

SB 2523



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Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i
Supporting S.B. 2523 Relating to Invasive Species
Senate Committees on Agriculture and Hawaiian Affairs,
and Energy and Environment
Tuesday, February 5, 2008, 2:00PM, Room 414

The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i is a private non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of Hawai'i's native plants, animals, and ecosystems. The Conservancy has helped to protect nearly 200,000 acres of natural lands for rare and endangered native species in Hawai'i. Today, we actively manage more than 32,000 acres in 11 nature preserves on O'ahu, Maui, Hawai'i, Moloka'i, Lāna'i, and Kaua'i and also work closely with government agencies and private landowners on cooperative land management projects.

The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i supports S.B. 2523 Relating to Invasive Species.

Invasive weeds, insects, diseases, snakes, and other pests are one of the greatest threats to Hawaii's economy, agriculture industry, natural environment, and the health and lifestyle of its people.

While it is presently illegal to import plants that are listed on the State Department of Agriculture's noxious weed list, it is not illegal to cultivate and sell such pests if a person already has them in their possession. Also, the State maintains a restricted list of plants that require a permit for importation into the state. However, the statutory authority for the restricted plant list needs to be amended to recognize that such plants can either be a host to an unwanted pest or disease, or the plant itself can be a pest because of its weedy properties.

This measure will close these loopholes in our laws, thereby enhancing our comprehensive effort to protect Hawaii's people, economy and environment from the devastating effects of invasive species.

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