

SB 696

LINDA LINGLE
Governor



LATE

SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DUANE K. OKAMOTO
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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TESTIMONY OF SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2009
9:30 A.M.
ROOM 211

SENATE BILL NO. 696
RELATING TO COQUI FROGS

Chairperson Kim and Members of the Committee:

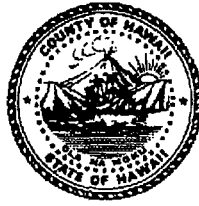
Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 696. The purpose of this bill is to appropriate funds for grants-in-aid to the city and county of Honolulu, and the counties of Maui, Kauai, and Hawaii for the eradication of coqui frogs. The State has taken the lead in addressing the coqui frog problem, we are working closely with the counties, and grants-in-aid to the counties are not the appropriate use of limited State resources to attack this problem. As a result, the Department of Agriculture opposes this bill.

Coqui frog has a limited distribution on Kauai, Maui, and Oahu and eradication may be feasible on these islands. The Department has played an essential role in the collaborative efforts to contain and eradicate infestations of coqui frogs on Oahu and Kauai. Due to these collaborative efforts, coqui frog has been restricted to the Lawai area on Kauai and eradicated from the Wahiawa area and a number of nurseries on Oahu. Department staff manage a coqui pest hotline and continues to respond to calls from the public for individual sightings of coqui frogs and removal of the frogs to ensure

that coqui does not become established in new areas on these islands. Staff also continually work with nurseries through treatment and education programs to ensure that they remain coqui-free.

The HDOA recently purchased approximately \$70,000 of citric acid (i.e., 1400 x 50 lb bags of citric acid) for use by program staff and community groups for control of the coqui frog. Plant Quarantine and Plant Pest Control program staff are working with nurseries to help growers keep growing areas free of the frog through barrier technology and chemical treatment and through the hot-water treatment of plants prior to movement interisland and out-of-state. To this end, a cost-sharing program has been established by the HDOA and County of Hawaii for commercial nurseries to recover up to 25% of eligible costs, not to exceed \$10,000, for the construction of a hot-water treatment facility for the disinfestation of plants. Hot-water treatment facilities have also been constructed by the HDOA for the treatment of plants found to be infested with the frog. One facility is located on Oahu at the Plant Quarantine Station near Sand Island, the second facility is a mobile unit for use by nurseries on the Island of Hawaii.

While these efforts help to contain the spread of the coqui frog, the frog is now wide spread in the East Hawaii area and is beyond eradication at this time on the Island of Hawaii with the available tools. A biocontrol of the frog is needed; however, no promising method of biocontrol for the frog has yet to be found that can be applied in Hawaii.



LATE

William P. Kenoi
Mayor

William T. Takaba
Managing Director

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Deputy Managing Director

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March 3, 2009

The Honorable Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
And Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means,
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Re: Senate Bill 696, RELATING TO COQUI FROGS

Dear Chair Kim and Committee Members:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 696, which would appropriate funds for grants-in-aid to the counties for coqui frog eradication for fiscal year 2010.

As you know, Hawai'i County has for years been a leader in the fight against the spread of coqui frogs despite the fact that this problem is clearly under the jurisdiction of the state Department of Agriculture. Today, our budget shortfall makes it extremely difficult for the county to continue to finance this effort.

Despite the county's financial difficulties, we stand ready to assist in state and federal efforts to control and eradicate the coqui frog. In the spirit of cooperation and collaboration, the county will provide matching funds for any money the state devotes to these efforts on Hawai'i Island.

We hope that with the assistance of the state we will be able to continue the community-based effort to control the spread of the coqui, and even to eliminate this invasive pest in those areas where it has not yet become firmly established.

Thank you for your consideration.

Aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Billy Kenoi".

Billy Kenoi
MAYOR

kim2 - Arline

LATE

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2009 4:37 PM
To: WAM Testimony
Cc: rick.pacific@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for SB696 on 3/3/2009 9:30:00 AM

Testimony for WAM 3/3/2009 9:30:00 AM SB696

Conference room: 211
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Rick Gaffney
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: rick.pacific@gmail.com
Submitted on: 3/2/2009

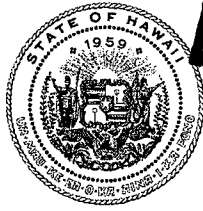
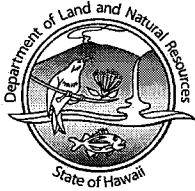
Comments:

I support this bill because Coqui are a huge problem on the big island and will be elsewhere unless a consistent effort is made to rid the islands of this obnoxious pest.

Bill should be amended to include substantial fines for nurseries on leased State Agricultural lands which fail to eliminate coqui frogs from the public property they lease.

Mahalo,
Rick Gaffney
Kona, Hawaii

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



LATE

LAURA H. THIELEN
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BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
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AQUATIC RESOURCES
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CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
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KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

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**Testimony of
LAURA H. THIELEN
Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committee on
WAYS AND MEANS**

**Tuesday, March 3, 2009
9:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211**

**In consideration of
SENATE BILL 696
RELATING TO COQUI FROGS**

Senate Bill 696 proposes to appropriate funds from general revenues and grant these funds to each of the counties to conduct coqui frog eradication efforts. The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) recognizes the need for coqui frog control and eradication efforts, however, given the current fiscal difficulties, it would not be prudent to pursue enactment at this time.

The Department recognizes coqui frogs as injurious wildlife and an invasive pest. Coqui frogs are only one of several invasive species that have come to the attention of the public. The Department along with its partner departments in the Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC) is tasked with strategically addressing all invasive species. The Department's approach is to support funding a broad, comprehensive program of invasive species effort through the HISC, so that such control efforts can be carried out in a coordinated and strategic manner. Limiting funds to only one species will reduce the ability of HISC to address most pressing needs in a flexible and adaptable manner.

The Department supports funding of work on invasive species, including coqui, but recommends that it be an integrated, broad and efficient approach to address multiple species through the strategic HISC process and not be limited to a single species approach.