

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

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**FEBRUARY 7, 2024
1:00 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 224**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2814
RELATING TO WATER INFRASTRUCTURE**

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2814. This bill Directs the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Agribusiness Development Corporation and the counties, to conduct a water infrastructure study for the State of Hawai'i. Appropriates money and declares that the appropriation exceeds the state general fund expenditure ceiling for 2024-2025. The Department offers comments and concerns.

This measure is a significant, large request. Due to its complexity, the identified appropriation of \$200,000, as well as the short delivery time, will be extraordinarily difficult, if not impossible, to meet. We anticipate a starting consultant fee of at least \$3,000,000 and a minimum time for performance of twenty-four months beginning at the receipt of the allotment. Additionally, private entities, which make up the bulk of the unknown inventory, are not mandated to work with us, nor do we have the authority to compel them to do so. Legal challenges to compel information could take years. Also, there is no law we are aware of that restricts the use of private owners to adhere to any plans they share. Finally, once the infrastructure and improvements are identified, is it the intent of this measure to provide annual funding to address private improvements, or is it the intent to condemn all lands of interest? Proper maintenance alone could easily

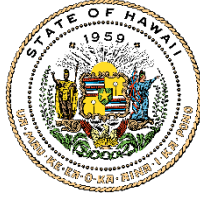


run into the millions of dollars per year, which would not include capital improvement costs in potentially the nine-figure range.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



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

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DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
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RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY

DEAN D. UYENO
ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
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FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

Testimony of
DAWN N. S. CHANG
Chairperson

Before the Senate Committee on
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Wednesday, February 7, 2024
1:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 2814
RELATING TO WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Senate Bill 2814 directs the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Agribusiness Development Corporation and the counties, to conduct a water infrastructure study for the State of Hawai'i and appropriates funds for this study. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) offers comments on this measure.**

The Department notes that §174C-31(e), Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS), directs the Department of Agriculture to prepare a State Agricultural Water Use and Development Plan (AWUDP) which shall include but not be limited to a master inventory plan that includes the following elements:

- (1) Inventory public and private irrigation water systems;
- (2) Identify the extent of rehabilitation needed for each system;
- (3) Identify source of water used by agricultural operations and particularly those on lands identified and designated as important agricultural lands under part III of chapter 205, HRS;
- (4) Identify current and future water needs for agricultural operations and particularly those on lands identified and designated as important agricultural lands under part III of chapter 205, HRS;
- (5) Subsidize the cost of repair and maintenance of the systems;
- (6) Establish criteria to prioritize the rehabilitation of the systems;
- (7) Develop a five-year program to repair the systems; and
- (8) Set up a long-range plan to manage the systems.

These elements of the AWUDP would fulfill the objectives of the agricultural water infrastructure study for the State of Hawai‘i described in this bill, except for the requirement to develop a tracking system to report future infrastructure needs. The Department of Agriculture completed its revised AWUDP in 2021. The Commission on Water Resource Management (Commission) has not adopted or approved this version of the AWUDP and has been working with the Department of Agriculture to bring the AWUDP before the Commission for adoption.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



WENDY L. GADY
Executive Director

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AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
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**TESTIMONY OF WENDY L. GADY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND
ENVIRONMENT**

Wednesday, February 7, 2024
1:00 p.m.
Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

**SENATE BILL NO. 2814
RELATING TO WATER INFRASTRUCTURE**

Chairperson Gabbard. Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill No. 2814, which directs the Department of Agriculture (HDOA), in collaboration with the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) and the counties, to conduct a water infrastructure study for the State of Hawaii.

ADC supports the Legislature's intent to inventory and assess the current condition of the state's water infrastructure. Water is an essential input for agricultural production and the infrastructure necessary to manage water resources and provide water services plays an important role in food security.

We support this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in our Executive Budget. Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.



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February 7, 2024

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

TESTIMONY ON SB 2814
RELATING TO WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
1:00 PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice-Chair Richards, 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 SB 2814, which directs the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Agribusiness Development Corporation and the counties, to conduct a water infrastructure study for the State of Hawai'i.

Land cannot support agriculture without adequate, economical water resources. Water is a basic necessity for farmers and ranchers to maintain and expand their production. The reliability of water is essential for our farmers and ranchers to grow crops and raise livestock efficiently.

There is a need for an efficient and equitable state policy for agricultural water. The profitability of existing enterprises as well as future expansion and success of the agricultural industry rely on adequate sources of water suitable for irrigation and the allocation of that water at reasonable rates. Water development programs within the state must be planned with due consideration for actual and potential agricultural development. Similarly, water regulations in the state should support existing and potential agricultural development. There should be a balance between environmental interests and economic benefits.

Data is needed to help develop new sources and distribution systems and to maintain the existing systems. Water maintenance and development have high capital costs and risks. Joint private-public development of water sources to serve agricultural production on adjacent and/or contiguous state and privately owned lands suited for agriculture should be encouraged.

The Legislature continues to advocate for increased self-sufficiency and sustainability. Agriculture must play a key role in the process and for there to be agriculture, water is essential.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

Cynthia K.L. Rezendes

rezentesc@aol.com

February 7, 2024

Committee on Agriculture and Environment
February 7, 2024, 1:00 p.m.

SUBJECT: SB 2814 – RELATING TO WATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Aloha Chairs Gabbard members of the committees,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and comments on this proposed bill. I am submitting COMMENTS to share how difficult this job will be to accomplish in one year and for the miniscule amount of funds being requested.

In 1999-2001 a very new group of individuals who formed a group called Mohala I Ka Wai (MIKW) wished to work with the Honolulu Board of Water Supply (HBWS) to understand all the water sources in the Wai`anae District on the island of O`ahu. As this was prior to the Twin Tower attack on September 11, 2001, I approached the Committee on Water Research Management (CWRM) to find out what water sources they had on record, whether they were still being used or not and how much water was involved.

I did receive from them a spreadsheet and maps which showed that, at the time, the Wai`anae District had somewhere around 230 wells identified in their files. As some of the lands had been sold to others, MIKW worked with the HBWS to send out a survey to all landowners who were supposed to have well(s) on their property and what the current disposition of those well(s) might be, i.e. in use, not in use, closed “properly” per regulations, etc.

Of the letters sent for this survey, there was an approximate 25% response rate (as best as I can recall), and of those only around 10% knew of the existence of a well on their property while the rest did not even know there was supposed to be a well on their property as recorded by CWRM.

Given this experience and with CWRM having an actual listing of supposed known wells in the State, I would request that instead of the DOA/ADC be given this task that CWRM, as part of their responsibility might be a better organization to initiate a study. Also, given the time involved for MIKW and HBWS to attempt to find out wells being used at the time for just one District, I believe the \$200,000 is not an adequate amount to do a complete study unless it will just be a paper study to determine what records are available.

This is a very important base for everyone to understand where water is being drawn from, how much and the quality of water being drawn for various purposes, i.e. potable, irrigation, etc.

I believe this is a worthwhile use of State funding but would request that modifications to the bill be made to enhance the efforts to provide everyone a better understanding of water uses in the State.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia K.L. Rezendes
Wai`anae Coast Resident