



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

---

Testimony Presented before the  
House Committee on Hawaiian Affairs  
April 01, 2009 at 9:30 a.m.

by  
Virginia Hinshaw, Chancellor  
and

Andrew G. Hashimoto, Dean and Director  
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HCR 167/HR 134 – REQUESTING THE COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF PLANTING KALO IN THE REFLECTING POOL THAT SURROUNDS THE STATE CAPITOL BUILDING.

Chair Carroll, Vice Chair Shimabukuro, and Members of the Committees:

My name is Andrew Hashimoto, and I serve as Dean and Director of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR), at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. I am presenting testimony on behalf of Virginia Hinshaw, Chancellor of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM).

Although we support the intent of HCR 167/HR 134 to study the feasibility of planting kalo in the Capitol pools to promote the State's official plant and provide a venue for its display in the State Capitol Building, the State Capitol has been designated as a historic building in the Hawai'i Register of Historic Places, and as such, it is under the purview of the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division and statutory requirements of Chapter 6E, Historic Preservation, Hawai'i Revised Statutes.

We further understand that the reflecting pools surrounding the State Capitol symbolically represent the ocean that surrounds us. We further understand that past attempts to change the symbolism of the "ocean" to a sand beach or a Japanese garden have been rejected by Historic Preservation. Planting kalo in the "ocean" would not only be inappropriate, but would likely add to the maintenance effort and costs and drainage issues for the pools.

We appreciate the creative solution proposed and appreciate confidence in CTAHR to conduct this study; however, we do not feel that approval to actually plant kalo in the pools will be granted given past practice, registered symbolism of the water, the fact that the plants will appear above the flat surface of the water, and the eventual requirement for additional maintenance of the pools, plants and water. Given the depth of the pool and potential algae growth, there may be a safety issues as well.

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa appreciates your interest and concerns in this issue but we cannot support passage of these resolutions, given the likelihood that UH Mānoa must

accommodate significant budget reductions over the next two fiscal years. The actions required by these resolutions would require an investment of resources, financially and in personnel time, that our campus cannot afford because we must devote them to programs essential to our primary campus mission.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on these resolutions.