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Governor



State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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DUANE K. OKAMOTO
Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE
AND
ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION, BUSINESS & MILITARY AFFAIRS
FRIDAY, APRIL 17, 2009
10:30 A.M.
ROOM 312**

**SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 72
REQUESTING THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE UNITED
STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY TO COLLABORATE AND SHARE
INFORMATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO PREVENT INVASIVE
SPECIES FROM ENTERING THE STATE OF HAWAII**

Chairpersons Tsuji and McKelvey and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Concurrent Resolution 72. The purpose of this resolution is to request USDA and USDHS to collaborate and share information with the department to prevent invasive species from entering the State of Hawaii. We strongly support this resolution, but would like to offer the following amendment.

The department's Plant Quarantine Branch, is legally mandated to inspect disembarking passengers, baggage, and cargo to reduce the introduction of invasive species that are brought into the State as a result of the movement of people and goods. As such, a strong emphasis should be on prevention efforts. Sadly, many invasive species are already impacting Hawaii's farmers and environment. The department would like to amend the resolution by adding another request into the resolution.

"(3) Enter into a cooperative agreement between USDA and HDOA as authorized under Section 10201 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2006."

Congress authorized cooperative agreements as part of an Early Pest Detection and Surveillance Improvement Program. A cooperative agreement with Hawaii offers a unique

opportunity to design an overarching prevention strategy that will benefit both Hawaii and the Nation. It also allows the state to compete for part of the \$12 million that is available for Pest and Disease Management that is so vital to our growers.

The welfare of our environment is dependent on our ability to prevent the introduction of invasive species. Hawaii contains 25% of the organisms on the list of Threatened and Endangered species, and this vulnerable biodiversity must be protected from invasive species. Many of Hawaii's unique species have already become extinct. Of all the plants and birds known to be extinct in the U.S., two-thirds were from Hawaii.

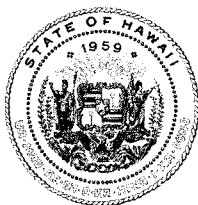
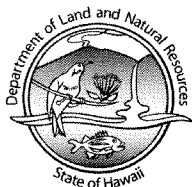
The risk of invasive species introductions is increasing as we expect 600 times more cargo from Guam moving within and around the Pacific Rim in 2010 due to the marine expansion in Guam. Proposed mitigations for the marine expansion in Guam have focused on the Brown Tree Snake, as it would cost the State more than \$400 million per year to manage the problem. This one invasive pest alone has caused over 1200 electrical outages in Guam from 1978 to 2004 because of its tendency to climb power lines and transformers.

There are other invasive species that would also follow this pathway such as mosquitoes and fire ants. Both pests would alter Hawaii's outdoor lifestyle and tremendously impact our economy and environment. Hawaii only has five species of mosquitoes, but there are hundreds of species in the Asia-Pacific rim that if established are capable of transmitting human and animal diseases, such as dengue, encephalitis, and malaria.

The impact of the red imported fire ant (RIFA) to recreation, tourism, and business, which includes golf courses, hotel/resort areas, and commercial businesses, would be nearly \$7 million a year and nearly \$135 million for foregone outdoor activities for residents and tourists. We have had two interceptions of this ant thus far, and now this pest completely surrounds us because of its presence on the West Coast, Asia, and the Pacific.

For these reasons, there is a vital need to have stronger collaboration with the federal agencies. We strongly concur that we must maximize our prevention efforts at the ports through improved communication, shared information and the operation of joint-use inspection facilities.

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



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

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**Testimony of
LAURA H. THIELEN
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committees on
AGRICULTURE
and
ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION, BUSINESS, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS**

**Friday, April 17, 2009
10:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 312**

**In consideration of
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 72
REQUESTING THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY TO COLLABORATE
AND SHARE INFORMATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (DOA)
TO PREVENT INVASIVE SPECIES FROM ENTERING THE STATE OF HAWAII.**

Senate Concurrent Resolution 72 proposes to request the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the United States Department of Homeland Security (USDHS) to collaborate and share invasive species related information with the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (DOA). The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) support this resolution.

The Department applauds DOA for their continuing efforts to work with USDA and USDHS on invasive species information sharing issues. The Department acknowledges the threats that invasive species cause especially to the State of Hawaii, and encourages federal partners to recognize the need to work with the State to prevent the entrance of invasive species. As such, the Department supports the collaborative information sharing and construction of joint state and federal inspection facilities, contingent upon available funding, as requested by this resolution.

LAURA H. THIELEN
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

RUSSELL Y. TSUJI
FIRST DEPUTY

KEN C. KAWAHARA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS



OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Legislative Testimony

**SCR 72, REQUESTING THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AND THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY TO
COLLABORATE AND SHARE INFORMATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE TO PREVENT INVASIVE SPECIES FROM ENTERING THE STATE
OF HAWAII**

House Committees on Agriculture, and

Economic Revitalization, Business, & Military Affairs

April 17, 2009

10:30 a.m.

Room: 312

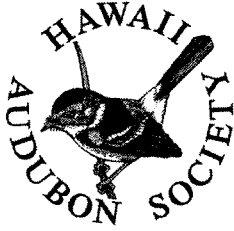
The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** SCR 72, which requests the United States Department of Agriculture and the United States Department of Homeland Security to collaborate and share information with the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture to prevent invasive species from entering the state.

Today, with less than 0.2% of the land area of the United States, the Hawaiian Islands support more than 30% of the nation's species listed under the Endangered Species Act. Hawai'i is well known as the extinction capital of the United States. Further, it is estimated that now up to 30% of all established species in Hawai'i are nonnative.

This legislature has called invasive species the single greatest threat to our state. OHA supports collaborative efforts that will further protect our state, enhance past legislative efforts, and in this time of economic hardship, be a practical way to achieve much needed progress in this area.

OHA points out that this bill also parallels presidential Executive Order 13112, Invasive Species (February 3, 1999), which requires federal agencies to use their authorities to prevent the introduction of invasive species, detect invasive species, and eradicate and control such species in a cost-effective and environmentally sound manner.

Therefore, OHA urges the Committees to PASS SCR 72. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



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

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TO: Committee on Agriculture
Representative Cliff Tsuji, Chair
Representative Jessica Wooly, Vice Chair

Committee on Economic Revitalization, Business and Military Affairs
Representative Angus I. K. McKelvey, Chair
Representative Issac W. Choy, Vice Chair

HEARING: Friday, April 17, 2009; 10:30 A.M., Conference Rm. 312

Re: SCR72 Invasive Species

Testimony in Support

Chair's Tsuji and McKelvey, and members of the Committee's on Agriculture, and Economic Revitalization, Business and Military Affairs. My name is George Massengale and I am a long time member of the Hawaii Audubon Society, and during session I serve as their legislative analyst. We're happy to be here today to offer testimony in support of SCR72, which would request the United States Departments of Agriculture (USDA), and Homeland Security (DHS) to collaborate and share information the Hawaii Department of Agriculture to prevent invasive species from entering the State of Hawaii.

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 Hawaii has the highest number of listed threatened and endangered species in the nation. The great majority of our threatened and endangered native birds, wildlife, and plant habitat are being destroyed by invasive species that managed to enter Hawaii via marine shipping containers and commercial aircraft.

This silent invasion of Hawaii by insects, disease organisms, weeds, and other pests is the single greatest threat to Hawaii's economy and natural environment and to the health and lifestyle of Hawaii's people. Pests already cause millions of dollars in crop losses, the extinction of native species, the destruction of native forests, and the spread of disease. But many more harmful pests now threaten to invade Hawaii and wreak further damage. Even one new pest--like the brown tree snake--could forever change the character of our islands. Stopping the influx of new pests and containing their spread is essential to Hawaii's future well-being.

We would point out that despite the efforts of more than 20 state, federal, and private agencies, unwanted alien pests continue to enter Hawaii at an alarming rate - about 2 million times more rapid than the natural rate. **Sixteen years ago the federal Office of Technology Assessment declared Hawaii's alien pest species problem the worst in the nation.** Hawaii's evolutionary isolation from the continents, and its modern role as the commercial hub of the Pacific make these islands particularly vulnerable to destruction by alien pests. **Gaps in current pest prevention systems and a lack of public awareness add further to this serious problem.**

The key to preventing invasive animal and plant species from entering our state is as SCR72 clearly articulates "collaboration" between those agencies and organizations that are tasked to intercept, quarantine, and eradicate invasive plants and animal. **We believe that the U.S. Office of General Counsel in advising USDA and DHS not to notify states regarding entry of invasive species is truly idiotic and needs to be changed.**

We hope that SCR72 will encourage those individuals at HSDA and DHS to reconsider the General Counsel's advice and correct this asininity.

We strongly commend the Senator Hee for introducing this resolution and would urge the committees to vote for passage.

Sincerely,



George Massengale, JD
Legislative Analyst