



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented before the  
House Committee on Agriculture  
April 17, 2009 at 10:00 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

HR 134, HD1 – REQUESTING THE COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF PLANTING NON-GENETICALLY MODIFIED KALO IN THE REFLECTING POOL THAT SURROUNDS THE STATE CAPITOL BUILDING.

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

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).

We oppose this measure. In previous testimony, we supported the resolution's intent to promote kalo and provide a venue to display State's official plant. However, we also stated that while we appreciate the creative solution of using the Capitol reflecting pools to showcase kalo, we do not believe that planting of kalo in the pools is appropriate because of the design intent of the building. We also questioned the likelihood of approval to plant kalo in the pools by the Historic Preservation Division of the Department of Land and Natural Resources because of the registered symbolism of the water, and their rejection of previous proposals to alter the symbolism of the pool representing the ocean surrounding our islands.

The Hawai'i State Capitol is a registered historic building in the Hawaii Register of Historic Places, and as such, any project which may affect the property is subject to review and approval by the Historic Preservation Division, in accordance with Chapter 6E, Hawaii Revised Statutes, specifically, Section 6E8, HRS.

An example of the Historic Preservation Division's review is provided in wording contained in a memorandum to the acting Public Works Administrator, Department of Accounting and General Services dated June 6, 2003, regarding a renovation project involving the State Capitol reflecting pools:

“We believe the reflecting pool is a character-defining element of the State Capitol as it is the element named to represent the ocean that surrounds us, an important part of Hawaii's heritage and future development as well....(P)lant

life below the surface of the pool will not be noticeable. However, the substitution of water with a symbolic representation of water will be an adverse affect to the historic character of the building, unless the substitution can mimic the characteristics of the water.”

Although Standing Committee Report No. 1508 addressed some of our pool maintenance concerns by suggesting that “consideration should be given to replacing these pools with dry land kalo, and perhaps, a symbolic representation of the surrounding ocean waters,” we do not believe that planting any kalo, dry land or wet land, in pools that represent the ocean is appropriate, as kalo is not grown in the ocean.

The University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa appreciates your confidence in us by assigning this feasibility study to CTAHR, but we cannot support this resolution, given the likelihood that UH Mānoa must accommodate significant budget reductions over the next two fiscal years and the strong likelihood that any request of this nature to the approving authority will not be approved. Additionally, the actions required by this resolution would require an investment of resources, financially and in personnel time, which our campus cannot afford because we must devote resources to programs essential to our primary campus mission.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this resolution.