



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Senate Committee on Higher Education
Tuesday, February 14, 2023 at 3:07 p.m.

By

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And

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SB 648 – RELATING TO AQUACULTURE

Chairs Gabbard and Kim, Vice Chairs Richards and Kidani, and Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment and Senate Committee on Higher Education:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 648 that appropriates funds to support the aquaculture disease diagnostic laboratory at the University of Hawai'i's College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR), in partnership with the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA).

We support the intent of this bill, however, we have concerns with the measure as written.

HDOA has a veterinary laboratory within the Division of Animal Industry (AI) that provides disease diagnostic laboratory support for livestock, poultry, and to some extent, aquacultured animals. CTAHR has built disease diagnostic laboratory capabilities for aquacultured animals but cannot provide services to the aquaculture industry with only project-supported personnel.

We believe the needs of the aquaculture industry would be best served by establishing an aquaculture disease diagnostic program within the existing HDOA AI Veterinary Laboratory that already provides disease diagnostic laboratory support for livestock, poultry, and to some extent, aquacultured animals. This laboratory should be administered by the HDOA, in consultation with CTAHR.

We defer to HDOA regarding the appropriation amount that they require to establish an aquaculture disease diagnostic laboratory within the existing AI Veterinary Laboratory.

We support the intent of the bill; however, we cannot support the passage of this bill as written. And, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our Board of Regents Approved Budget. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.