

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

SHAN S. TSUTSUI
Lt. Governor



State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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SCOTT E. ENRIGHT
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF SCOTT E. ENRIGHT
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS**

February 12, 2015
8:30 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 312

**HOUSE BILL NO. 503
RELATING DROUGHT MITIGATION**

Chairpersons Tsuji and Kawakami and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 503. The purpose of this bill is to appropriate funds for drought mitigation projects in each of the counties. The department supports the intent of this bill provided it does not impact the initiatives set forth in our executive biennium budget.

The effects of drought on agriculture can be devastating. With the possibility of drought lasting for years, crop yields can fall dramatically and farms can close. In 2004, the Commission on Water Resource Management assisted in the creation of drought committees in each county. The committees then came up with prioritized, potential projects, including reservoir construction, to implement in order to mitigate the effects of drought. This request represents recognition of the importance and need for these projects.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of
CARTY S. CHANG
Interim Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on
AGRICULTURE**

**Thursday, February 12, 2015
8:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 312**

**In Consideration of
HOUSE BILL 503
RELATING TO DROUGHT MITIGATION**

House Bill 503 proposes to provide \$4,000,000 of general revenues for drought mitigation measures and projects in each county of the State for Fiscal Year 2016-2017. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) appreciates the intent of this measure, however is not able to support it at this time because funding for these projects would negatively impact the Executive Biennium Budget request.**

The Department recognizes the need to mitigate the effects of drought and this need is acknowledged in the Hawaii Drought Plan. Droughts have severely affected Hawaii in the past, and as part of a natural climate cycle, droughts will impact the State in the future. In addition to agriculture and livestock industries, drought-induced impacts will also affect other sectors of the community, such as water supply, business, the environment, and public health and safety.

The Department concurs with the importance of drought planning and the effective implementation of mitigation measures and strategies. The Hawaii Drought Plan and the County Drought Mitigation Strategies identify and recommend implementation of drought mitigation actions, subject to available funding. These Drought Mitigation Strategies were developed in consultation with key stakeholders who participated as members of the respective local County Drought Committees to identify and prioritize projects to help reduce the impacts of drought in their communities.

CARTY S. CHANG
INTERIM CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

DANIEL S. QUINN
INTERIM FIRST DEPUTY

W. ROY HARDY
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
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
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KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
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February 12, 2015

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

TESTIMONY ON HB 503
RELATING TO DROUGHT MITIGATION

Room 312
8:30 AM

Aloha Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Onishi and Members of the Committee:

I am Christopher Manfredi, President of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,932 farm family members statewide, and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

Various areas of Hawaii, especially agricultural sectors have been severely impacted by drought over consecutive years. As we enter 2015, 100% of the State is already in an "abnormally dry" or "moderate drought" state as reported by the U.S. Drought Monitor. (Attached at end of document)

As Hawaii seeks to increase its level of self-sufficiency, droughts provide one of our most significant threats. Farmers are pragmatic and adjust plantings based on historical weather trends and outlooks. The likelihood of drought and reduced access to water mean less acres planted. Planting without assurance of harvest does not make business sense. Those with perennial crops such as orchards face losses if water is not available at critical times such as during fruiting. Without adequate water, trees pull water to ensure survival, resulting in poor fruit formation. Droughts force ranchers to reduce herd size, in extreme cases, breeding stock, negatively impacting future years.

Hawaii has faced multiyear droughts and long term forecasts predict droughts separated by extreme rainfall events. These rainfall events, unlike the typical trade showers are short-lived and without preparatory measures to capture the water, can cause damage and runoff into the ocean. These storm events are not conducive to infiltration to the watershed, thereby restoring springs or groundwater supplies, rather are more likely to cause erosion and property damage.



In 2007 a similar drought mitigation measure was passed, providing Counties resources to implement drought mitigation measures. A good example of the use of funds is the improvement of the Kula Ag Park reservoir by the County of Maui.

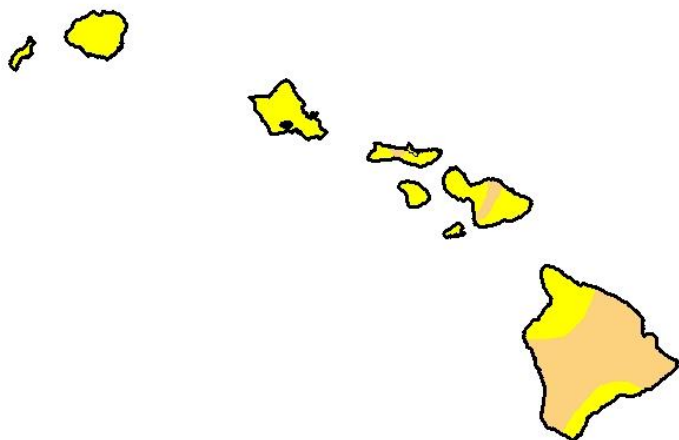
Funds were used for relining a reservoir; coupled with investments by the County to improve pumping reliability, the measure has reduced water losses critical during drought periods and made more water available to Ag park farmers. Additionally, a portion of the money was also utilized to develop a stormwater capture plan. The resultant report provides the basis for engineering design as funding becomes available. These projects need to continue.

Droughts are often forgotten as rainfall periods occur. Yet, preparation is needed ahead of droughts – after the start of a drought, it is too late. A Drought Council was created within the Water Commission to address priorities for the various Counties. An update of these projects is needed coupled with funding to better prepare agriculture for inevitable future droughts.

We appreciate the committee’s steadfast support of agriculture and respectfully request your strong support of this measure.

Please contact Warren Watanabe at 281-9718 should you have any questions.

U.S. Drought Monitor Hawaii



February 3, 2015
(Released Thursday, Feb. 5, 2015)
Valid 7 a.m. EST

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	46.63	0.00	0.00	0.00
Last Week <i>1/27/2015</i>	0.00	100.00	46.63	0.00	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago <i>11/4/2014</i>	92.67	7.33	2.72	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year <i>12/31/2014</i>	67.97	32.03	2.76	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year <i>9/30/2014</i>	0.00	100.00	2.68	0.00	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago <i>2/4/2014</i>	41.24	58.76	22.20	2.91	0.42	0.00

Intensity:

- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

Author:
Brian Fuchs
National Drought Mitigation Center



<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2015 12:26 PM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: gottlieb@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB503 on Feb 12, 2015 08:30AM

HB503

Submitted on: 2/10/2015

Testimony for AGR on Feb 12, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alan Gottlieb	Hawaii Cattlemen's Council	Support	No

Comments: Changing weather conditions make water one of the most important risks facing farmers and ranchers. As Hawaii moves towards increased self sufficiency and sustainability, efforts must be taken to reduce risks borne by farms and ranches. When borne alone, farm and ranch viability is reduced to points in which farmers and ranchers must make the hard decision of whether their enterprise can support their families or survive as a business. Having sound drought mitigation plans are essential if we are going to survive. We cannot have these plans and infrastructure in place without adequate funding. Please fund this bill.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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February 10, 2015

Representative Clift Tsuji, Chair
Representative Richard H.K. Onishi, Vice-Chair
House Committee on Agriculture

Representative Derek S.K. Kawakami, Chair
Representative Sam Satoru Kong, Vice Chair
House Committee on Economic Development & Business

Testimony in Support of HB 503 Relating to Drought Mitigation (Appropriates \$4,000,000 for County Drought Mitigation Projects and Measures).

Thursday, February 12, 2015, 8:30 a.m., in Conference Room 312

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF) is a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers and a utility company. LURF's mission is to advocate for reasonable, rational and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural and cultural resources, and public health and safety.

LURF appreciates the opportunity to express its **support of HB 503**, and of the various agricultural stakeholder groups who defend the goals of viable agricultural operations and the conservation and protection of agriculture, including important agricultural lands (IAL) in Hawaii. The bill confirms the need for collaboration amongst diverse sectors of the community - business, government, and agricultural stakeholders - and the importance for them to work together cooperatively to improve the economic viability of the State's agricultural industry.

HB 503. This bill proposes to appropriate out of the State's general revenues, \$4,000,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2016-2017 for drought mitigation projects and measures in each county of the State.

LURF's Position. The purpose of this bill is to implement drought mitigation measures and strategies developed by each of the four counties and laid out in the Hawaii drought plan. The goal of the plan is to develop coordinated emergency response mechanisms and outline steps toward reducing the effects of future

drought occurrences which continue to adversely affect farms and ranches in the State, hindering the ability to produce quality products consistently throughout the year. Agricultural lands require a constant supply of water to support and maintain productivity. In order to ensure that local agricultural producers may continue to rely on a dependable supply of water for crops, as well as research and development operations, sufficient funding is necessary to mitigate the impact of droughts.

Local farmers and ranchers who rely on secure water supplies to service their agricultural lands, consider such drought mitigation projects and strategies critical to conduct their agricultural operations and to sustain their businesses. These agricultural stakeholders believe measures such as HB 503 will greatly assist by providing funding necessary to implement improvements for the long-term betterment of the State's agricultural industry, and are relying on legislation such as this to help them work toward the expansion of diversified agriculture and promote the agricultural self-sufficiency of the State.

For the above reasons, LURF **supports HB 503**, and respectfully urges your favorable consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in support of this matter.

onishi3 - Timothy

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2015 8:23 PM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: warrenmcfb@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB503 on Feb 12, 2015 08:30AM*

HB503

Submitted on: 2/10/2015

Testimony for AGR on Feb 12, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Warren Watanabe	Maui County Farm Bureau	Support	No

Comments:

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2015 7:43 AM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: djc@akinaka.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB503 on Feb 12, 2015 08:30AM

HB503

Submitted on: 2/10/2015

Testimony for AGR on Feb 12, 2015 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ken Kawahara	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I support this measure related to drought mitigation. As a former Deputy Director for the Commission on Water Resource Management, I have first-hand witnessed drought impacts and how they severely affected Hawaii's agriculture and livestock industries as well as other sectors of the community like water supplies, business, the environment and public health and safety. During my tenure, we were able to work with key stake holders and successfully implement drought strategies. One of the challenges was to distribute the drought mitigation funding that was appropriated to CWRM. I suggest should the legislature fund this important measure, the monies be appropriated directly to the four counties of the state where they could identify and prioritize specific projects within their communities. Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.

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February 11, 2015

LATE

TO: The Honorable Clift Tsuji, Chair
House Committee on Agriculture

The Honorable Derek S.K. Kawakami, Chair
House Committee on Economic Development & Business

F R O M: Gladys C. Baisa *GCB*
Councilmember

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF FEBRUARY 12, 2015; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT
OF HB 503, RELATING TO DROUGHT MITIGATION**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. The purpose of this bill is to appropriate \$4,000,000 for county drought mitigation projects and measures.

I support this measure for the following reasons:

1. A viable agriculture industry requires a steady and reliable supply of water. Drought conditions continue to adversely affect farms and ranches in the State, hampering their ability to produce quality products on a consistent basis.
2. The Hawaii drought plan provides clear policies and specifies response entities to implement immediate, short-term, and long-term response measures to mitigate the impact of droughts.
3. County drought committees were formed for each of the four counties in Hawaii. Each county drought committee developed a drought mitigation strategy for its respective county, with a focus on drought mitigation projects. These strategies represent the local needs and concerns.
4. Sufficient funding to the counties is necessary to address the many challenges that our agriculture industry faces in preparing for droughts.

For the foregoing reasons, I **support** this measure.

Attachment