



Kalepa Koalition

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Phone/Fax: 808-639-0152

March 1, 2016

TO: Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair

**RE: Testimony on SB 2217 Relating to Agriculture
March 1, 2016, Conference Room 211**

Chairperson Tokuda and Members of Committees:

My name is Les Milnes and I support HB1345. I am the president of the Kalepa Koalition, an Hawaii agricultural cooperative of the farmers and ranchers who hold long-term licenses on 6,500 acres of State land behind Kalepa Ridge on Kauai and under the administration of ADC.

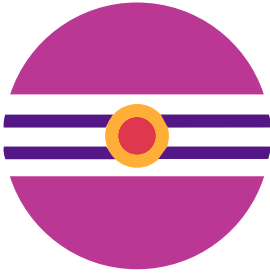
The East Kauai Water Cooperative System services a large portion of the Kalepa lands; most of the farmers, ranches and the huge Green Energy Team biomass project on a 1,000 acres utilize the system through Hanamaulu Ditch or off the Upper and Lower Aahoaka Reservoirs.

Last year, ADC received funding for the renovation of the Upper and Lower Aahoaka reservoirs, and this work should begin in 2016. The passage of bill SB2217 will assure multiple parcel holders, including the island's largest banana farmer, with a reliable source of water year round.

I respectfully request that this bill be passed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Les Milnes".

Leslie P. Milnes, President
Kalepa Koalition



Saiva Siddhanta Church

Kauai's Hindu Monastery
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Phone: (808) 822-3012

March 1, 2016

Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair

Testimony on SB 2217 Relating to Agriculture March 1, 2016, Conference Room 211

Chairperson Tokuda and Members of Committees:

We are writing today in favor of SB2217. We are a founder member of the East Kauai Water Users' Cooperative Board of Directors and understand the vital importance of these ditch systems for agriculture in each part of Kauai.

We are writing today in favor of SB2217. We are current users of this water system and a founder member of the East Kauai Water Users' Cooperative Board of Directors. The water supplied by the system is very important to the Church for both its 70 acres of fee-simple land Wailua Homesteads and its 300+ acres on Kalepa lands now held by the Church under a 35-year license agreement with ADC.

The agriculture industry remains an essential component of Hawaii's economic landscape and is only possible with a reliable supply of water. The East Kauai system can irrigate 4,000 acres of productive farm land which has in past years produced millions of dollars worth of sugar cane. Its multiple reservoirs and 30 plus miles of ditch are an irreplaceable State-owned resource valued by experts at hundreds of millions of dollars.

The State is amply justified in providing partial support to the system which enjoys a strong volunteer effort.

We urge your committee to back the community's grass roots efforts to preserve and operate this system through the East Kauai Water Users' Cooperative.

Saiva Siddhanta Church

Acharya Arumuganathaswami

Acharya Arumuganathaswami
Farm Manager



**East Kauai
Water Users' Cooperative**

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March 1, 2016

TO: Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair

RE: **Testimony on SB 2217 Relating to Agriculture
March 1, 2016, Conference Room 211**

Chairperson Tokuda and Members of Committees:

My name is Jerry Ornellas and I support SB2217. I am the president of the East Kauai Water Users' Cooperative which has managed the State-owned reservoir and ditch system in the Kapaa/Kalepa area for the past 14 years.

The bill is intended to supply needed cash support to our system which receives more than \$150,000 per year in volunteer labor, fees and donations.

Over the last four years, the State has invested strategically in the system, most notably with the completed renovation and upgrade of Wailua Reservoir, the renovation of Upper Kapahi Reservoir now underway and Aahoaka reservoir, which should begin soon.

There remain important repairs which must be tended to least they become major issues down the road. Our system provides irrigation water to a number of farmers, ranchers and householders in the Kapaa and Kalepa areas. It is critical to a dynamic homegrown agriculture industry on Kauai's East Side.

I respectfully ask that you pass this bill.

East Kauai Water Users' Cooperative

Jerry Ornellas, President