



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance

February 24, 2007

by

Darren Okimoto

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University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB1219 Relating to Department of Agriculture Loans.

Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee, 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 HB1219 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 Hawaii's growing aquaculture industry with over \$28 million in sales in 2005. The enactment of HB1219 by the state will further aid in the development of the industry and signal Hawaii's commitment to support one of agriculture's fastest growing sectors.

I therefore strongly endorse HB1219 and seek your support in the passage of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB1219, provided that its passage does not supplant the Board of Regents approved Biennium Budget request.