



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Agriculture

February 10, 2007

by

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### **HB 1616 Relating to Aquaculture**

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 the intent of HB 1616 which "appropriates funds to develop the concept of, and conduct a feasibility study, including estimated costs, for, the establishment of a primary quarantine and laboratory facility for aquatic species used in the Hawai'i aquaculture industry", provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact budget priorities indicated in our Board of Regents approved Biennium Budget request.

UH Sea Grant through the Windward Community College Freshwater Aquaculture Facility managed by Sea Grant Aquaculture Extension Specialist, Dr. Clyde Tamaru, has supported the development of the aquaculture industry by not only serving as a demonstration and research facility, but also as a temporary quarantine site for freshwater aquatic species cultured in the state. However, the size of this facility is small and its capacity to serve as a quarantine site is limited. The rapid increase in industry growth and product diversification will necessitate the establishment of a dedicated primary quarantine and laboratory facility for aquatic species in Hawai'i.

I thus strongly endorse HB 1616 and seek your support in the passage of this bill, provided its passage does not supplant the Board of Regents approved Biennium Budget request.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 1616.