



# HAWAII STATE ENERGY OFFICE STATE OF HAWAII

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

SCOTT J. GLENN  
CHIEF ENERGY OFFICER

235 South Beretania Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804

Telephone:  
Web:

(808) 587-3807  
energy.hawaii.gov

Testimony of  
**SCOTT J. GLENN, Chief Energy Officer**

before the  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE**

Wednesday, March 23, 2022  
9:00 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

**SUPPORT  
SB 2056, SD1  
RELATING TO SOIL CLASSIFICATIONS.**

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and Members of the Committee, the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) supports SB 2056, SD1, which requires the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) to conduct a study of the suitability of the State's current soil overall (master) productivity rating system classified by the Land Study Bureau's (LSB) detailed land classification. This bill also requires a report to the Legislature and appropriates funds.

HSEO agrees with the statement in SECTION 1 of the bill that the LSB system "reflects the agricultural activities of plantation sugar cane and pineapple production that dominated Hawai'i agriculture at the time of the study" and may no longer be appropriate to guide Hawai'i's food and agricultural sustainability goals. Further, the bill references the U.S. Department of Agriculture's national soil classification system as an example of other methods that can be used to classify agricultural soils more appropriately.

Current state law (sections 205-2 and 205-4.5, Hawai'i Revised Statutes) directs the permissibility of solar energy projects on Agricultural land based on the land's LSB rating. However, in some cases the practical use of the lands for agriculture, or co-location of crops or livestock with solar energy projects, is greater or less than indicated by the soils alone. For example, although the soils in one area may have a productivity

rating that is higher than another area the availability or lack of irrigation water may encourage or constrain the actual productivities of the various sites. The degree to which these factors are captured (or not) in the current system deserves review.

Therefore, HSEO believes a study of the suitability of soil classification systems for the regulation of agricultural lands would contribute to a better understanding of Hawai'i's agricultural lands, systems, potential, and needs.

HSEO defers to the appropriate agency for administration and fiscal matters.

HSEO supports this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Supplemental Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.