



LATE

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March 23, 2017

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

TESTIMONY ON HB 1584, HD2
RELATING TO IMPORTANT AGRICULTURAL LANDS

Room 224
2:00 PM

Aloha Chairs Rhoads and Gabbard, Vice Chair Riviere, and Members of the Committees:

I am Randy Cabral, President of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,900 farm family members statewide, and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interest of our diverse agricultural community.

HFB supports HB 1584, HD2, which requires the counties to make recommendations for important agricultural lands by 6/30/2019 and requires the Land Use Commission to identify and designate important agricultural lands by 6/30/2020 for any county that fails to meet the 6/30/2019 deadline.

Since the enactment of the Constitutional Mandate in 1978 to preserve and protect Important Agricultural Lands (IAL), HFBF came before the Legislature every year with proposals of how this measure could be implemented. It was only in 2005 when the standards and criteria to designate IAL was finally passed and in 2008 when the incentives were passed. It was a long road.

We were pleased when the first lands were designated by Alexander and Baldwin in 2009 totaling nearly 4000 acres in Kauai. Today, we have over 100,000 acres that were voluntarily designated by landowners across the State.

Nearly nine years have passed since the incentives were passed in 2008 and we remain in the phase in which counties will submit maps to the LUC identifying lands to be designated as IAL. Act 183 (SLH 2005) states that the counties will work on identification and mapping of important agricultural lands via funding from the State disbursed through the Land Use Commission. Most Counties have yet to receive funding and in turn the county IAL identification and mapping has not progressed as anticipated. HFB supports the Legislators support in implementing Act 183 by providing the funds necessary to identify and map IAL in each county.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this measure.



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I
MĀLAMA I KA HONUA. *Cherish the Earth.*

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

Thursday, March 23, 2017 2:00PM Room 224

In SUPPORT HB 1584 HD 2 Relating to Important Agricultural Lands

Aloha Chairman Rhoads and members of the Water and Land Committee,

On behalf of our 20,000 members and supporters throughout the State, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i strongly supports the intent of HB 1584 HD2, which will require the counties to make recommendations for important agricultural lands (IAL) by June 30, 2019 and provides a mechanism for the Land Use Commission to identify and develop maps of IAL in the event that a county does not meet the proposed June 30, 2019 deadline. The bill will also amend the important agricultural land qualified agricultural cost tax credit by extending it by 10 years and increasing the tax credit amount.

The Sierra Club strongly supports this bill because it improves protections for agricultural lands by specifically identifying lands set aside for agricultural production. Protecting these lands from future development is one important step towards advancing the state's goals to double local food production.

HB 1584 HD2 is consistent with the purpose of HRS §§ 205-41 - 52 by assisting the State in carrying out its constitutional duty, as expressed in Article XI, Section 3 of the Hawai'i State Constitution, to "conserve and protect agricultural lands, promote diversified agriculture, increase agricultural self-sufficiency and assure the availability of agriculturally suitable lands." The bill aims to incentivize efforts by each county in identifying and mapping IAL by providing grants-in-aid to county's that submit their respective recommendations and maps of IAL by the proposed deadline.

In furthering the the State's Constitutional duties in regards to agricultural lands and agricultural sustainability, HB 1584 HD2 will also have a tremendous effect on the economy and help protect our environment. In 2008, it was estimated that replacing even 10% of the food we import with locally grown food could result in up to \$6 million in state tax revenues and create more than 2,300 jobs.¹ Further, increasing the amount of local agriculture production will lower the risk of invasive species introductions and greatly reduce our carbon footprint.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to provide testimony on this important issue.

Mahalo,
Marti Townsend
Director

¹PingSun Leung & Matthew Loke, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, University of Hawaii at Manoa, *Economic Impacts of Increasing Hawai'i's Food Self-Sufficiency*, p.6 (Dec. 2008) available at: <http://hdoa.hawaii.gov/add/files/2012/12/FoodSSReport.pdf>

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2017 1:50 PM
To: WTL Testimony
Cc: lbc@hawaiiantel.net
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HB1584

Submitted on: 3/23/2017
Testimony for WTL/AEN on Mar 23, 2017 14:00PM in Conference Room 224

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lois Crozer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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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LATE

March 23, 2017

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Water & Land

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Gil Riviere, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Support of HB 1584, HD2 Relating to Agriculture (Requires the counties to make recommendations for important agricultural lands by 6/30/2019 or forfeit that right to the Land Use Commission. Extends the period to claim important agricultural land qualified agricultural cost tax credits by 10 years and amends qualified agricultural costs and the amount of the credit. Appropriates funds.)

WTL/AEN Hrg: Thursday, March 23, 2017, at 2:00 p.m., in Conf. Rm. 224

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 the intent of HB 1584.**

HB 1584, HD2. The purpose of this measure is to implement Act 183(SLH 2005) in accordance with the State's constitutional duty to protect important agricultural lands (IAL), by providing a monetary incentive to the counties for the identification and mapping of important agricultural lands; and to amend the IAL qualified agricultural cost credit.

This bill requires the counties to make recommendations for important agricultural lands by June 30, 2019, or forfeit that right to the Land Use Commission; amends the definition of IAL qualified agricultural costs by adding the "clearing, removal of trees and debris from, and soil restoration of former sugar and pineapple plantation lands

that have been out of use for more than three years;” amends the amount of the credit; extends the period to claim IAL qualified agricultural cost tax credits by ten years; and allocates and appropriates an unspecified amount of funds to each county for the identification and mapping of IAL.

LURF’s Position. LURF supports the intent of HB 1584, HD2, because it provides funding to the counties to complete their IAL maps and proposed designations, establishes deadlines for the counties to identify and designate IAL; and facilitates the ability for agricultural landowners, farmers and operators to utilize IAL incentives to support the viability of agriculture in Hawaii.

LURF has been an IAL proponent, and has contributed to the drafting of the IAL laws, Acts 183 (SLH 2005) and Act 233 (SLH 2008). LURF members include private property owners, farmers and ranchers who own, maintain, and engage in a wide array of diverse agricultural enterprises, and who consider such activities and ventures critical to the conduct of their operations and to help sustain their businesses. Several of these LURF members have already designated over fifty percent (50%) of their private lands as IAL.

LURF believes that HB 1584, HD2 is consistent with the underlying intent and objectives of the IAL laws (Hawaii Revised Statutes [HRS], Sections 205-41 to 52), which were enacted to fulfill the mandate in Article XI, Section 3 of the Hawaii State Constitution, “to conserve and protect agricultural lands, promote diversified agriculture, increase agricultural self-sufficiency and assure the availability of agriculturally suitable lands.” As noted in HRS Section 205-41, the intent of Act 183 (2005) was to develop agricultural incentive programs to promote agricultural viability, sustained growth of the agricultural industry, and the long-term use and protection of important agricultural lands for agricultural use.

LURF respectfully urges this Committee to favorably consider HB 1584, HD2.

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