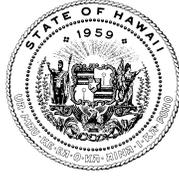


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
STATE OF HAWAII
*Ke Kia'āina o ka Moku'āina 'o
Hawaii*

SYLVIA J. LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR
STATE OF HAWAII
*Ka Hope Kia'āina o ka Moku'āina
'o Hawaii*



KALI WATSON
CHAIRPERSON, HHC
Ka Luna Ho'okele

KATIE L. LAMBERT
DEPUTY TO THE CHAIR
Ka Hope Luna Ho'okele

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS
Ka 'Oihana 'Āina Ho'opulapula Hawaii'i

P. O. BOX 1879
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96805

TESTIMONY OF KALI WATSON, CHAIR
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON WATER AND LAND
AND AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
HEARING ON FEBRUARY 12, 2025 AT 1:05PM IN CR 229

SB 1085, RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

February 11, 2025

Aloha Chairs Inouye and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Elefante and Richards, and Members of the Committees:

The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) **supports with amendment** this bill which appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture for the preparation of an environmental impact statement to drill non-potable water wells on individual parcels at Panaewa agricultural park and Panaewa farm lots.

DHHL appreciates the intent of this bill. However, Pana'ewa farm lots are not defined in this bill. If the bill's referenced Pana'ewa farm lots consists of parcels or property under the jurisdiction of DHHL, we respectfully request that it be acknowledged and noted that the Hawaiian Homes Commission (HHC), as codified in the Hawaii State Constitution, has exclusive land use and zoning authority for Hawaiian Home Lands. Additionally, lessee beneficiaries with existing cesspools may pose a threat to any well within proximity due to possible contamination to the aquifer.

DHHL recommends inserting a new Section to SB1085 with language that reads "The department of agriculture shall consult and coordinate with the department of Hawaiian home lands on the location and distribution of water from the non-potable water wells prior to and after the completion of the environmental impact statement to drill non-potable water wells on individual parcels at Panaewa agricultural park and Panaewa farm lots."

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA
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 SENATE COMMITTEES ON WATER AND LAND AND
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2025
1:05 P.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 229**

**SENATE BILL NO. 1085
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

Chairs Inouye and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Elefante and Richards and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 1085. This bill appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture ("Department") for the preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the drilling of non-potable water wells on individual parcels at Pana'ewa agricultural park and Pana'ewa farm lots. The Department supports the intent of the bill and respectfully offers comments.

The Department supports providing resources for farmers and ranchers to expand production. Access to irrigation water is a critical resource for agriculture to expand.

The Department comments that lease rent is based on unimproved vacant land (lowest possible) and therefore all individual, on property, infrastructure improvements are the responsibility of the lessee. Article VII Section 4 of the Hawaii State Constitution states that "No tax shall be levied or appropriation of public money or property made, nor shall the public credit be used, directly or indirectly, except for a public purpose."



The Department respectfully requests the bill include the public benefit of the preparation of the EIS in consideration of the Article VII Section 4 of the Hawaii State Constitution.

Alternatively, the Department respectfully suggests that grant funding be explored should the legislature desire to assist individuals. Further, we note that this agricultural park is served by the County of Hawai'i's Department of Water Supply, who gives a substantial discount for agricultural use.

Lastly, if the bill's referenced Pana'ewa farm lots consists of parcels or property under the jurisdiction of the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands ("DHHL"), the Department respectfully defers to DHHL as it may operate under different sets of guidelines and statutes.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on 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 12, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

TESTIMONY ON SB 1085
RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Conference Room 229 & Videoconference
1:05 PM

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Inouye, Vice-Chairs Richards and Elefante, and Members of the Committees:

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 1085, which appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture for the preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) to drill non-potable water wells on individual parcels at Panaewa Agricultural Park and Panaewa Farm Lots. This initiative is a crucial step in improving water security for agriculture in this region while alleviating pressure on potable county water supplies.

Access to affordable and reliable irrigation water is essential for agricultural viability. At the Panaewa Agricultural Park and Panaewa Farm Lots, many farmers struggle with the high cost and limited availability of irrigation water, limiting their ability to expand production. Developing non-potable water wells would free up potable county water for residential use while providing a more cost-effective and sustainable water source for agricultural operations.

According to data from the U.S. Census of Agriculture and the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture, agricultural production in Hawai'i has been declining, with water access cited as a key limiting factor. Floriculture, diversified crops, and livestock operations all require consistent irrigation to maintain and expand production. Without a dedicated water source, agriculture will continue to struggle.

The Panaewa farmers have expressed willingness to participate in a cost-share arrangement for the development and maintenance of these wells, further strengthening the case for this investment. Their commitment demonstrates a public-private approach that ensures long-term sustainability of the infrastructure once developed.

We respectfully request an amendment to clarify that this is a pilot program limited to Panaewa Agricultural Park and Panaewa Farm Lots. A focused pilot program would allow for a cost-effective, site-specific approach to evaluating the feasibility of non-potable water wells without committing to a larger, more expensive initiative.

We urge the committee to pass SB 1365 with amendments to establish this as a pilot program specifically for Panaewa Agricultural Park and Panaewa Farm Lots, ensuring a practical, data-driven approach that can inform future agricultural water access initiatives.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure

SB-1085

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 7:58:44 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/12/2025 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Warren Watanabe	Testifying for Maui County Farm Bureau	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Maui County Farm Bureau strongly supports SB1085, Relating to the Department of Agriculture. Mahalo.



**THE SENATE
KA 'AHA KENEKOA**

**THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2025**

**COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair**

**COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair**

**Wednesday, February 12, 2025 1:05 PM
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street**

**RE: SB 1085 – RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE.**

My name is Eric S. Tanouye and I am the President for the Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association. HFNA is a statewide umbrella organization with approximately 350 members. Our membership is made up with breeders, hybridizers, propagators, growers, shippers, wholesalers, retailers, educators, and the allied industry, which supports our efforts in agriculture.

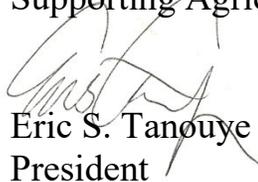
The Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association (HFNA) **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 1158**

We support the funding of an environmental impact statement looking into non-potable water wells on individual parcels for the Panaewa agricultural park and Panaewa farms lots. It is important as farmers that we have access to water for the growing of our products and places less of a burden on community water lines to have a separate source available.



If you have any questions at this time, I would be happy to discuss them and can be reached by phone at 808-959-3535 ext 22, cell 960-1433 and email eric@greenpointnursery.com.

Supporting Agriculture and Hawaii,



Eric S. Tanouye
President

Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association

SB-1085

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 8:03:00 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/12/2025 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole Galase	Testifying for Hawaii Cattlemen's Council	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council supports the appropriating funds to DOA in preparation for drilling water wells



February 10, 2025

To: Chair Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair Tim Richards, Chair Lorraine Inouye, Vice Brandon Elefante Kusch, and the members of the Senate committees.

Subject: SB 1085, Relating to the Department of Agriculture

Aloha,

I am submitting testimony in **support** of SB 1085, which appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for drilling non-potable water wells on individual parcels at Panaewa Agricultural Park and Panaewa Farm Lots.

The proposed funding in SB1085 is a critical step toward supporting Hawai'i's farmers by ensuring water resources are accessible for agricultural use. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the urgency of increasing Hawai'i's self-sufficiency in food production. With improved access to non-potable water wells, farmers in Panaewa will be better equipped to cultivate their crops, contributing to Hawai'i's food security goals while reducing reliance on imports. Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) are essential for responsible development, but their costs often create barriers for farmers. SB1085 ensures this burden does not fall on individual farmers, allowing them to focus on expanding operations and productivity. Water is the lifeblood of agriculture, and this bill will enable farmers leasing agricultural land from the Department of Agriculture to overcome irrigation challenges through funding for a comprehensive EIS.

An EIS ensures water well development minimizes environmental risks while maximizing agricultural benefits. By passing SB1085, the Legislature will empower Hawai'i's farmers, advance local food production, and promote sustainable agricultural development. I respectfully urge the committees to support this measure.

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 2025, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students and young professionals working in the food 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.



**HAWAI'I
FOOD+
POLICY**

Honolulu, HI 96813
food@purplemaia.org

Mahalo for your time and consideration of this measure and for your ongoing support of Hawai'i's agricultural community.

Mahalo,
Lea iaea & the Food+ Policy Team
#fixourfoodsystem

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 2025, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students and young professionals working in the food 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.

SB-1085

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 3:38:24 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/12/2025 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Randy Cabral	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support

SB-1085

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 7:25:52 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/12/2025 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John R. Gordines	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Water for farms and ranches is a must to continue to feed our people!

SB-1085

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 10:21:53 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/12/2025 1:05:00 PM

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

Comments:

Please pass this measure that will be the first step in helping farmers at the Panaewa Ag Park and Farm Lots move toward more reliable and affordable irrigation water; necessary for their continued productivity.

This pilot project will also allow the county to retain more of its potable water for residential use when the farmers are able to access the non-potable irrigation water.

Thank you.