

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEXTER KISHIDA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND

**FEBRUARY 13, 2024
10:30 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 430**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 2618 HD1
RELATING TO AQUACULTURE**

Chair Ichiyama, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2618 HD1. The bill requires the Department of Agriculture to conduct a feasibility study to identify potential sites in the State for an aquaculture park that promotes commercial aquaculture expansion; requires a report to the Legislature prior to the Regular Session of 2025; and makes an appropriation. The Department supports this bill.

Dedicated aquaculture parks would be a desirable tool in the State's strategy to grow the aquaculture industry. Successful tenants would help define industry potential and become aspirational examples to potential new operators. The siting of the park(s) must be carefully considered to provide the best chance for productivity and market access.

As such, the Department supports this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





HB 2618 HD1
RELATING TO AQUACULTURE
House Committee on Water and Land

February 13, 2024

10:30 am

Conference Room 430

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS HB2618 HD1** which would mandate that the Department of Agriculture (DOA) conduct a feasibility study to identify potential sites in the state for the establishment of an aquaculture park that promotes commercial aquaculture expansion. Native Hawaiians have a strong history and tradition with the development of aquaculture for commercial and subsistence practices. OHA would like to see these traditions and practices of aquaculture be supported as it is integral to the long-term success and viability of the industry in Hawai‘i.

For millennia, Native Hawaiians built and maintained a successful and thriving ecosystem of traditional loko i‘a (fishponds) across the Pae ‘Aina. These traditional aquacultural systems were so prevalent and widely adopted that loko i‘a are located on every island, with many still being maintained and producing food for traditional practitioners and the broader community to this day.

OHA is encouraged by this promising proposal. We trust that, if passed, the Department of Agriculture would work hand-in-hand with the many leaders who have successfully restored and returned to production fishponds on multiple islands. OHA stands ready to kōkua the Department in this important endeavor. We look forward to the potential an aquaculture park can have for the future of our waters, lands and people.

OHA **SUPPORTS HB2618 HD1** and urges this committee to advance this measure. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.

HB-2618-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2024 3:12:51 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/13/2024 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ronald Weidenbach	Hawaii Aquaculture and Aquaponics Association	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawai'i Aquaculture and Aquaponics Association (HAAA) strongly supports the intent of HB2618 HD1 to require the Department of Agriculture (DOA) to conduct a feasibility study to identify potential sites in the State for an aquaculture park that promotes commercial aquaculture expansion. Given the high demonstrated success of the many aquaculture operations operating at NELHA in Kailua-Kona, which is now filled or nearly filled to capacity, a second similar facility focused entirely on aquaculture, either freshwater and/or marine, would help support the continued expansion of the Hawai'i aquaculture sector.

However, given that the DOA does not currently have the in-house expertise to conduct a comprehensive feasibility study comparable to what was undertaken to identify and select the successful NELHA site, the DOA should be authorized to contract a technically competent aquaculture authority to conduct this study, in order for it to be sufficiently comprehensive and technically sound to identify one or more locations for a second aquaculture park with a high probability of similar success as demonstrated at NELHA.

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



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

February 13, 2024

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND

TESTIMONY ON HB 2618, HD1
RELATING TO AQUACULTURE

Conference Room 430 & Videoconference
10:30 AM

Aloha Chair Ichiyama, Vice-Chair Poepoe, 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 supports HB 2618, HD1, which requires the Department of Agriculture to conduct a feasibility study to identify potential sites in the State for an aquaculture park that promotes commercial aquaculture expansion and requires a report to the Legislature prior to the Regular Session of 2025.

Hawai'i's aquaculture industry farm gate value is \$80,000,000, the second-highest contribution to the economy in diversified agriculture. Hawai'i's favorable climate and geography allow for inherent advantages benefitting aquaculture production.

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.

However, more investment and research into the aquaculture industry is needed, including investment and research into different types of aquaculture, aquaculture system optimization, and economic implications of various methods of aquaculture production. A Hawai'i Aquaculture Park could facilitate this and the growth of our Aquaculture sector.

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

HB-2618-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2024 12:12:37 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/13/2024 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacqueline S. Ambrose	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, RELATING TO AQUACULTURE.

Requires the Department of Agriculture to conduct a feasibility study to identify potential sites in the State for an aquaculture park that promotes commercial aquaculture expansion. Requires a report to the Legislature prior to the Regular Session of 2025. Makes an appropriation