

LATE TESTIMONY

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Marcus Oshiro, Chair

Rep. Marilyn Lee, Vice Chair

Friday, March 30, 2007

3:00 PM

Room 308

STRONG OPPOSITION TO SB 1718 HD1 – SPRBs for BlueEarth

45 copies

Aloha Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kat Brady and I respectfully offer this testimony in my own behalf.

SB 1718 HD1 authorizes special purpose revenue bonds for BlueEarth Maui Biodiesel, LLC for construction of a biodiesel refinery on Maui.

I am strongly opposed to offering special purpose revenue bonds, which I view as a favor from the state to companies that would benefit Hawai'i and her people. The reasons for my skepticism are:

- Blue Earth Maui Biodiesel, LLC has no track record in Hawai'i
- Blue Earth is planning a facility, the impacts of which have NEVER been discussed in the community
- The issue of 'sustainable' biodiesel is a discussion taking place across the globe – is there really such a thing as 'sustainable' biodiesel?
- Currently rainforests in Southeast Asia are being destroyed in the guise of 'sustainable biodiesel'

Yesterday (3.29), WAM heard the House companion bill and DEFERRED the measure because Budget and Finance testified that this request EXCEEDS the amount of bonds allocated to promote renewable energy.

Isn't it interesting that this entity, which is part of Hawaiian Electric Company, wants to exhaust the SPRBs for renewable energy with a project that has NO track record, while legitimate renewable energy producers have faced HECO's multiple barriers (interconnection, power purchase agreements, etc.)? Wouldn't it be wonderful if instead of this project, HECO wanted to install solar on rooftops around Hawai'i, or increase the penetration of wind, or supported an innovative ocean energy project? I think this proposal is very revealing about our energy utility and I hope that you consider this in your deliberations.

The issues surrounding biodiesel are huge for Hawai'i:

- Where will the crops be grown? Our agricultural land is being urbanized every day
- Will small farmers benefit or must these crops be grown in large plantations?
- Where will the water come from? The Iao aquifer is already over-pumped and way beyond its sustainable yield.
- Our agricultural irrigation system leaks like a sieve and will take millions to get it back into usable shape
- Does Hawai'i really want to go back to plantation style agriculture?

Kat Brady – Testimony in OPPOSITION TO SB 1718 HD1

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- Does Hawai`i really want to go back to monocropping that has depleted our soil, contaminated our water, and left a toxic legacy for present and future generations to deal with?

One of the most productive crops for the production of biodiesel is palm oil and the Indonesian military is mowing down rainforests for palm oil plantations. Indonesia now ranks third in the world in greenhouse gas emissions. In 1998, I met the Chief of the Bentian people – an indigenous tribe that lives in the forests of Borneo. Chief Dingit told me that his tribe was being pushed back further into the rainforest because the Indonesian military was clearing the land. I didn't realize then what he was talking about. Now it has become painfully clear to me. Chief Digit passed onto the next life a year and one-half ago, but I am sure he is weeping for his people and his land now.

Please don't try to address the largest contributor to global warming – the burning of fossil fuels – by deforesting Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brazil – deforestation being the second largest contributor to global warming.

Hawai`i has many, many feasible options and we must start with what is sustainable here instead of destroying the environments of indigenous peoples around the globe for our own self-interest.

Please HOLD this bill.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.