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# HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING A MORATORIUM ON THE RELEASE OF BIOLOGICAL CONTROL  
AGENTS FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT OF PLANT SPECIES  
THAT ALSO SERVE AS FOOD RESOURCES.

1           WHEREAS, according to the 2008 Department of Agriculture's  
2 white paper, *Food Self-Sufficiency in Hawaii*, "[b]etween 85-90%  
3 of Hawaii's food is imported, which makes it particularly  
4 vulnerable to natural disasters and global events that might  
5 disrupt shipping and the food supply"; and  
6

7           WHEREAS, according to the State environmental policy  
8 guidelines, section 344-4(2)(A), Hawaii Revised Statutes, "[I]n  
9 pursuance of the state policy to conserve the natural resources  
10 and enhance the quality of life, all agencies, in the  
11 development of programs, shall, insofar as practicable . . .  
12 [e]ncourage management practices which conserve and fully  
13 utilize all natural resources"; and  
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15           WHEREAS, the current economic crisis has created financial  
16 hardship for many Hawaii residents, who are now finding it  
17 increasingly difficult to afford to buy food; and  
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19           WHEREAS, state projections indicate that the current  
20 financial crisis will probably continue over the next several  
21 years; and  
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23           WHEREAS, in addition to commercial agriculture in Hawaii,  
24 there is an abundance of plant food resources growing wild in  
25 the forests and parks, such as guava, strawberry guava, mango,  
26 avocado, thimble berry, banana poka, passion fruit, and other  
27 plants; many of these natural resources also grow in  
28 neighborhoods and in backyards for both commercial and private  
29 use; and these food resources are an important part of food  
30 self-sufficiency; and  
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1           WHEREAS, some of these food plants are currently considered  
2 to be weeds in certain environmental locations and are  
3 frequently managed by the Department of Agriculture and the  
4 Department of Land and Natural Resources using biological  
5 control methods, which involves releasing insects, fungi,  
6 bacteria, viruses, or other pathogens to attack specific  
7 species; and

8  
9           WHEREAS, the use of biological control for weed management  
10 of a food plant species threatens the beneficial uses of that  
11 species, since the insect, fungus, bacteria, virus, or other  
12 pathogen may spread to other areas where the targeted species is  
13 considered desirable; as a result, attacking a food plant with  
14 biological control agents can eliminate the ability to use the  
15 food plant anywhere the biological control agent can be spread,  
16 including in neighborhoods, backyards, and on other private and  
17 public property, denying residents the ability to grow that food  
18 plant on private property, or to gather that food plant in the  
19 wild, thus, severely curtailing the ability of residents to  
20 utilize these food resources and achieve food self-sufficiency;  
21 and

22  
23           WHEREAS, the release of biological control agents could be  
24 irreversible and irrevocable; now, therefore,

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26           BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
27 Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session  
28 of 2009, the Senate concurring, that the Department of  
29 Agriculture and the Department of Land and Natural Resources are  
30 requested to institute a five-year moratorium throughout the  
31 State on the use and release of biological control agents that  
32 could have a detrimental impact on food resources, affording the  
33 public the opportunity to use our State's natural resources to  
34 feed themselves and their families, and to improve the food  
35 self-sufficiency and sustainability of our State; and

36  
37           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Agriculture  
38 and the Department of Land and Natural Resources are requested  
39 instead to employ other methods of weed control for wild food  
40 plants that do not interfere with the ability of residents to  
41 grow, gather, and enjoy these natural food resources; and

42  
43           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
44 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the



# H.C.R. NO. 249

1 Board of Agriculture and the Chairperson of the Board of Land  
2 and Natural Resources.

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OFFERED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark H. ...", is written over a horizontal line.

MAR 18 2009

