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LAND
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**TESTIMONY OF THE CHAIRPERSON
OF THE BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

on Senate Bill 2850, Senate Draft 2- RELATING TO BIOSECURITY

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEES ON
AGRICULTURE
and
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

March 13, 2008

Senate Bill 2850, Senate Draft 2 consolidates existing quarantine authorities and stated goals for the Department of Agriculture (DOA) by recognizing the biosecurity program, provides authorities to require cargo manifests of cargo, provides funding and appropriates unspecified funding for the biosecurity program and for planning the interim joint inspection facility and permanent joint inspection facility. While the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) recognizes the intent of this measure, the Department nonetheless has concerns as it would adversely impact priorities in the Executive Supplemental Budget request

Preventing new invasive species from establishing in Hawaii provides the greatest long term protection for Hawaii and the Department supports strong import quarantine measures. The increase in interisland transportation without adequate inspection and quarantine has resulted in the spread of invasive species across the state once they become established on a single island. Some of the most recent and costly examples of this are the introduction of several coqui frogs each year to the islands of Maui, Molokai, Oahu and Kauai and the spread of stinging nettle caterpillar from the Big Island to Maui and Oahu. The lack of including invasive species quarantine in all airport and harbor facilities planning both hampers inspection efforts by the Department of Agriculture and increases the cost and time that shippers and businesses must expend to take their agricultural cargo to remote locations. Central, well planned facilities allow for efficient cargo movement and better quarantine inspections that protect Hawaii's economy and environment from invasive species. The Department supports including provisions for well planned facilities along with a more complete biosecurity program.

Honolulu International Airport currently does not have adequate federal or state quarantine inspection facilities. The only well equipped and recently built or renovated inspection facilities are located at Kahului Airport and are expected to greatly improve the capability of the Department of Agriculture to unload containers in a secure environment for inspections as well as provide on site treatment of infested goods and produce. Combining facilities with the United States Department of Agriculture and other federal agencies that carry out inspections will

reduce operating costs over the long term as well as improve efficiency for businesses that are required to comply with both federal and state regulations.

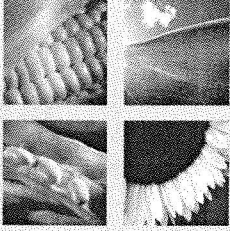
Planning and coordination with federal agencies for joint facilities is timely as improvements to the Honolulu International Airport are currently under way and plans for facilities improvements at harbors are also being developed.

In Hawaii, over 432,000 - 20' equivalent containers are imported annually according to 2005 numbers recorded by the Department of Transportation. A similar number of containers are transported interisland each year. Allowing DOA to review detailed descriptions of the contents of the containers and prioritize them for inspection will allow the highest risk goods to be inspected for invasive species as the current DOA capacity allows while allowing the rest to move on to their destinations. Requiring detailed manifests will improve the State's response to future risk posed by new commodities such as the increased importation of building materials that may harbor invasive plants, insects or even larger animals such as snakes. Including inspection and quarantine treatment in the State's transportation network and providing DOA with the resources and authority to improve interisland and import quarantine for Hawaii, protects the State's agricultural sector, tourism economy and environment.

DOA has developed and implemented key initiatives in their Biosecurity Strategy designed to reduce the import and spread of invasive species such as coqui and nettle caterpillar. The recent increase in permanent inspector positions and the establishment of the user fee under Act 9, Session Laws of Hawaii 2007, has been an important incremental step in the process of supporting a modernized and functional quarantine system to protect Hawaii from invasive species that threaten agriculture, the economy, our environment and way of life.

The development of sustained, scalable funding for Hawaii's quarantine system was one of the priorities recognized by the 2002 Legislative Reference Bureau Report "Filling the Gaps in the Fight Against Invasive Species". In a poll carried out in Feb 2007 by Qmark, a division of Star Segal, done on behalf of the Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS), nearly 75% of those polled supported a service fee to protect Hawaii from invasive species.

Establishment of adequate interisland quarantine inspections and improvements in inspections of imports will require additional resources and authorities as identified in this measure. The Department supports the intent of this measure, however has concerns with the budgetary implications this bill will have on the Executive Supplemental Budget request, and defers to DOA on the specific mechanisms for developing these tools.



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Testimony by: Sarah Styan
SB 2850sd2, Biosecurity
House AGR/EEP Committees
Thursday, March 13, 2008
Room 312: 9:30 am

Position: Support

Chairs Tsuji and Morita, and Members of the House AGR/EEP Committees:

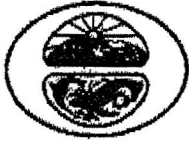
My name is Sarah Styan. I am a Kauai resident, President of HCIA and research scientist of Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Waimea Research Station. The HCIA represents seed production and research facilities operating in Hawaii for nearly 40 years. The HCIA is comprised of five member companies that farm an estimated 8,000 acres on four islands, valued at \$97.6 million in operating budget (2006/2007 HASS). We are proud members of Hawaii's diversified agriculture and life sciences industries.

As testified in previous years, HCIA believes that financing the prevention of importation of invasive species is more prudent than later financing of eradication or containment programs. Examples of such latter efforts include the battle against the coqui frogs, miconia, gorse weed, fireweed and others.

Policy and funding support for the Department of Agriculture's proposed Biosecurity program is critical, not only to the agricultural industry, but to Hawaii's environment. The proposed program seeks to establish pre-entry inspection programs and quarantine as needed of exporters from other states and countries, and safe handling and storage of food and agricultural cargo.

This is a welcomed and necessary program to protect Hawaii's farmers and environment. Hawaii's exporters have been subject to such stringent pre-entry inspection programs for many years.

I can be reached at 808-338-8300 ext. 113 if there are any questions. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.



Conservation Council for Hawai'i

Testimony Submitted to the House Committee on Agriculture and
House Committee on Energy and Environment

Hearing: Thursday March 13, 2008
9:30 am
Room 312

Support for SB 2850 SD 2 Relating to Biosecurity

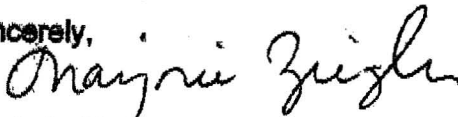
Aloha. The Conservation Council for Hawai'i supports SB 2850 SD 1, which establishes statutory provisions and appropriates funds for the Department of Agriculture's biosecurity program, including funds for planning interim and permanent joint state-federal joint inspection facilities.

We urge you to also consider increasing the inspection fee for marine and air shipments so that more inspectors can be hired. Currently, the inspection fee is only \$1 per 20-foot container or equivalent. This token fee is not enough to cover the costs of adequately inspecting shipments to prevent invasive species from entering Hawai'i.

We also recommend that, as part of the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture's post-entry measures within the biosecurity program, permanent adequate funding be established for the Invasive Species Committee's for Kaua'i, O'ahu, Moloka'i, Maui, and Hawai'i. The Invasive Species Committees are doing a good job with limited resources. They are working with private landowners in a cooperative manner to control invasive species already here. Please identify the appropriate vehicle to establish permanent adequate funding for the Invasive Species Committees.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,


Marjorie Ziegler



Working Today for the Nature of Tomorrow!

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COORDINATING GROUP ON
ALIEN PEST SPECIES

The House of Representatives
Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection
March 13, 2008
9:30 a.m., Conference Room 312
State Capitol

Testimony in Support of SB 2850, SD2

Aloha Chair Tsuji, Chair Morita, and Members of the Committees,
The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) **supports SB 2850, SD2, Relating to Biosecurity.**

For an agency tasked with protecting our agriculture, environment, and parts of our economy, public health and quality of life, the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA) has done a lot with very little. Their dedicated staff inspects as much incoming agricultural cargo as possible in sub-optimal inspection areas without benefit of their own treatment or disposal units for infested commodities. Inspectors watch with their hands tied as non-agricultural cargo sails by without inspection, perhaps carrying new pests into the State. That's when they know what's in the containers—many times manifests don't list all items that should be targeted for inspection. And the information passed to HDOA about possible State pest concerns from Federal inspectors searching incoming foreign cargo is largely due to personal relationships and commitment to do what is best, not necessarily what is codified.

Dedication goes only so far. We need to provide HDOA with the funding, the legal ability and the workspaces to protect Hawai'i. SB 2850, SD2 would provide HDOA with the tools necessary to implement an effective biosecurity program by ensuring that they have the ability to conduct inspections on more than just incoming agricultural products; by ensuring that HDOA can accurately identify cargo that should be inspected; and by providing funds for the planning and building of a new joint Federal-State inspection and quarantine facility at the Honolulu International Airport.

CGAPS believes that empowering HDOA to provide effective biosecurity and promoting interagency communication and cooperation via a joint inspection facility should be a top priority in the battle against invasive species.

CGAPS asks for your support of SB 2850, SD2. Mahalo.

CGAPS--Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species
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