



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

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March 10, 2011

TESTIMONY

Re: HR77/HCR84 REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, IN COOPERATION WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES, TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO EVALUATE THE CURRENT LAWS, RULES, AND STANDARDS OF PRACTICE REGARDING HIGH RISK PLANTS REQUIRING INTERVENTION.

Chair Tsuji, Nishimoto and Members of the Committees:

Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation on behalf of commercial farm and ranch families and organizations in the State provides the following comments on HR77/HCR84 creating a proactive means to reduce invasive species in Hawaii.

We appreciate the Legislature's continued efforts to increase Hawaii's ability to prevent and control invasive species. The Biosecurity Plan provides an excellent comprehensive roadmap to achieving this goal. The Hawaii Department of Agriculture, and more recently in partnership with the University of Hawaii, College of Tropical Agriculture are making steady progress in establishing processes towards this goal. The efforts to identify and expand production of high risk plants currently imported is a good example. The budget cuts have derailed the process, but efforts continue and they need to be supported. Both entities are doing more with less and support of their efforts is essential.

The intent of this measure is part of Plant Quarantine's jurisdiction. The high risk plants have the most direct impact on the agricultural industry. A voluntary group was convened by the HDOA including all affected parties in agriculture, regulatory entities, researchers, NGOs associated with invasive species. This effort is expected to continue and will achieve the intent of this measure.

Technical personnel at HDOA and CTAHR are strained due to decreased personnel, increased demands and reduction in financial resources. They should be encouraged to continue in the planned course of action and not burdened with unfunded mandates.

We understand and appreciate the intent of this measure but request that the capacities of HDOA and CTAHR be considered in making a decision on this measure. Critical functions need to continue. HDOA has committed to continuing their High Risk Plants discussions so that should suffice to meet the needs of this measure.

For the reasons above, HFBBF does not support this resolution as written. We appreciate this opportunity to provide our opinion on this important matter. If there are questions, please contact Warren Watanabe at 2819716. Thank you