



The Senate
Committee on Ways and Means
Thursday, March 29, 2012
9:00 a.m., Conference Room 211
State Capitol

Testimony in Support of HB 1942 HD2 SD1

Aloha Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) **strongly supports HB 1942 HD2 SD1, Relating to Invasive Agriculture**, which would allow moneys in the pest inspection, quarantine, and eradication fund to be expended for the electronic importer manifest program, and makes an appropriation for the program.

This bill would allow HDOA to expand the electronic importer manifest pilot program, which is a web-based program that importers of produce and other commodities would use to list their upcoming imports. The detailed web manifest can be viewed by HDOA-PQ inspectors to preview the types of produce, cut flowers, and other commodities being imported, the origin of the commodity, the number of cases or pieces, the airline, flight number, date and time of expected arrival of each commodity. With this web-based system, the inspector could then prioritize inspections according to risk, release low risk commodities, and let the importer know which commodities to hold for inspection. A prototype of the system is already in place, and it has helped in maximizing limited staff, reducing air cargo space issues, expediting clearance of low risk commodities, maintaining food quality and food safety. The pest inspection, quarantine, and eradication fund is an appropriate funding source. Mahalo for your consideration.

Aloha,

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

Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai‘i
Supporting H.B. 1942 SD1 Relating to Agriculture
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Thursday, March 29, 2012, 9:00AM, Rm. 211

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.

The Nature Conservancy supports H.B. 1942 SD1, which would make clear that the State Department of Agriculture (HDOA) may spend revenue from its cargo inspection fee program on fully implementing an electronic shipping manifest program.

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. 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. 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.

A key component of HDOA’s Biosecurity Program is automating and electronically linking the department’s inspection database system with shipping manifests for air and sea cargo arriving in Hawai‘i. When electronically linked, HDOA inspectors are able to make much more informed decisions about the types of cargo arriving in Hawai‘i before it arrives, including the risk of that cargo containing invasive pests and what level of inspection, if any, is needed.

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