

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

Testimony of
WILLIAM J. AILA, JR.
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on
FINANCE

Wednesday, April 2, 2014
2:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 2920, SENATE DRAFT 1, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Senate Bill 2920, Senate Draft 1, House Draft 1 proposes to appropriate funds to: 1) the County of Hawaii Department of Parks and Recreation to establish a pilot project relating to the control of Little Fire Ant (*Wasmannia auropunctata*), 2) the University of Hawaii to establish a canine detection team for statewide use to assist in the detection of little fire ants, and 3) the Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC) for a statewide public awareness and education campaign on little fire ants. The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) **supports this measure and offers the following comments.**

The stinging, invasive Little Fire Ant is a primary threat to Hawaii's environment, agriculture, and economy, as well as to the health and way of life of Hawaii's people. The interagency HISC, administratively housed within the Department, has provided key funding support to the Hawaii Ant Lab, which is the State's primary resource for research on invasive ant control. The Hawaii Ant Lab is based in Hilo and has engaged in research on different pesticides, applicator methods, and control strategies for Little Fire Ant. The Department supports funding the County of Hawaii for control work in county parks and suggests coordinating control efforts, research, and strategies with the Hawaii Ant Lab in order to facilitate information.

As a number of bills this session address invasive species issues, the Department suggests that this appropriation be considered in addition to other invasive species bills this session, including those that would provide funds to the HISC for coordinated, interagency direction for invasive species projects across the State. The Department supports this additional appropriation measure, provided that this appropriation does not replace or adversely impact appropriations for other priorities in the Executive Budget request.

The Department appreciates the opportunity to provide these comments.

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

JESSE SOUKI
FIRST DEPUTY

WILLIAM M. TAM
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
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HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
Governor



SCOTT E. ENRIGHT
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

KEN H. KAKESAKO
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512
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**TESTIMONY OF SCOTT E. ENRIGHT
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**WEDNESDAY APRIL 2, 2014
2:00 P.M.
ROOM 308**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2920 SD2 HD1
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

Chairperson Luke and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2920 SD2 HD1 relating to invasive species. This bill establishes and appropriates funds for a little fire ant pilot project in the County of Hawaii's Department of Parks and Recreation to address the spread of little fire ants and develop model strategies to eradicate the threat of little fire ants that can be implemented statewide, a canine detection team pilot project, and public awareness and education campaign to address the little fire ant threat in Hawaii.. The Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA) supports the intent of this bill, but defers to the County of Hawaii Department of Parks and Recreation, the University of Hawaii, and the Hawaii Invasive Species Council as to the implementation of this bill.

Hawaii faces many invasive species threats across the islands, including the little fire ant (LFA). Originally from South America, LFA is considered among the world's most invasive species. LFA are tiny ants, measuring 1/16th long and are pale orange in color. LFA can produce painful stings and large red welts and may cause blindness in pets. They can build up very large colonies on the ground, in trees and agricultural areas and nurseries.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.



DENNIS "FRESH" ONISHI
Council Member
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HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL

25 Aupuni Street, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

April 1, 2014

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
and Members of the Committee on Finance

Dear Representative Luke and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony strongly supporting Senate Bill 2920.

Funds appropriated in this bill will allow Dr. Cas Vanderwoude from the Hawai'i Ant Lab under the Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa to continue working to find ways to stop the spread of the little fire ant, which is an issue of serious statewide concern.

The program that they have started with the County of Hawai'i Department of Parks and Recreation, using grant funding from the Hawai'i Tourism Authority, is testing different kinds of bait insecticides for their effectiveness against the little fire ant.

Treatment started on January 15 at Richardson Ocean Park and also at the Pana'ewa Rainforest Zoo, with encouraging results.

A second bait treatment with a different insecticide was applied at Richardson Ocean Park on the afternoon of Thursday, March 27. The Hawai'i Ant Lab is still collecting data to study the effectiveness of this second treatment.

This bill also appropriates funds for a statewide canine detection team pilot project and a statewide public awareness and education campaign to stop the spread of the ant. A multi-pronged approach to the little fire ant is the best way to keep it from spreading further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis Onishi".

Dennis "Fresh" Onishi
Hawai'i County Council Member

finance1

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, April 01, 2014 2:16 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: misc@hawaii.edu
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2920 on Apr 2, 2014 14:00PM

SB2920

Submitted on: 4/1/2014

Testimony for FIN on Apr 2, 2014 14:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Teya Penniman	Maui Invasive Species Committee	Support	No

Comments: The Maui Invasive Species Committee supports this measure and respectfully requests language requiring the Hawaii Invasive Species Council to establish an inter-island multi-stakeholder Working Group. Proposed text: There is established within the Hawaii invasive species council an invasive species task force to address the continued movement of invasive plants, plant pests, and vertebrate pests between islands. The invasive species task force shall: (1) Consider and propose recommendations to address the continued movement of invasive plants, plant pests, and vertebrate pests between islands; (2) Gather relevant background data on invasive species that pose a threat to Hawaii; (3) Assess the current and future impact of invasive species to Hawaii; (4) Examine and assess existing methods for addressing invasive species in Hawaii; (5) Examine needed state policies or responses to address the continued movement of invasive species between islands; and (6) Examine other concerns of the task force regarding invasive species movement in Hawaii. The invasive species task force shall consist of representatives from the following departments, sectors, and organizations: (1) Department of land and natural resources; (2) Department of agriculture; (3) Department of health; (4) Department of business, economic development, and tourism; (5) Department of transportation; (6) University of Hawaii; (7) Invasive species committees; (8) Coordinating group on alien pest species; (9) Agriculture; (10) Horticulture; (11) Shipping; (12) Tourism; and (13) Others as determined by the Hawaii invasive species council. Members of the task force shall designate a chair from among themselves and serve without compensation for their service on the task force, but may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses, including travel expenses, incurred for serving on the task force. The invasive species task force shall meet at least four times to develop a comprehensive set of recommendations and shall submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2015. The invasive species task force shall be dissolved on July 1, 2015. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$50,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2014-2015 to establish the invasive species task force to address the continued movement of invasive plants, plant pests, and vertebrate pests between islands, including the use for facilitation or consultant services necessary to gather relevant background data and travel to ensure adequate statewide representation. The sum appropriated shall be expended by the Hawaii invasive species council for the purposes of this part.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or

directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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finance1

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 31, 2014 2:33 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: gottlieb@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB2920 on Apr 2, 2014 14:00PM*

SB2920

Submitted on: 3/31/2014

Testimony for FIN on Apr 2, 2014 14:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alan Gottlieb	Hawaii Cattlemen's Council	Support	No

Comments:

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 31, 2014 7:44 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: mmmmahalo2000@aol.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2920 on Apr 2, 2014 14:00PM

SB2920

Submitted on: 3/31/2014

Testimony for FIN on Apr 2, 2014 14:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mike Moran	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Please support. This is manini move on an extremely critical problem, but any action is better than none. Let us not wait until we are overrun with LFA. Mahalo, Mike Moran Maui

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Sent: Tuesday, April 01, 2014 3:49 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: pennysfh@Hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2920 on Apr 2, 2014 14:00PM

SB2920

Submitted on: 4/1/2014

Testimony for FIN on Apr 2, 2014 14:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Penny Levin	Individual	Support	No

Comments: This bill includes the participation of the HISC and focuses the pilot program on big island which has been the primary source of little fire ants to the other islands through nursery shipments predominantly. The conservation, agriculture and tourism community needs all the help it can get to control LFA at the source. Education, inspection, containment and eradication are all critical parts of the process. Canine teams are now being used successfully in Guam to detect LFA, recently in one of their major public parks. LFA in public parks put mothers, young children and pets at particular risk. LFA is the biggest growing threat we have not just to agriculture but to the tourist industry, residential homes, young children, pets and every sector of society and business. I urge the legislature to do whatever it can to support the detection, control and eradication of this invasive species. mahalo.

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LATE

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, April 01, 2014 4:14 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: lynhowe1946@yahoo.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB2920 on Apr 2, 2014 14:00PM*

SB2920

Submitted on: 4/1/2014

Testimony for FIN on Apr 2, 2014 14:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lyn Howe	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

April 2, 2014

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON SB 2920, SD2, HD1
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Room 308
2:00 PM

LATE

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto, Vice Chair Johanson, and Members of the Committee:

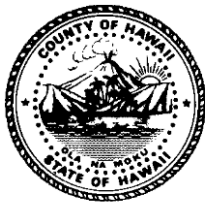
I am Christopher Manfredi, President of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,832 farm family members statewide, and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interest of our diverse agricultural community.

HFB is in strong support of SB 2920, SD2, HD1, which establishes and appropriates funds for a little fire ant pilot project, canine detection team pilot project, and public awareness campaign to research solutions for addressing the little fire ant threat in Hawaii.

HFB recognizes the harm that the little fire ant has caused to farms, businesses, and the quality of life of those affected by the pest. We agree that immediate measures must be undertaken to stop its spread to other areas.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

William P. Kenoi
Mayor



Laverne R. Omori
Director

Donn S. Mende
Deputy Director

County of Hawai`i

DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

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April 1, 2014



The Honorable Sylvia Luke
Chair, Committee on Finance
State Capitol, Conference Room 308
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Testimony on SB 2920 SD2 HD1

Dear Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the County of Hawai`i, Department of Research and Development, we hereby provide testimony in support of SB 2920 HD1. This bill would provide funds to help combat the Little Fire Ant (LFA) on Hawai`i Island and assist in controlling the spread of this pest to other islands.

In the world of damaging invasive species, the Little Fire Ant is among the most significant pests to get to Hawai`i's shores. Unlike the coffee berry borer or the varroa mite that have direct impact on specific sectors of our agricultural economy, the LFA has the potential for inflicting much more wide spread economic damage. Not only could it adversely impact multiple agricultural crops, beaches and forest lands, it could impact our tourist industry. It is a very difficult pest to control and will require concerted efforts on many fronts to gain the upper hand.

SB 2920 HD1 takes needed steps towards addressing the challenge that the LFA presents. Hawai`i County would welcome the opportunity to continue its close working relationship with the Hawai`i Ant Lab to come up with innovative ways to control LFA infestations.

Because of logistical hurdles we believe the June 30, 2015 deadline is quite ambitious and would like to suggest the bill be amended to reflect an end date of December 31, 2015 with a final report due to the Legislature in January, 2017.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. In the event you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

DONN S. MENDE
Deputy Director

LATE

I, Nathan Graves strongly support the passage of SB2920 SD2 HDI

The *Wasmannia auropunctata* or little fire ant, threatens Hawaii's ecosystem and biodiversity. Little fire ants have had a devastating role throughout the Pacific, and have grown at rates that will continue to threaten species. The little fire ant invades agricultural land and farms that both damages farms and has a harmful effect on workers. The little fire ant also promotes scale insects that secrete plant sap and protects these insects from their natural predators. The little fire ant has also been known for infesting houses, beds, furniture and food. In the Galapagos the fire ant has been known to eat tortoise hatchlings and attack the eyes of adult tortoises.

The invasive species has already spread throughout the big island, Kauai, Oahu, and Maui. Although, at times there may be a conflict between animal rights and invasive species reduction, in the case of the little fire ant there is much more harm than good. Unfortunately Hawaii's climate suits the reproduction of the little fire ant perfectly, because of that reason action must be taken. The little fire ant has proven to have a negative effect on humans, agriculture, and native Hawaiian species.

Without passage of this bill the state will be unable to address the spread of the little fire ant. It is important that the state of Hawaii works in collaboration with the ant lab of Pacific Cooperative Studies at the University of Hawaii to research solutions in order to stop this invasive species. Because of these reasons, I fully endorse this legislation and urge the state legislature to pass it into law.

Respectfully Yours,

Nathan Graves



LATE

Committee on Finance
Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Scott Nishimoto, Vice Chair
Rep. Aaron Johanson, Vice Chair

Testimony of the Oahu Invasive Species Committee in **support** of SB 2920: Relating to Invasive Species.

Wednesday, April 2, 2014 2:00 PM, Room 308

The Oahu Invasive Species Committee **supports** SB 2920, which would provide critical funding for a little fire ant detection pilot project to conduct research on control of this species, and to implement a statewide awareness and education campaign.

Little fire ant has been detected on Kauai, Oahu, Maui and Hawaii islands. This ant species is potentially one of the most devastating invasive species introductions in Hawaii's history. Little fire ant will significantly harm agriculture, tourism and native Hawaiian species as well as every individual's quality of life. Hawaii has the advantage of being one of few locations in the world where practical applied research is being conducted to develop new ways of controlling this invasive species. The Hawaii Ant Lab (HAL), a project of the Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit of the University of Hawaii, has made significant strides in developing technologies to control and eradicate this invasive ant. By funding pilot projects through HAL on Hawaii Island, this will allow for the rapid development of effective management practices to prevent further spread of little fire ant across the state. Hawaii Island has significant infestations where the HAL can test detection and control methods, tools and management practices with the best results. These pilot programs cannot take place on another island because the little fire ant populations are either not large enough where there cannot be a risk of failure of controlling the populations. Little fire ant canine detection teams have been trained and used in Australia for years to great success, and HAL would be able to collaborate with Australian partners to ensure a successful canine program here in Hawaii.

The best method to detect new little fire ant populations outside of known infestation areas is to establish a statewide awareness and education campaign. The public is the best tool resource managers have to learn of new locations of little fire ant throughout the islands. No single organization, not partnership of organizations, have the staffing to survey an entire island. We need to have the public report little fire ant so that we can respond rapidly and effectively to manage new infestations. The Hawaii Invasive Species Council is the best conduit to facilitate funding this outreach effort as it has an established and successful public outreach working group skilled in addressing invasive species issues.

Little fire ant will reduce native forest species diversity, impact endangered seabird and arachnid species such as the happy faced spider and devastate agricultural fields, back yards and public beach parks. This tiny ant has extremely painful stings and may cause blindness in animals,

including household pets. In Hilo, Richardson's Beach Park has been closed down for two days in the past month to treat an infestation of little fire ant. Last month in Guam, a young girl was sent to the emergency room because she had such a severe allergic reaction to little fire ant stings. My best friend's pet cat is blind in its right eye from being repeatedly stung by this ant in their backyard in Hilo. This is a public health, environmental and fiscal emergency that needs to be addressed immediately. We have one opportunity to prevent the spread of little fire ant into the backyards of the State and the time to act is now.

Mahalo,

Oahu Invasive Species Committee



23 E. Kawili St, Hilo, HI 96720 • Phone: (808) 933-3340

LATE

SUPPORTING SB2920 RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES (LITTLE FIRE ANTS)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

APRIL 2, 2:00 PM CONFERENCE ROOM 308

The Big Island Invasive Species Committee is a partnership of private citizens and government agencies working to address invasive species issues on the island of Hawaii. Our mission is to prevent, detect, and control the spread of the highest risk invasive species threats to the Big Island environment, economy, and way of life.

BIISC SUPPORTS THIS MEASURE, AND OFFERS THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS:

We strongly support a detector dog program. Little Fire Ants are a widespread problem on the Big Island, impacting countless residents on their properties, farms, and increasingly, in their favorite recreational sites. BIISC field crews regularly encounter LFA while controlling invasive plants, and had a worker stop breathing for a minute after being bitten around the neck by a huge number of ants. We may have to abandon plant targets due to LFA.

Detector dogs provide the highest level of confidence that inspected goods are free of little fire ants and other pests. At the Hawaii Conservation Conference, a dog handler from Australia explained that the dogs in their biosecurity program can find even a single ant in a case of produce! The Hawaii Ant Lab is well positioned and well-connected professionally to develop and implement the proposed detector dog program on the island of Hawaii.

Control measures have been developed by the Hawaii Ant Lab (HAL), directed by the Hawaii Department of Agriculture. Their small staff includes leading global experts in biosecurity and invasive ant management, and BIISC refers residents to their excellent website daily.

We strongly support the HI County Parks and Recreation Pilot Program. Since the battle for the Big Island has been officially declared “lost,” by the Hawaii Ant Lab, we need an assortment of public and private entities tackling the problem here. As the Hawaii Ant Lab will undoubtedly be asked to focus more on new infestations on Maui and Oahu, it is even more important that Hawaii County be given leeway to try to tackle this problem without constraints.

HAL has developed needed baits, tools, and management practices. **The specific plan for implementing LFA control will vary by site, and requires the dedicated attention of staff who live, work, play, and have authority in each site.** BIISC has tremendous confidence in the ability and dedication of the County Department of Parks and Recreation in carrying out this task.