

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR - 2 2006

RE: S.B. No. 2486
S.D. 2

Honorable Robert Bunda
President of the Senate
Twenty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2006
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Transportation and Government Operations,
to which was referred S.B. No. 2486, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to fortify and enhance the
work of the temporary Invasive Species Council by:

- (1) Repealing the sunset date for the Invasive Species Council and placing it within Department of Land and Natural Resources for administrative purposes only; and
- (2) Increasing the number of council members to include eight members of the legislature to serve ex officio and in an advisory capacity.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources, the Department of Agriculture, the Hawaii Farm Bureau, the Conservation Council for Hawaii, and The Nature Conservancy.

Act 85, Session Laws of Hawaii 2003, established the Invasive Species Council for the special purpose of providing policy level decisions, coordination, and planning among state departments, federal agencies, and international and local initiatives for the control and eradication of harmful invasive species infestation throughout Hawaii, and for preventing the introduction of other invasive species that may be potentially harmful. Act 85



recognized a need to involve all the agencies, at the cabinet level, that have responsibility to control invasive species on the ground, as well as regulate or promote the pathways in which invasive species can gain access into the State.

Your Committee finds that the silent invasion of Hawaii by insects, disease-bearing organisms, snakes, weeds, and other pests is the single greatest threat to Hawaii's economy and natural environment and to the health and lifestyle of Hawaii's people. Invasive species already cause millions of dollars in crop losses, the extinction of native species, the destruction of native forests, and the spread of disease.

Hawaii's evolutionary isolation from the continents and its modern role as the commercial hub of the Pacific make these islands particularly vulnerable to destruction by invasive species. The present problem is severe. The future, though, may be even more dire. Slow, piecemeal action will not be sufficient. Drastic improvements must be made now to stem the tide of invasive species.

The Invasive Species Council's special purpose is to augment coordinated approaches that support local initiatives for the prevention and control of invasive species, such as the coordinating group on alien pest species and the island invasive species committees. The Invasive Species Council has initiated the development of a coordinated invasive species policy.

Your Committee further finds that the Invasive Species Council is a very important agent in preventing, controlling, and eradicating invasive species in Hawaii, and the areas that are most affected by the invasive species are on the Neighbor Islands.

The addition of legislative members to the Invasive Species Council, in an advisory, nonvoting capacity, is a natural extension of the intent, purpose, and mission of the council to become a fully representative body that obtains information and advice from all knowledgeable government entities.

Your Committee has amended this measure on the recommendation of the Department of Land and Natural Resources, as follows:

- (1) Clarifying that the legislative members are nonvoting;



- (2) Specifying that a simple majority of voting members constitutes a quorum to do business; and
- (3) Clarifying that a simple majority of voting members is required to take action.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Transportation and Government Operations that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 2486, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Third Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 2486, S.D. 2.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Transportation and
Government Operations,


LORRAINE R. INOUE, Chair



