



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

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2012
9:00 A.M.
ROOM 211

SENATE BILL NO. 2460
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairperson Nishihara and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill No. 2460. The purpose of this Act is to make an appropriation to the department for the funding of the electronic importer manifest program. We strongly support this measure.

The Importer Manifest program allows the Department to prioritize inspection prior to importation enabling the department to utilize staffing more effectively. For importers, the manifest system allows the perishable commodities to go to transitional inspection facilities and be released if the commodity is low-risk instead of being held for inspection thereby alleviating congestion. Inspection will be done on-site at the transitional facility for high- and medium-risk commodities allowing for better detection of pests. Low risk commodities will be randomly selected for inspection.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai‘i
Supporting S.B. 2460 Relating to Agriculture
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Friday, February 24, 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 S.B. 2460, 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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