

HB1943 HD2

Testimony

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
Governor



RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

TESTIMONY OF RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
TUESDAY, MARCH 13, 2012
2:50 P.M.
ROOM 229

HOUSE BILL NO. 1943 HD2
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Chairpersons Nishihara and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill No. 1943 HD1. The purpose of this Act is to fund the plant quarantine detector-dog program. We support the amended HD1 but respectfully request to amend the funding amount.

The Hawaii Detector Dog Program (HDDP), which began operations in November 1989, was shutdown at the end of June 2009. The remaining personnel were transferred to other inspector positions within HDOA, and the remaining detector dogs were retired and placed in appropriate homes within the State. This was due in part to a 27-percent reduction in State's general funded support to the department that was a direct result of the economic downturn in Hawaii's revenue forecast prior to the end of the State's fiscal year 2009.

On a daily basis there are regularly scheduled commercial as well as military flights that arrive in Hawaii throughout a 24-hour period; therefore, the re-instatement of the HDDP is needed to address the anticipated military build-up in the Marianas. In



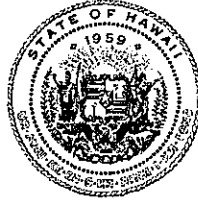
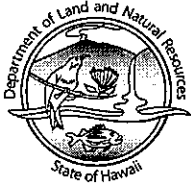
FY09, commercial and private flights amounted to 1,137 aircraft inspected upon arrival, resulting in the clearance of about 25,000 items that underwent visual inspection. As a result of the future military build up in Guam, there is a critical need to secure funding support for HDOA to re-establish the HDDP to effectively screen arriving aircraft and ships as well as associated cargo for the presence of Brown Tree Snake (BTS) from high-risk areas. In addition, any remaining funding support will also be needed for HDOA to further augment the rapid response program for BTS and other snake sighting reports before a snake population becomes established in Hawaii.

Due to the fiscal instability of federal programs in Guam that provide the first line of defense with barriers and interdiction efforts to minimize the spread beyond Guam, it is now more urgent for Hawaii to bolster our prevention efforts to keep the BTS out of Hawaii. As such, we are requesting the re-establishment of the detector dog program to not only assist us in BTS interdiction efforts, but also to minimize the smuggling of illegal animals and contraband.

We respectfully request the amount of funding to be \$162,540 from general funds as we will utilize the monies from the federal grant to reimburse the State for the amount of time used for BTS detection work as related to the grant's conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



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

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

WILLIAM J. AILA, JR.
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

GUY H. KAULUKUKUI
FIRST DEPUTY

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LAND
STATE PARKS

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

**Before the Senate Committee on
AGRICULTURE**

**Tuesday, March 13, 2012
2:50 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229**

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 1943, HOUSE DRAFT 2
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

House Bill 1943, House Draft 2 proposes an appropriation of general revenues to match a federal grant for the detector-dog program within the Department of Agriculture (DOA). The Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) supports the intent of this measure and defers to DOA on the details of staffing needs and funding the detector-dog program.

House Bill 1943, House Draft 2 will provide the state match to a federal grant to fund the detector-dog program and also provide greater flexibility to utilize the Program for other state prevention activities in addition to brown tree snake interdiction. DLNR recognizes the severe impacts that invasive species, including the brown tree snake, could have on the State's natural resources and public health and safety. DLNR welcomes the enhancement of invasive species detection and prevention capacity through this program.



The Senate
Committee on Agriculture
Tuesday, March 13, 2012
2:50 p.m., Conference Room 229
State Capitol

Testimony in Support of HB 1943 HD2

Aloha Chair Nishihara and Members of the Committee,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) supports HB 1943 HD2, *Relating to Invasive Species*, which would make an appropriation to re-establish the HDOA detector dog program.

The 2009 CGAPS Vision and Action Plan lists the re-establishment of HDOA's detector dog program as one of the ten most important actions we must take to protect Hawai'i. Although vitally important in detecting brown treesnakes and other species of concern, the dog/handler teams are also effective at encouraging honest behavior in people that see them in the terminals, and discouraging smuggling in those that are taking advantage of the current system. We respectfully ask for your support. Mahalo for your consideration.

Aloha,

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



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

2343 Rose Street • Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Phone: (808) 848-2074 • Neighbor-Islands: (800) 482-1272
Fax: (808) 848-1921 • Email: info@hfbf.org
www.hfbf.org

March 13, 2012

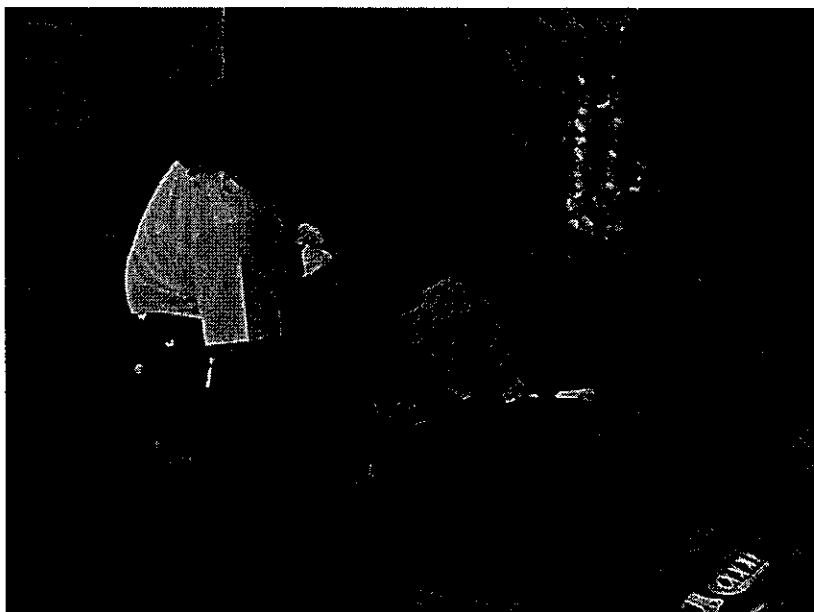
HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

TESTIMONY ON HB1943, HD2
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Room 229
2:50 PM

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Kahele, and Members of the Committee:

I am Mae Nakahata, representing the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation (HFBF). Organized since 1948, the HFBF is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide, and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interest of our diverse agricultural community.



HFBF is in strong support of HB1943, HD2, appropriating funds for dog detector positions in HDOA.

Several years ago, Maui was fortunate to have a detector dog. The dog supplemented inspectors. The detector dog teams monitored 546 flights with 122,745 passengers and intercepted 1,747 agricultural commodities, 71% of which were not declared by passengers. In one case persimmons infested with mealybugs not known to Hawaii were detected by the dog. As many of you know Maui is known for persimmons in the fall so this could have had major impacts on the industry. During the time, passengers were comfortable with the detector dog and supportive of the use of the dog by the State to keep alien pests out of the State.

Flights from Guam pose significant threats our island environment. Recently there have been many reports of snakes. Their presence provides evidence that existing methods are insufficient to protect our islands from this threat. The success rate of brown tree snakes in taking over environments make it imperative that preventive measures must be put into place. Escapes of these snakes in Hawaii with no predators will be devastating.

We respectfully urge your strong support and restoration of funding to this measure. Past experience proves it is an efficient use of resources. Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this important matter.



Protecting nature. Preserving life.™

The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i
923 Nu'uuanu Avenue
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817

Tel (808) 537-4508
Fax (808) 545-2019

nature.org/hawaii

Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i
Supporting H.B. 1943 HD2 Relating to Invasive Species
Senate Committee on Agriculture
Tuesday, March 13, 2012, 2:50PM, Rm. 229

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. 1943 HD2 and its purpose to provide support for State Department of Agriculture (HDOA) to reinstate its dog detector program. Please provide sufficient funding to ensure that the HDOA is able to support this program with permanent staffing, with the understanding that State funds will be matched by funds from the U.S. Department of Interior's Office of Insular Affairs.

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.

Having an operational canine inspection program is an important means of detecting pests in cargo, particularly brown tree snakes that may stow away in cargo coming to Hawai'i from Guam. 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. This is especially the case with brown tree snakes that have caused enormous ecological as well as economic harm to Guam.

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TESTIMONY

Committee on Agriculture
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Senator Gilbert Kahele, Vice Chair

Tuesday March 13, 2012
TIME: 2:50 pm
PLACE: Conference Room 229

RE: HB 1943, HD2 - Relating to Invasive Species

Chairperson Nishihara, Vice-Chair Kahele and Committee Members,

My name is Phyllis Shimabukuro-Geiser and I am testifying as a resident of Hawaii. I support HB 1943, HD 2 concerning appropriations for the detector-dog program.

I have personally witnessed the danger and destruction of the brown tree snake in Guam. I saw the snakes wrapped around fencing and gates of private property, specially the entrance to Guam's sole egg farm during a farm visit. I also toured the Guam Department of Agriculture and saw many large freezers filled with hundreds of brown tree snakes that the local department captured as part of their surveillance program. Besides the monsoons, the snake's impact on human welfare and agriculture are major deterrents to Guam's sustainability and food security. Hawaii is at risk without adequate detection due to the frequency of air travel from the region. For these reasons, I support the appropriation to the Department of Agriculture to the plant quarantine detector-dog program.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Phyllis Shimabukuro-Geiser