



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education and Technology
Friday, February 3, 2023 at 2:00 p.m.

By

Darren T. Lerner, PhD
Director, University of Hawai'i (UH) Sea Grant College Program,
School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology

And

Michael Bruno, Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 1268 – RELATING TO AQUACULTURE

Chair Perruso, Vice Chair Kapela, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program (Hawai'i Sea Grant) supports HB 1268 with the acceptance of the recommendation below and provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in the University's Board of Regents Approved Executive Biennium Budget.

Hawai'i Sea Grant strongly recommends changing the following language in HB 1268 pertaining to submission of the statewide strategic five-year plan to the legislature: "prior to the convening of the 2024 legislative session" to "prior to the convening of the 2025 legislative session" As it currently stands and based on funding processes and availability, Hawai'i Sea Grant would have approximately 4 months to implement and complete the strategic planning process before the 2024 legislative session, which is an inadequate time to effectively conduct the process and generate and meet expectations.

Hawai'i Sea Grant's mission is to provide integrated research, extension, and education activities that increase understanding and use of ocean and coastal resources of the Hawaiian and Pacific Islands and support the informed personal, policy, and management decisions that are integral to realizing this vision. Hawai'i Sea Grant is part of a national network of 34 university-based programs associated with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) that promote better understanding, conservation, and use of coastal resources.

In 2021, Hawai'i Sea Grant established and has been facilitating a Hawai'i Aquaculture Collaborative (HAC), which is an industry-led partnership whose aim is to facilitate collaborations between aquaculture industry leaders and aquaculture-relevant state, public, and non-profit agencies to strengthen and grow aquaculture in the state and thereby increase Hawai'i's economic resilience and food security.

The HAC has identified several priority areas to strengthen and grow aquaculture in Hawai'i that include increasing government support, supporting workforce development, promoting collaboration between the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture and aquaculture industry leaders, and supporting an effort to develop a five-year statewide strategic plan for the industry, among others.

Hawai'i Sea Grant supports the intent of HB 1268 to develop a five-year statewide strategic plan for aquaculture that is informed by industry leaders, stakeholders, and community and requests that adequate time is allowed for its development. Funding this measure will help the aquaculture industry and stakeholders to formalize and set clearly defined goals for aquaculture in the state along with developing a mission and vision that is aligned with the State of Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE, 2023**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:
H.B. NO. 1268, RELATING TO AQUACULTURE.

BEFORE THE:
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY

DATE: Friday, February 3, 2023 **TIME:** 2:00 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 309

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Candace J. Park, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Perruso and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

The purpose of this bill is to require the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College to: (1) contract with an independent consultant to develop a statewide strategic five-year plan for aquaculture, and (2) submit the plan to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2024.

Section 6 of article X of the Hawai'i State Constitution gives the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i "exclusive jurisdiction over the internal structure, management, and operation of the university." Section 6 further provides: "This section shall not limit the power of the legislature to enact laws of statewide concern. The legislature shall have the exclusive jurisdiction to identify laws of statewide concern." If the Committee decides to pass this bill, we recommend an amendment that adds a statement identifying this bill as a law of statewide concern.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.



Feb 1, 2023

Rep. Amy A. Peruso, Chair, and Rep Jeanne Kapela, Vice Chair
House Committee on Higher Education & Technology
Friday, February 3, 2023, 2:00 PM, Conference Room 309

Re: House Bill 1268 Relating to Aquaculture

Aloha Chair Peruso, Vice Chair Kapela, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Aquaculture and Aquaponics Association (HAAA) representing aquaculture industry members, researchers, and supporters Statewide strongly supports the intent of HB 1268, to conduct a SWOT analysis on the whole, diverse, statewide aquaculture industry and its place in the State economy, building on the DOA, ALSS Program's Strategic Plan. As such, the HAAA respectfully recommends the following change to Section 1, b, lines 6-9. (*Brackets are deleted language and underline is the new language*).

(b) The statewide strategic five-year plan for aquaculture shall:

(1) Conduct a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis [on the department of agriculture's Aquaculture Development Program Strategic Plan 2023- 2033] of the statewide aquaculture industry to determine current status and future potential, that will provide detailed guidance for further expansion; and

(2) Develop an industry values statement, goals, objectives, and an operational plan, including budgets and timelines.

In addition, the currently proposed 2024 deadline for report submission leaves only a few months for the proposed work to be accomplished. This is insufficient time for a comprehensive SWAT analysis of Hawaii's diverse aquaculture industry. We therefore respectfully recommend that this timeline be extended 12 months, to 2025.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of the intent of HB 1268 with recommended changes.

Sincerely,
Ronald P. Weidenbach
HAAA President



February 2, 2023

TO: Representative Amy Perruso, Chair; and Representative Jeanne Kapela, Vice Chair
House Committee on Higher Education & Technology
Friday, February 3, 2023, 2:00 p.m., via Videoconference

RE: SUPPORT FOR HOUSE BILL 1268 RELATING TO AQUACULTURE –
DEVELOP A 5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Aloha Chair Perruso, Vice Chair Kapela, and Members of the Committee,

Kulahaven Farms strongly supports HB1268: A 5-Year Strategic Plan for Aquaculture. Our company was formed specifically because of Hawaii's dire need for increased food security. I do not need to tell you how much food we import nor what a drain that is on our economy. But I would like to remind you that Hawai'i loves fish. And we have a long history of feeding our population through aquaculture.

Fish are the last wild populations to be commercially hunted at scale but this cannot and will not last. It is imperative that we accelerate development of new and improved methods of fish cultivation -not just for our own population but for that of the planet.

My personal experience has demonstrated just how difficult it is to develop and build new ventures of the sort that are so desperately needed. Aquaculture is a very efficient means of food production but aquaculture ventures require significant resources in order to succeed. Despite public consensus on the need for increased food production and the wide acceptance of seafood products here, the resources required to increase production remain woefully inadequate. Time is running out and change begins with political will. I implore you to vote yes on HB1268.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Dobovan', written over a light-colored rectangular background.

John Dobovan
President
Kulahaven Farms
PO Box 901301
Kula, HI 96790
(808) 955-0955
jd@kulahavenfarms.com



EcoPonicX, Inc.
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808-725-7168
www.ecoponicx.com

February 1, 2023

TO: Representative Amy Perruso, Chair; and Representative Jeanne Kapela, Vice Chair
House Committee on Higher Education & Technology
Friday, February 3, 2023, 2:00 p.m., via Videoconference

RE: SUPPORT HOUSE BILL 1268 RELATING TO AQUACULTURE – DEVELOP A 5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Aloha Chair Perruso, Vice Chair Kapela, and Members of the Committee,

EcoPonicX, Inc. strongly supports HB 1268: A 5-Year Strategic Plan for Aquaculture. According to the DBEDT study *Increased Food Security and Food Self-Sufficiency Strategy*, published in October 2012, shows Hawai'i has an 85-90% dependency on importation for various items and commodities: liquid natural gas, petroleum products, food items, etc. Another study *Hawaii's Food Consumption and Supply Sources: Benchmark Estimates and Measurement Issues* published in October 2013 reports importation of foreign sourced seafood at 48.7%, which means nearly half of all the ahi poke consumed in the state originated in foreign waters. We feel that developing an environmentally conservative aquaculture industry that practices traceability, transparency, and utilizes locally sourced resources should be of the highest importance to every citizen of our state. We don't need another pandemic to further illustrate supply chain impacts to product availability and price.

EcoPonicX, Inc. is a small startup by four passionate individuals that are actively developing processes and prototypes to: grow plant crops indoors in recirculating aquaponic systems, researching the creation of a fish feed locally utilizing Hawaii's food waste, and to commercially raise popular native and endemic species for direct consumption or value added products.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this measure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ame", written in a cursive style.

Scott "Ame" Arakaki
Co-Founder



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

January 3, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & TECHNOLOGY

TESTIMONY ON HB 1268
RELATING TO AQUACULTURE

Conference Room 309 & Videoconference
2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Perruso, Vice-Chair Kapela, 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 offers the following support relating to HB 1268, which would require the University of Hawai'i sea grant college program to contract with an independent consultant for the development of a statewide strategic five-year plan for aquaculture and appropriates funds for this.

The Legislature acknowledged the importance of Hawai'i's aquaculture industry by revitalizing the Aquaculture Development Program (ADP) through Act 63, SLH 2019, and in SLH 2022 provided funding for 4 positions for ADP. Supporting local aquacultural production can help the State move toward greater food sustainability and there is significant growth potential for the aquaculture industry in Hawai'i.

HFB strongly supports the goal of this measure and respectfully suggests that this body adopt the specific well-reasoned recommendations made by the Hawai'i Aquaculture and Aquaponics Association to assure that the goal will be met.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.

2029 Nuuanu Ave. #1510
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817
February 1, 2023

Representative Amy A. Perruso, Chair, and Representative Jeanne Kapela, Vice Chair
House Committee on Higher Education and Technology
State Capitol, 415 S. Beretania St.
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Perruso, Vice Chair Kapela, and Members of the Committee,

I strongly support HB 1268, "Relating to Aquaculture," which would allow the U.H. Sea Grant program to hire a consultant to develop a five-year strategic plan for aquaculture.

I have made my living in aquaculture and aquaponics in Hawai'i since the late 1970's. Since that time, aquaculture has grown into a major component of Hawaii's diversified agriculture, with sales of almost \$80 million in 2021 and with much room for further growth. The five-year plan proposed by HB 1268 is a current industry priority, and is needed to guide State policies and programs in order to encourage the orderly development of this valuable and extremely diverse industry.

I respectfully submit a couple of minor concerns with HB 1268. First, it is not clear why a SWOT analysis of the current Aquaculture Development Program strategic plan is necessary. This plan is an internal program plan, not an overall strategic plan for the industry. Second, the deadline for completion of the strategic plan is no later than 20 days before the opening of the 2024 legislative session. By the time the act takes effect in July 2023, the funds are released, and a consultant is hired, only a few months may remain for the consultant to interview the many industry participants and stakeholders, conduct the necessary planning, and prepare a detailed report. I therefore respectfully urge your Committee to support passage of HB 1268, but also to amend the deadline to allow a full year for completion of the strategic plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important legislation, and for your support of Hawai'i's growing aquaculture industry.

Sincerely,


Frederick M. Mencher

HB-1268

Submitted on: 2/2/2023 1:33:26 PM

Testimony for HET on 2/3/2023 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janet Ashman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure. Thank you.