

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
Governor



RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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TESTIMONY OF RUSSELL S. KOKUBUN
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2012
1:30 P.M.
ROOM 308

HOUSE BILL NO. 2244 HD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE INSPECTORS

Chairpersons Oshiro and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill No. 2244 HD1. The purpose of this Act is to establish a licensure program to deputize private inspectors for the purpose of conducting inspections on other parts of the United States. We support the bill as amended in HD1.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i
Supporting the Intent of H.B. 2244 HD1 Relating to Agriculture Inspectors
House Committee on Finance
Friday, February 24, 2012, 1:30PM, Rm. 308

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 the intent of H.B. 2244 HD1 and its purpose to allow the State Department of Agriculture (HDOA) to enter into compliance agreements with other state and federal agriculture agencies to monitor production, treatment, packing, and inspection of commodities in their state of origin before being shipped to Hawai'i. We defer to the HDOA as whether its current authorities related to such compliance agreements are sufficient, and whether this measure would enhance their ability to protect Hawai'i from new pest introductions.

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. Enhancing the Department of Agriculture's ability to have cargo assessed, and possibly treated, for invasive pests before it ever leaves an out-of-state point of origin will be helpful in preventing new pest arrivals in Hawai'i.

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FINTestimony

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
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Conference room: 308
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Luana Beck
Organization: Individual
E-mail: hooluanaranch@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2012

Comments:

We support the passage of HB 2244 and the amended wording submitted by the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation to also "serve the rural underserved communities within the State of Hawaii". Mahalo!
Tom and Luana Beck

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 23, 2012 12:42 PM
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Conference room: 308
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Warren Watanabe
Organization: MCFB
E-mail: warrenmcfb@hotmail.com
Submitted on: 2/23/2012

Comments: