



STATUS REPORT ON 2023 AQUACULTURE BILLS AT MID-POINT CROSSOVER, AND

INDUSTRY ALERT RE: SB818 SD1 (PAGE 2)

Nine industry priorities were developed by the Hawaii Aquaculture Collaborative and submitted to the Ag Committees of the 2023 Legislature. The following bills are/were supportive of these priorities..

Priority 1: Support the Aquaculture Disease Diagnostic Lab

HB 694 HD1: Passed House Committee on Higher Education w amendments to transfer lab from CTAHR to DOA, add 2 microbiologist positions, and add support funding, passed House Finance unamended, transferred to Senate, passed first reading in Senate

SB 648 SD1: Passed Senate Ag and Higher Education Committees with same amendments as HB 694 but not heard by Senate Ways and Means

Priority 2: Statewide 5-year Strategic Plan for Aquaculture

HB1268 HD1: Passed by House Higher Education Committee with amendments, passed by Water and Land, but not heard by House Finance

SB 518 SD1: Passed by Senate Ag and Higher Education Committees with amendments but not heard by Senate Ways and Means

Priority 3: Feasibility study for an Oahu Aquaculture Park

SB 650 SD1: Passed by Senate with amendment to expand study to entire State but not heard by Senate Ways and Means

Priority 6: Establish an Industry-led Aquaculture Advisory Council

SB 519 SD1: Passed by Senate Ag with amendment expanding Council from 5 to 11 members but not heard by Senate Ways and Means

Priority 7: Expand annual support for HSBIR program

HB 395: Passed by House Committee on Economic Development but deferred by House Finance

SB 703: Passed by Senate Committee on Energy and Economic Development but not heard by Senate Ways and Means

SB1297 SB2 Governor's HTDC package passed the Senate Committees on Energy and Economic Development with amendments and Ways and Means with amendments, and was transferred to the House

PLEASE BECOME INFORMED ABOUT SB818 SD1 AND PREPARE TESTIMONY FOR NEXT HEARING

SB 818 SD1 Relating to Aquaculture: Was passed by the Senate Committees on Agriculture and on Energy and Economic Development unamended, and by Ways and Means with amendments.

The purpose of this measure is to transfer the administrative attachment of the aquaculture development program, including the aquaculture disease diagnostic lab and veterinarian, from the Department of Agriculture (DOA) to the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) which is now under the Department of Business Economic Development & Tourism (DBED&T). In addition, this bill includes the following provisions of concern:

§163D-E Powers, duties, and activities of the corporation.

(a) The business of aquaculture shall be governed by this part and shall be exempt from any other provisions relating to the harvesting, processing, and marketing of cultured aquatic life.

(b) Except as provided in this part, the business of aquaculture processing, distribution, and marketing shall be administered by the executive director.

(3) Administer the programs of the State relating to animal husbandry, entomology, farm credit, development and promotion of agricultural products and markets, and the establishment and enforcement of the rules on the grading and labeling of agricultural products.

SECTION 11. of this bill also proposes an ADC-managed Mokuleia Aquaculture Innovation Center. For clarification and my full disclosure, the intent of this Section is the repurposing of my family's community-supported North Shore Aquafarm site.

For more information on SB 818 SD1, please see the Legislature's status report which can be accessed via the link below that provides the background on this bill an additional links to the full text, all testimonies received, committee reports, and other relevant information regarding this bill.

https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session/measure_indiv.aspx?billtype=SB&billnumber=818&year=2023 .

This is a highly politicized aquaculture program transfer effort. The HAAA recommends that the Hawaii aquaculture industry come out in strong opposition to SB818 SD1. Alternatively, if you feel that the economic development function of aquaculture development would be better served by DBED&T, then please consider a recommending the transfer these functions only to the Business Development & Support Division of DBED&T, but it is critical that the Aquaculture Disease Diagnostic Lab remain in DOA Animal Industries in order to remain technically and financially viable to support our industry.

Please give serious consideration to submitting testimony on this measure when it is scheduled for hearings in the House. We anticipate that this bill will first be referred to the House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems and to House Finance. HAAA will send out an Industry Alert as soon as this bill is scheduled for hearing. Testimony must be submitted at least 24 hours before the hearing date and time or it will be marked late and may not be provided to the Committee members in time for review.

Thank you,

Ron Weidenbach,
HAAA President