

SR91

**REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE AND DEPARTMENT
OF LAND AND NATURAL
RESOURCES TO DEVELOP A PLAN
TO PURCHASE THE KOHALA DITCH
SYSTEM IN THE DISTRICT OF
NORTH KOHALA ON THE ISLAND
OF HAWAII.**

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



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

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

**Before the Senate Committees on
AGRICULTURE
and
WATER AND LAND**

**Tuesday, March 31, 2015
2:50 PM
State Capitol, Room 414**

**In consideration of
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 148/SENATE RESOLUTION 91
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND DEPARTMENT OF
LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO DEVELOP A PLAN TO PURCHASE THE
KOHALA DITCH SYSTEM IN THE DISTRICT OF NORTH KOHALA ON THE ISLAND
OF HAWAII**

Senate Concurrent Resolution 148/Senate Resolution 91 requests the Department of Agriculture (“DOA”) and the Department of Land and Natural Resources (“Department”) to develop a plan to purchase the Kohala Ditch System in North Kohala, Hawaii and develop the optimal management plan for the ditch. The resolution further directs DOA to determine the estimated cost of purchasing Kohala Ditch and report its findings to the Legislature prior to the convening the Regular Session of 2016. **The Department offers the following comments.**

The State may already own the portion of the Kohala Ditch that passes through the forest reserve in the Pololu Valley area (Tax Map Keys: (3) 5-1-001:005 and 019). However, ditch maintenance has always been the responsibility of the sugar cane concerns who built the system and their successors in interest. The Department’s mission does not include the maintenance of agricultural irrigation systems, nor does the Department have the resources to assume such maintenance obligations.

The Department notes that DOA assumed management of the Hamakua Ditch System (also located on Hawaii Island) some years ago. In the event that DOA and the Legislature determine that acquiring the privately owned portions of Kohala Ditch is feasible and desirable, the Department is available to assist with the due diligence required for the land acquisition. Finally, the Department notes that the mission of the Agribusiness Development Corporation (“ADC”) does extend to the

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CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

acquisition and management of agricultural irrigation systems,¹ and ADC has the authority to acquire title to real property. Accordingly, DOA and/or ADC may be able to conduct the necessary acquisitions themselves.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

¹ See ADC's website at: <http://hdoa.hawaii.gov/chairpersons-office/agribusiness-development-corporation/>

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND
THE TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2015

March 30, 2015

Testimony in Support of Senate Resolution 91

Chair Ruderman and Committee Members:

Chair Thielen and Committee Members:

We are pleased to see members of the Hawaii Legislature take an active interest in the future of the Kohala Ditch. Constructed over a hundred years ago to support the needs of the sugar industry in North Kohala, this important irrigation system continues to provide a critical supply of water to farmers, ranchers, growers, and other businesses. Indeed, the introduction of Senate Concurrent Resolution 148 could not be timelier as a focus on Ditch maintenance and related infrastructure improvement projects are relevant issues. These, including the sustainability of agriculture in North Kohala, are important matters for open discussion.

As a non-profit organization, the Kohala Ditch Foundation was created for the purpose of assuming the management of ditch irrigation operations to benefit agriculture in North Kohala. The Foundation remains open to any and all planning initiatives by either government or non-government organizations that affect the current and future operations of the Kohala Ditch.

Additional information on the Kohala Ditch Foundation may be found at www.kdfhawaii.org.

Robert Lindsey, President, Kohala Ditch Foundation

Ed Teixeira, Vice President

Cheri Gallo, Secretary/Treasurer

Scott May

Ed Boteilho

Guido Giacometti

David Fuertes

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SR91

Submitted on: 3/30/2015

Testimony for AGL/WTL on Mar 31, 2015 14:50PM in Conference Room 414

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
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SR91

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Kama Hopkins	Individual	Support	No

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SR91

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Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Robert K. Lindsey, Jr.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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