohomoku

**LATE**

**SB-1498**

Submitted on: 2/27/2023 10:14:37 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kaipo Kekona	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill as it directly addresses the displacement of our native peoples and their crop systems. This will also help to the greater mission in the end of sustainability and food security crisis here in Hawaii

**LATE**

**SB-1498**

Submitted on: 2/28/2023 8:59:57 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/28/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Eva Elizabeth Eli	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the return of 'Āina and lo'i kalo in order to preserve the native Hawaiian farming practices & relationships of kanaka to our food source of life. We must return to our 'Āina to farm and feed our people for our physical, emotional, spiritual & psychological well-being. Hāloa, the kalo plant, is our kumu ola-source of Life. When our 'Āina thrives, our kalo thrives, our Health thrives and our way of Life for All who call Hawai'i can thrive. Please support the return of 'Āina kalo to our communities.

I ola kākou iā Hāloanakalaukapalili.

me ke aloha 'Āina,

Kapela Eli

Makua, Kumu, Mahi'ai, Aloha 'Āina, He Hawai'i