



For the Protection of Hawaii's Native Wildlife
HAWAII AUDUBON SOCIETY

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LATE
Testimony

EMAIL: AGRtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov

TO: Committee on Agriculture
Representative Clift Tsuji, Chair and Representative Tom Brower, Vice Chair

HEARING: Friday, February 8, 2008; 9:15 A.M., Conference Rm. 325

Re: HB2977, Relating to Invasive Species

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Brower and members of the Committee on Agriculture.. My name is George Massengale, I a member of the Hawai'i Audubon Society and during session I serve as their Legislative Analyst. Thank you for the opportunity to submit our testimony in support of HB2977, which would give priority to eradicating coqui frogs that are on state or county land.

The Hawaii Audubon Society was founded in 1939, and is the oldest conservation organization in Hawaii. The Society has over 1,500 dedicated members statewide working together to further the Society's primary mission is the protection of Hawaii's native wildlife and habitats. This includes protecting our ecosystems from invasive species. The sad fact is that Hawai'i has the highest number of listed threatened and endangered species in the nation.

The coqui frog, was accidentally introduced into Hawaii from Puerto Rico in about 1988. Aside from being a major noise nuisance, the frogs pose a threat to Hawaii's island ecosystem. Coqui frogs have a voracious appetite that puts Hawaii's unique insects and spiders at risk. They can also compete with endemic birds and other native fauna that rely on insects for food. The frogs are quite adaptable to the different ecological zones and elevations in the state and have been found from sea level to 4,000 feet elevation (at sites in Volcano on Hawaii). Scientists are also concerned that an established coqui frog population may serve as a readily available food source if (or when) brown tree snakes are accidentally introduced in Hawaii

Amending Section 194-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to make it a priority to eradicating coqui frogs that are on state or county land and within one mile of residential areas should have an impact on the noise nuisance that plagues certain residential areas. However focusing on areas near residential areas will have no impact, in other coqui infestations further away which may be threatening our endemic birds by eliminating their food sources.

We believe that this would be a much better bill it were further amended to include the additional language that would address in which our endemic birds and animals are threatened. We would recommend the following language. "to make it a priority to eradicating coqui frogs that are on state or county land and within one mile of residential areas [as well areas that provide critical habitat to endangered and threatened animal and bird species endemic to Hawaii.]"

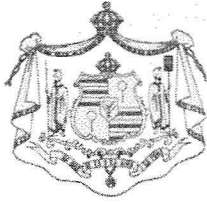
(additional language bracketed)

Thank you for the opportunity testify here today.

Sincerely,



George Massengale, JD
Legislative Analyst



Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs
P. O. Box 1135
Honolulu, Hawai`i 96807

LATE
Testimony

TESTIMONY OF LEIMOMI KHAN, PRESIDENT
IN SUPPORT OF

HB 2977 - RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

**HOUSE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE; CONSUMER PROTECTION &
COMMERCE; AND TRANSPORTATION**

Hearing date and time: February 8, 2008

February 7, 2008

Aloha Chairpersons Tsuji, Herkes and Souki; Vice-Chairs Brower, McKelvey and Nishimoto; and Members of the House Committees on Agriculture; Consumer Protection & Commerce; and Transportation.

The Association is a growing national confederation of fifty-three Hawaiian Civic Clubs, located throughout the State of Hawai`i and in the States of Alaska, California, Colorado, Illinois, Nevada, Utah, Virginia and Washington State. It initiates and works to support actions that enhance the civic, economic, educational, health and social welfare of our communities, and in particular, the culture and welfare of the Native Hawaiian community.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 2977, which would require the Invasive Species Council to give priority to eradicating coqui frogs that are on state or county land and within one mile of residential areas.

On October 28, 2006, the Association adopted Resolution No. 2006-068, Urging the County of Hawai`i and the State Department of Land and Natural Resources to Create and Enforce Legal Remedies to Stop the Spread of Coqui Frogs. This Resolution cited the spread of coqui frogs due to imported plants from the U.S. mainland, the severe infestation problems from Hilo to Hamakua, Puna, Kona, Waipi`o, parts of Waimea and Kohala via potted plants, vehicles and loads of construction and landscaping materials.

We were also concerned about infestation in conservation areas such as the Hakalau National Wildlife Refuge, which threatens to render certain bird species extinct. We believe this bill in tandem with House Bill 2843, which would impose a fee for all incoming non-containerized freight as well as assess fines for violations of state quarantine laws, are a good step toward combatting the coqui frog. The state is the biggest landlord, and prioritizing eradication efforts on these lands and within one mile of more densely-populated residential areas appear a reasonable step in the right direction. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



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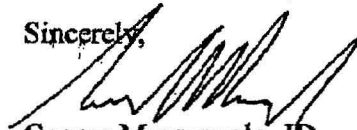
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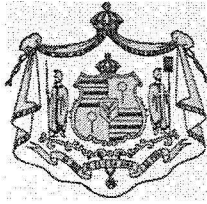
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