



State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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LATE TESTIMONY

TESTIMONY OF RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2012
8:00 AM
ROOM 312

HOUSE BILL NO. 1943 RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Chairpersons Tsuji and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill No. 1943. The purpose of this Act is to establish the Hawaii invasive species detection and prevention program within the department and makes an appropriation for the contracting of private dog handlers. We strongly support the intent, but have concerns on establishing a new invasive species detection and prevention program on top of the existing Biosecurity program. We also have strong concerns with contracting private dog handlers because of our program's regulatory nature. We respectfully suggest the language of this bill be merged with the language of HB 1747 and offer an HD1 for your review.

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 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 Brown treesnake 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. There are vacant federal detector dog positions, however, we would like to have half of the salaries be funded from the Agriculture Development and Food Security Special fund or from general funds to maintain the proper nexus with the federal grant.



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

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February 1, 2012

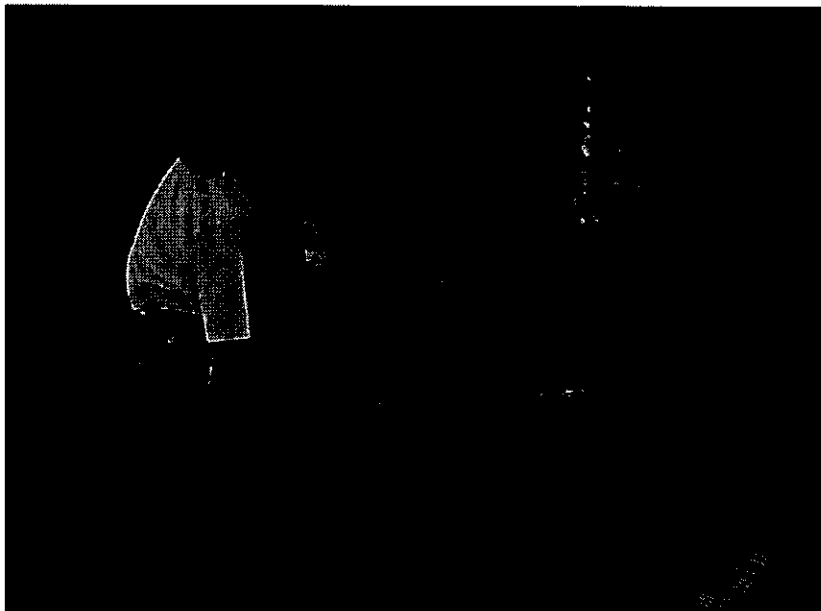
HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

TESTIMONY ON HB 1943
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Room 312
8:00 AM

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Hashem, and Members of the Committee:

I am Warren Watanabe, 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 HB 1943, 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 of this measure. Past experience proves it is an efficient use of resources. Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this important matter.

LATE TESTIMONY

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 01, 2012 8:26 AM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: farmfreshhawaii@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1943 on 2/1/2012 8:00:00 AM

Testimony for AGR 2/1/2012 8:00:00 AM HB1943

Conference room: 312
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: Yes
Submitted by: Juanita Kawamoto Brown
Organization: Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hi
E-mail: farmfreshhawaii@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/1/2012

Comments: