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GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



**STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA**

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**DAWN N.S. CHANG**  
CHAIRPERSON  
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HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of  
DAWN N. S. CHANG  
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on  
WATER & LAND**

**Thursday, March 16, 2023  
10:00 AM**

**State Capitol, Conference Room 430 & Videoconference**

**In consideration of  
SENATE BILL 735, SENATE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO THE DISPOSITION OF WATER RIGHTS**

Senate Bill 735, Senate Draft 1 proposes to establish that the public auction requirements for the disposition of water rights shall not be required for a lease of water for commercial kalo cultivation. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure.**

The Department acknowledges that the water leasing process currently in statute imposes burdensome requirements on water lease applicants, especially smaller agricultural users including taro farmers. The Department supports amending Section 171-58, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to simplify the water leasing process, including providing certain exemptions from regulatory requirements for taro farmers.

Exempting water leases for commercial taro cultivation from public auction as proposed in this measure would reduce the uncertainty for applicants, while allowing oversight by the Board of Land and Natural Resources for the use of the water. Additionally, applicants seeking a water lease would still be required to fulfill other requirements of the water leasing process, including providing a reservation to the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands and collaborating with the Department to develop and implement a watershed management plan.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.



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Kauai

Aloha Chair Ichiyama, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the House Water & Land 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 SB735.**

This bill is of great benefit to the traditional agricultural communities of Hawaii and to their way of life. Kalo, or taro, has been a staple of Hawaiian diet and culture for centuries and its cultural significance cannot be understated. This bill would protect traditional and customary practices of Native Hawaiians related to the instream use of water for commercial kalo cultivation from the current process for the disposition of water rights. This would ensure a continued, prosperous future for Hawaiian agriculture and would provide for the protection and preservation of traditional practices.

For these reasons, the Hawaii Farmers Union United strongly supports SB735.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kaipo Kekona, President HFUU/HFUF

**SB-735-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/15/2023 3:32:24 PM

Testimony for WAL on 3/16/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dana Keawe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support

**SB-735-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/16/2023 9:58:12 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/16/2023 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
james pirtle	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I opose this bill. The legislature is not lawfully elected thus does not have the authority to enact laws and bills. All actions are treason against the United States of America.