



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

TESTIMONY

SB 2479
PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE VII, SECTION 12, OF THE
HAWAII STATE CONSTITUTION

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

February 24, 2006

by

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

Testimony for
Senate Bill 2479

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I am pleased to contribute the expertise of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) and the University of Hawai'i to provide input to the decision-making process on Senate Bill 2479, which proposes a constitutional amendment to authorize the state to issue special purpose revenue bonds and use the proceeds to assist agricultural businesses operating on important agricultural land.

For Hawaii to be competitive globally, it must diversify its economic base. Agriculture can be a major player in this process by developing high-value products that take advantage of Hawaii's brand identity. As the legislature has already demonstrated with the passage of HB1640 which became Act 183 last session, we need to preserve and protect important agricultural lands, become more food self-sufficient, and provide necessary incentives for agricultural economic viability. Encouraging agricultural development not only will pay financial dividends to the state but will pay environmental and social dividends as well.

SB2479 would allow the use of special purpose revenue bonds by agricultural businesses operating on important agricultural lands, and thus enhance the State's commitment to preserving agricultural lands and promoting agricultural industry.

For these reasons, I support SB2479. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.