



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Agriculture

February 10, 2007

by

Darren Okimoto

Extension Leader, Sea Grant College Program

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 1219 Relating to Department of Agriculture Loans

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Brower, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Darren Okimoto and I am the Extension Leader for the University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program (UH Sea Grant). I offer written testimony in strong support of HB 1219 which "increases the amount of money for agricultural loans and aquacultural loans that the chairperson may approve from \$25,000 to \$75,000."

UH Sea Grant through its aquaculture extension specialists and agents has worked successfully with the state's Aquaculture Development Program to promote and develop Hawai'i's growing aquaculture industry with over \$28 million in sales in 2005. The enactment of HB 1219 by the state will further aid in the development of the industry and signal Hawai'i's commitment to support one of agriculture's fastest growing sectors.

I therefore strongly endorse HB 1219 and seek your support in the passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 1219.