

LINDA LINGLE  
Governor



State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
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**SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO**  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

**DUANE K. OKAMOTO**  
Deputy to the Chairperson

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

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2010  
3:00 P.M.  
ROOM 308**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 2948, H.D. 1  
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chairperson Oshiro and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 2948, H.D. 1. The purpose of this bill is to 1) Establish restrictions on the interisland movement of certain agricultural and nonagricultural articles; 2) Amend requirements related to the notification of arrival, labeling, authority to inspect, and importation of certain agricultural and nonagricultural articles; and, (3) Establish a misdemeanor offense and increase the fine applicable to violators.

The department strongly supports this measure.

Invasive species threatens Hawaii's economy, agriculture industry, its people, and environment. Preventing the entry of invasive species is a primary part of the mission of the Hawaii Department of Agriculture, and we are trying to fill the gaps in the invasive species prevention system with the implementation of the Hawaii Biosecurity Program. A key component is the timely and proper notification of the movement of goods and the expansion of existing authorities to include nonagricultural commodities. It is imperative for the department to be cognizant of the different articles, whether agricultural or not, that enter the State so that sound decision making can be made to

determine what items require a closer inspection, while at the same time, being able to take action on pest discoveries regardless of whether they appear on agricultural commodities or on other types of cargo.

In 2007, the Legislature provided much needed funding through the Hawaii Department of Transportation to develop an electronic manifest system, which when fully implemented, will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the various port activities throughout the State. It will also improve workflow management and allow for a more efficient scheduling of resources through advance notification of a shipment arrival with the determination of the risk of that cargo made prior to arrival. With an average of 500,000 containers moving into the State each year and another 500,000 containers moving from one island to another, every single container cannot be inspected; however, due to the increased concern about health, environment, and economic impacts of invasive species, the department must be able to screen and inspect high-risk shipments, as well as be given the ability to treat or destroy a pest before it becomes established in Hawaii's farms, homes, and forests.

It has been stated that the transportation infrastructure is critical to an island state, but there must be adequate safeguards to prevent the introduction of invasive species into the state as well as between the neighboring islands. The passage of this measure will be an important mitigation step, and key to the success of the Hawaii Biosecurity Program.

To provide some examples, in 2008, a rock shipment originating from China was found to be infested with spiders; and another shipment containing dried reeds from Africa, which were to be used for home construction, were found to be carrying weed seeds and other insect pests. These experiences emphasized the need for the expansion of HDOA's authority from strictly agricultural commodities to all articles that are destined to Hawaii. As the ever-increasing threat from the brown treesnake and red imported fire ant looms on the horizon, we must be able to respond effectively and

efficiently. Household goods from Guam pose a high risk for the introduction of the brown treesnake into the State, while frozen chicken and earth-moving equipment are a high risk for the red imported fire ant. These particular articles are not adequately covered under current statutory authorities, and therefore, the department's quarantine laws must be expanded to provide adequate protection.

We would once again suggest that Section 2 of this measure be deleted from this bill since another current measure, now referred to as H.B. 1684, H.D. 2, already references subsection (b) of Section 150A-14 in that particular House bill.

Thank you for your continued support of the Hawaii Biosecurity Program and allowing us the opportunity to testify on this very important measure.



**Hawaii Farm Bureau**  
F E D E R A T I O N

2343 Rose Street, Honolulu, HI 96819  
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**TESTIMONY**

**HB 2948HD1 RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chair Oshiro and Members of the Committee:

Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation on behalf of our farmer and ranch families and organizations **support HB 2948 HD1 with effective date restored**, establishing requirements associated with interisland transportation to reduce risks of invasive species movement.

As the State faces unprecedented financial challenges it is critical that agencies operate in the most efficient manner. This means the public, businesses and agencies must form a collaborative partnership to result in maximum productivity within the system. This bill seeks to provide the mechanism to achieve such results. Risk assessments by HDOA have identified maximum risk commodities. At the same time, global trade had resulted in non-traditional movement of pests. This knowledge can be used to improve the efficiency of inspections if advanced knowledge of product movement is identified. We support this bill's intent to achieve this goal.

HFBB strongly requests your **support of this measure, restoring the effective date**, along with timely implementation to improve inspection efficiencies and result in greater protection from invasive species. If there are any questions, please contact Luella Costales at 848 2074. Thank you

Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i  
Supporting H.B. 2948 HD1 Relating to Agriculture  
House Committee on Finance  
Thursday, February 18, 2010, 3:00pm, Rm. 308

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*The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i is a private non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of Hawaii's native plants, animals, and ecosystems. The Conservancy has helped to protect nearly 200,000 acres of natural lands for 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. We also work closely with government agencies, private parties and communities on cooperative land and marine management projects.*

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The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i supports H.B. 2948 HD1 Relating to Agriculture, particularly the enhancements to HRS Section 150A-5 regarding written notification to the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA) of the contents and origin of arriving cargo. Knowing in advance what is arriving at our sea and air ports is a critical component of the HDOA's ability to efficiently deploy its limited resources, protect the state from pest and disease introductions, and expedite the movement of cargo for the benefit of businesses and residents.

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

The HDOA is responsible for the inspection and permitting of arriving cargo and interisland cargo shipments to protect the state from unwanted plant and animal pests and diseases. The Department developed a multi-faceted Biosecurity Plan to enhance its efforts with more inspectors, more efficient and effective inspection services, joint state-federal inspection facilities, and agreements with importers and producers for improved sanitary protocols before items are shipped to Hawai'i and between the islands. Past financial and personnel support provided by the Legislature has been essential to implementing this plan.

Unfortunately, the current budget conditions in the State have caused drastic—and potentially catastrophic—reductions in the Department's capability to review permit applications and to inspect cargo entering and moving between the islands:

- 28 of 50 general funded inspectors have been laid off across the State;
- At Honolulu International Airport (HNL), there are now only 6 inspectors where there used to be 19; and
- Insect interceptions by inspectors at HNL have dropped from about 150 per month down to about 10 per month.

The Department's inspection and permitting capacity has dropped so far below anything that can reasonably be expected to be effective that there is a good chance that we won't know what new pest has arrived and been distributed across the islands until there is an outbreak of some kind. Knowing what is coming before it arrives is critical to make the best use of the resources the HDOA still has.

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**AIRLINES COMMITTEE OF HAWAII**

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February 18, 2010

The Honorable Marcus Oshiro, Chair  
House Committee on Finance

**Re: House Bill 2948, HD1 – Relating to Agriculture  
FIN#3– February 18, 2010, 3 PM – Conference Room 308**

Aloha Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee and Members of the Committee:

The Airlines Committee of Hawaii\* (ACH), which is made up of 23 signatory air carriers that underwrite the Hawaii State Airport System, appreciates the opportunity to share our views with you.

We are aware and supportive of the need to take preventative measures that restrict and reduce the spread of invasive species in the state. As providers of air transportation for visitors and residents and as transporters of airfreight to and within Hawaii, the ACH has supported the expansion of inspection of articles brought into this state. In 2008 as a result of an agreement with the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA), ACH members began voluntarily providing daily manifests for all cargo traveling on flights into the state. This pivotal change has allowed HDOA inspectors the opportunity to screen air freight cargo prior to landing and, subsequently, gives the department the ability to better align its resources to meet inspection needs.

For interisland air cargo, we believe there is a need to make changes to this bill because, as currently written, would be very difficult to carry out. With very short windows for interisland flights and hundreds of departures daily, requiring a written notification of freight in advance of flights would have an adverse impact and become economically devastating for all parties involved in the transportation process from the farmer to the airfreight provider to the merchant.

For these reasons, we respectfully recommend that the committee consider amending this bill to accommodate those challenges and the challenges HDOA is facing with the reduction of agriculture inspectors at all airports throughout the state.

As always, we are grateful for the opportunity to provide input on this matter.

Sincerely,

Alan Ogawa  
ACH Co-Chair

Lori Peters  
ACH Co-Chair

*\*ACH members are Air Canada, Air New Zealand, Air Pacific, Alaska Airlines, All Nippon Airways, American Airlines, China Airlines, Continental Airlines, Continental Air Micronesia, Delta Air Lines, Federal Express, go!, Hawaiian Airlines, Japan Airlines, JALways, Korean Air, Northwest Airlines, Philippine Airlines, Qantas Airways, United Airlines, United Parcel Service, US Airways, and Westjet.*



COORDINATING GROUP ON  
ALIEN PEST SPECIES

The House of Representatives  
Committee on Finance  
Thursday, February 18, 2010  
3:00 p.m., Conference Room 308  
State Capitol

### **Testimony in Support of the Intent of HB 2948 HD1**

Aloha Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the Committee,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) **supports the intent of HB 2948 HD1, *Relating to Agriculture***, and submits the following comments:

Detailed manifests provided in advance of arriving cargo are an important feature of New Zealand's Biosecurity program, and the computer program that tracks the manifests also allows staff to prioritize inspection of high risk containers. It also provides a means to randomly choose a percentage of containers for inspection for quality control purposes. This system saves time and money, and provides information for agency improvement and public/user validation of the program. The extreme shortage of HDOA inspection staff at ports (and the continued movement of pests even in the best of times) necessitates a change in how things are done, and some companies have stepped forward to actively participate in reducing the risk of invasive species moving through the transportation networks, while others may be taking a "wait and see" position. Therefore, CGAPS urges the ongoing discussion between HDOA, transportation companies and legislators to find the best approach to implement detailed manifests. Mahalo.

CGAPS--Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species  
Ph: (808) 722-0995