

NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



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

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LAND  
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of  
WILLIAM J. AILA, JR.  
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on  
AGRICULTURE**

**Wednesday, February 8, 2012  
9:00 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 312**

**In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 1940  
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR AGRICULTURE INSPECTORS**

House Bill 1940 proposes an appropriation from the Agricultural Development and Food Security Special Fund to fund plant quarantine inspectors and support staff within the Department of Agriculture (DOA) for the purpose of enhancing capacity to detect and prevent the entry of invasive species. The Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) supports the intent of this measure and defers to DOA on the budget implications and the specific language required to adequately address the funding and staffing needs associated with an expanded detection and prevention program.

The number of agricultural inspectors at DOA decreased in recent years due to budget cuts, from 95 to 55 inspectors. Ten positions were restored in 2011, but additional positions are required to adequately detect and prevent invasive species at the State's ports of entry. DLNR recognizes the severe impacts that invasive species could have on the State's natural resources and public health and safety and supports enhancement of invasive species detection and prevention capacity.



COORDINATING GROUP ON  
ALIEN PEST SPECIES

House of Representatives  
Committee on Agriculture  
Wednesday, February 8, 2012  
9:00 a.m., Conference Room 312  
State Capitol

### Testimony in Support of HB 1940

Aloha Chair Tsuji and Members of the Committee,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) supports **HB 1940**, *Making an appropriation for agriculture inspectors*, which would appropriate funds from the agriculture development and food security special fund to fund plant quarantine inspectors and support staff.

The loss of more than 30 HDOA inspectors and support staff on each island is still being felt, even with the restoration of 15 inspector positions. Staff are still doing double and sometimes triple their job loads, and new pests are inevitable. The use of funds from agriculture development and food security special funds is appropriate, as prevention of new pests helps the viability of Hawai'i's agriculture industry, and additional inspectors would be able to clear cargo in a more efficient manner. Your support of HB 1940 is greatly appreciated. Mahalo for your consideration.

Aloha,

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



Testimony Reference : HB 1940

Date of Hearing: Feb 8

From: Hawaii Farmers Union United

### SUPPORT

Testimony:

The HFUU believes that the Dept of Ag needs to get the financial support to accomplish it's mission.

We have suffered greatly in the BEE and the COFFEE industries in the last three years, due to agriculture pests getting through the inspection system.

In recent state administrations, the Ag department seems to have been hit hard and suffer more cuts than other departments.

This is penny wise and pound foolish. Our BEE and COFFEE industries are on the ropes and contemplating a collapse.

The loss of these two industries would be disastrous. In the case of the BEE farmer, one most consider all the other crops that the bees pollenate.

Even the KONA COFFEE industry does not fall alone, they would take down all the value added business that are associated with coffee.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak for the family farmer in Hawaii.

Glenn Martinez  
HFUU President  
FYI:

Hawaii Farmer Union United is the largest agriculture organization in the State of Hawaii that represents the small family farmers at the exclusion of GMO and Mega Corporation mono- crop industrial farms. With small family farmers on every island Hawaii Farmers Union is the only Grassroots farm organization where the members have direct voice.

Any testimony given to the Legislature is vetted to the membership. Often the testimony is a blend of opinions voiced directly from membership. We also encourage all individual members to submit testimony directly, particularly where there voice is different then the majority, thus all farmer voices are heard, not just the loudest.



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[nature.org/hawaii](http://nature.org/hawaii)

Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i  
Supporting H.B. 1940 Making an Appropriation for Agriculture Inspectors  
House Committee on Agriculture  
Wednesday, February 8, 2012, 9:00AM, Rm. 312

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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 10 nature preserves on 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 supports H.B. 1940 and the appropriation of funds from the agricultural development and food security special fund to support more Department of Agriculture Plant Quarantine Branch inspectors and support staff.

Invasive weeds, insects, diseases, snakes, and other pests are one of the greatest threats to Hawaii's economy, agriculture, natural environment, and the health and lifestyle of its people. The HDOA has developed a multi-faceted Biosecurity Program to enhance its invasive species prevention efforts at air and sea ports with more inspectors, more efficient and effective inspection systems and services, improved inspection facilities, and agreements with importers and producers for improved sanitary protocols before items are shipped to Hawai'i.

Evidence from Hawai'i and around the world shows that preventing new pest establishment is exponentially more economical than eradicating a pest or, even worse, controlling it indefinitely once it becomes established. Though some Plant Quarantine Branch inspector and support positions have been reinstated in recent months, their numbers are not nearly what they were prior to the economic downturn and mass layoffs of a few years ago, nor what is necessary to provide sufficient coverage at our air and sea ports.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

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