



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Higher Education and Technology
Friday, February 3, 2023 at 2:00 p.m.

By

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And

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HB 1268 – RELATING TO AQUACULTURE

Chair Perruso, Vice Chair Kapela, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program (Hawai'i Sea Grant) supports HB 1268 with the acceptance of the recommendation below and provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in the University's Board of Regents Approved Executive Biennium Budget.

Hawai'i Sea Grant strongly recommends changing the following language in HB 1268 pertaining to submission of the statewide strategic five-year plan to the legislature: "prior to the convening of the 2024 legislative session" to "prior to the convening of the 2025 legislative session" As it currently stands and based on funding processes and availability, Hawai'i Sea Grant would have approximately 4 months to implement and complete the strategic planning process before the 2024 legislative session, which is an inadequate time to effectively conduct the process and generate and meet expectations.

Hawai'i Sea Grant's mission is to provide integrated research, extension, and education activities that increase understanding and use of ocean and coastal resources of the Hawaiian and Pacific Islands and support the informed personal, policy, and management decisions that are integral to realizing this vision. Hawai'i Sea Grant is part of a national network of 34 university-based programs associated with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) that promote better understanding, conservation, and use of coastal resources.

In 2021, Hawai'i Sea Grant established and has been facilitating a Hawai'i Aquaculture Collaborative (HAC), which is an industry-led partnership whose aim is to facilitate collaborations between aquaculture industry leaders and aquaculture-relevant state, public, and non-profit agencies to strengthen and grow aquaculture in the state and thereby increase Hawai'i's economic resilience and food security.

The HAC has identified several priority areas to strengthen and grow aquaculture in Hawai'i that include increasing government support, supporting workforce development, promoting collaboration between the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture and aquaculture industry leaders, and supporting an effort to develop a five-year statewide strategic plan for the industry, among others.

Hawai'i Sea Grant supports the intent of HB 1268 to develop a five-year statewide strategic plan for aquaculture that is informed by industry leaders, stakeholders, and community and requests that adequate time is allowed for its development. Funding this measure will help the aquaculture industry and stakeholders to formalize and set clearly defined goals for aquaculture in the state along with developing a mission and vision that is aligned with the State of Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.