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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO ERADICATE AND CONTROL THE COQUI FROG.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the island of Hawaii  
2 has become infested by the Caribbean tree frog  
3 (eleutherodactylus coqui) or more commonly known as coqui frogs,  
4 since their accidental introduction on the island of Hawaii in  
5 the early 1990s. In early 1992 there were only sporadic  
6 sightings of coqui frogs, in 1998 there were eight reported  
7 occurrences, in 2001 over eighty-five occurrences were  
8 documented, with another sixty-five occurrences that were  
9 undocumented, and now there are over one hundred fifty firmly  
10 established specific sites on the island of Hawaii.

11           In their native habitat in Puerto Rico, coqui frog  
12 populations can reach densities greater than eight thousand per  
13 acre and consume an estimated 47,500 preys per night per acre.  
14 Because Hawaii is similar in climate to Puerto Rico but without  
15 any of the coqui frogs' natural predators, it is estimated that  
16 coqui frog populations on the island of Hawaii could reach ten  
17 times that reported in the native forests of Puerto Rico. The  
18 infestation of coqui frogs is in such concentrations that the



1 sounds they emit have been measured at sustained levels  
2 exceeding the department of health's maximum permissible sound  
3 level of seventy decibels, and therefore have become a threat to  
4 human health and welfare and unreasonably interfere with the  
5 comfortable enjoyment of life and property.

6 The coqui frog was declared an agricultural pest on  
7 September 27, 2001, making shipments of plants infested with  
8 coqui frogs subject to quarantine pursuant to chapter 150A,  
9 Hawaii Revised Statutes, and sections 4-72-3 and 4-72-4, Hawaii  
10 Administrative Rules. The coqui frog has the potential to  
11 negatively impact sales of Hawaii's floriculture industry that  
12 totaled \$61,187,000 in 2002. The majority of the industry is  
13 located in East Hawaii where the coqui frog infestation is  
14 greatest.

15 In 2003, the legislature recognized the invasion of alien  
16 species as the single greatest threat to Hawaii's economy,  
17 natural environment, and the health and lifestyle of Hawaii's  
18 people and visitors. This problem has grown exponentially over  
19 the past decade due to lack of dedicated funding, personnel, and  
20 political support.

21 In response to this threat, the mayor of the county of  
22 Hawaii issued a Declaration of Emergency in February, 2004. The



1 county of Hawaii, department of agriculture, University of  
2 Hawaii at Hilo, University of Hawaii at Manoa, United States  
3 Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services Division and the  
4 National Wildlife Research Center have formed the coqui frog  
5 working group and have produced the coqui frog working group  
6 incident action plan to combat this invasive specie. This plan  
7 focuses on three primary areas: eradication and control;  
8 research; and community education and support. While the county  
9 of Hawaii has contributed \$1,000,000, the State of Hawaii has  
10 contributed \$100,000, and the federal government has contributed  
11 \$200,000 to this eradication effort. Greater levels of aid are  
12 needed to deal with a problem that has not been effectively  
13 dealt with for over a decade. With legislative funding,  
14 increased control, research, and community education, this Act  
15 will lead to a reduction in the economic, environmental, and  
16 public health threats posed by the coqui frog to the Hawaii  
17 island community.

18 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
19 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$2,000,000, or so  
20 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2006-2007, for  
21 a grant-in-aid to the county of Hawaii for the support and



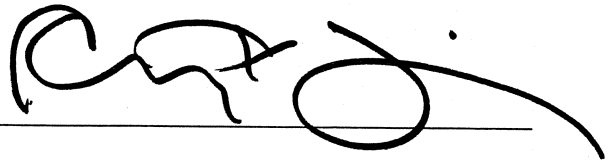
1 implementation of the coqui frog working group incident action  
2 plan.

3 SECTION 3. The sum appropriated shall be expended by the  
4 county of Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

5 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2006.

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INTRODUCED BY:

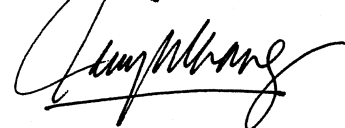


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HB 2763

**Report Title:**

Appropriation; Invasive Species; Coqui Frog

**Description:**

Makes an appropriation to eradicate and control the coqui frog.

