



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR

July 11, 2007

The Honorable Colleen Hanabusa, President
and Members of the Senate
Twenty-Fourth State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 409
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Madam President and Members of the Senate:

Re: House Bill No. 899 HD1 SD1 CD1

On July 10, 2007, House Bill No. 899, entitled "A Bill for an Act Relating to Integrated Strategies for Statewide Food and Energy Crop Production" became law without my signature, pursuant to Section 16 of Article III of the Constitution of the State of Hawaii.

House Bill 899 appropriates out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$450,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2007-2008 to the University of Hawaii Center for Conservation Research and Training ("CCRT") for Phase 1 of a project to develop "best strategies consistent with comprehensive agricultural management practices to facilitate sustainable production of crops through long-term enhancement of soil quality using ecologically responsible means." I am told Phase 1 of the project would identify and test charcoal additive strategies to improve the nutrient levels in soils.

There are several concerns with this measure. This bill identifies Phase 1 of a research and development project without providing any insight into what subsequent phases may entail, or whether or not there will be subsequent phases. This raises both fiscal and programmatic concerns. The bill contains neither a plan of action nor recognizable outcomes for the funds invested. Further, it is unclear how the expenditure of moneys in fiscal year 2007-2008 would impact funding levels in subsequent fiscal years.

There appears to be doubt within the scientific community, as expressed in a number of journals and formal publications, as to whether using charcoal as a geologic carbon sequestration technique should be researched and developed at the expense of other environmentally sound, technologically feasible, and economically affordable solutions to climate change, such as improving energy efficient power generation, developing renewable energy, and protecting threatened forests.

Similarly, extensive research into using charcoal as a long-term enhancement of soil quality has been conducted by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and various agricultural

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research entities. It is unclear how the research proposed in this measure would not duplicate or overlap existing analyses. As the bill recognizes, the use of high carbon anthropogenic soil for agricultural purposes has been applied "since ancient times by indigenous communities in other tropical regions around the world." Thus, it is questionable whether the research contemplated in this measure would significantly help advance human understanding of this technology.

For the foregoing reasons, I allowed House Bill No. 899 to become law as Act 266 effective July 10, 2007 without my signature.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Lingle", written in a cursive style.

LINDA LINGLE