
A BILL FOR AN ACT

MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR AGRICULTURE INSPECTORS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that support for the
2 department of agriculture's biosecurity system is important
3 because of the impact of invasive species on Hawaii's
4 agriculture, environment, natural resources, public health, and
5 economy. The legislature also finds that the effectiveness of
6 the biosecurity program is directly related to the number of
7 inspectors performing inspections at the ports and the resources
8 appropriated to implement the various layers of protection
9 within the biosecurity system.

10 The legislature also finds that the Kahului airport has the
11 facilities and manpower for that port and its corresponding
12 volume of air passengers, baggage, and cargo. Honolulu
13 international airport, which handles the majority of passengers,
14 baggage, and cargo arriving into Hawaii, does not have the
15 inspection facilities or the necessary number of inspectors
16 required to perform effective inspections. The cargo load
17 entering the State through the Honolulu international airport is
18 approximately thirty times that of Kahului airport. Yet,



1 testimony submitted to Senator Daniel Akaka in congressional
2 hearings revealed that the number of inspectors based at the
3 Kahului airport is roughly proportional to the three hundred
4 inspectors based at Honolulu international airport. Senator
5 Akaka highlighted this issue at his field hearing for the United
6 States Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental
7 Affairs, Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the
8 Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia, on October 27,
9 2011.

10 Clearly, as most cargo, including high risk cargo, is
11 cleared and inspected at Honolulu harbor and Honolulu
12 international airport, the biosecurity system must focus on
13 Honolulu harbor and Honolulu international airport. This is not
14 only critical, but urgent since the department of transportation
15 is moving forward with the airport and harbor modernization
16 plans, which will increase the capacity of the harbors and
17 airport, thus correspondingly increasing the risk and potential
18 impacts to the State, as airports and harbors are the two major
19 pathways for invasive species into Hawaii. In this regard,
20 increased movement of goods into Hawaii from international
21 origination points will pose the greatest risk. Moreover, the
22 increased risk of incoming pests will require additional rapid



1 response and quarantine measures by plant quarantine inspectors
 2 due to the inability of the federal inspection agencies to
 3 protect Hawaii from incoming actionable and non-actionable pests
 4 through the ports.

5 As it supports the department of transportation's
 6 modernization programs, the legislature must also support
 7 funding for adequate inspection at the ports, including
 8 additional quarantine and rapid response programs on- and or
 9 off-port and staffing for the department of agriculture plant
 10 quarantine inspector and support staff at levels sufficient to
 11 meet existing requirements prior to the expansion of the port
 12 system. Currently, staffing levels for agricultural inspectors
 13 are approximately fifty per cent of what is necessary to
 14 effectively inspect existing incoming cargo.

15 Failure to provide such financial support will compromise
 16 public health, safety and welfare, agriculture, the environment,
 17 and our economy. Accordingly, focus on protecting the state,
 18 rather than a particular port or county, should be the priority.

19 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the agricultural
 20 development and food security special fund the sum of \$2,400,000
 21 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2012-2013



1 to fund thirty-eight plant quarantine inspectors and three
2 support staff.

3 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
4 agriculture for the purposes of this Act.

5 SECTION 3. The department of agriculture shall submit a
6 status update on agricultural inspection activities funded under
7 this Act to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to
8 the convening of the 2013 regular session.

9 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on February 1, 2050.



Report Title:

Department of Agriculture; Inspectors; Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates funds from the agriculture development and food security special fund to fund plant quarantine inspectors and support staff. Effective February 1, 2050. (HB1940 HD1)

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