



State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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TESTIMONY OF SCOTT E. ENRIGHT
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

MONDAY MARCH 17, 2014
9:00 A.M.
ROOM 312

SENATE BILL NO. 2920 SD2
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Chairperson Wooley and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2920 SD2 relating to invasive species. This bill establishes 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.

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.

The Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA) supports the intent of this bill, but would like to mention that much of the work to be done in the pilot project is currently being worked on at the Hawaii Ant Lab. HDOA suggests that the pilot project work closely with the Hawaii Ant Lab to coordinate their efforts.

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

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

**Before the House Committee on
AGRICULTURE**

**Monday, March 17, 2014
9:00 A.M.
State Capitol, Conference Room 312**

**In consideration of
SENATE BILL 2920, SENATE DRAFT 2
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

Senate Bill 2920, Senate Draft 2 proposes to appropriate funds to the County of Hawaii to establish a pilot project relating to the control of Little Fire Ant (*Wasmannia auropunctata*). 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 Hawaii Invasive Species Council (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 sharing.

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

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KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS



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March 17, 2014

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

TESTIMONY ON SB 2920, SD2
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Room 312
9:00 AM

Aloha Chair Wooley, Vice Chair Onishi, 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 which establishes and appropriates funds for a little fire ant pilot project 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.

Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i
Commenting on S.B. 2920 SD2 Relating Invasive Species
House Committee on Agriculture
Monday, March 17, 2014, 9:00AM, Room 312

The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i is a private non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of the lands and waters upon which life in these islands depends. The Conservancy has helped to protect nearly 200,000 acres of natural lands in Hawai'i. Today, we actively manage more than 35,000 acres in 11 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 of Hawai'i submits the following comments on S.B. 2920 SD2 Relating to Invasive Species. We appreciate the crisis situation that exists with respect to the little fire ant (LFA), especially on Hawai'i island, and we support a strong and coordinated response to address this invasion there and on other islands.

However, we hope that the necessary response to LFA will be additive as opposed to shifting funds away from other important priorities that could prevent the State and its partners from also devoting appropriate attention and funding to variety of pest issues across the islands. For example, in Fiscal Year 2007 the Legislature's provision of specific funding for coqui frog control was really a shifting of existing funds from other invasive species programs, which then caused layoffs in the Island Invasive Species Committees and a hiatus in the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council's research grant program.

The task of the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) is to provide a comprehensive, statewide approach to invasive species including prevention, early detection, control, research and education programs. This effort necessarily results in important coordination, collaboration, and prioritization amongst government agencies and partners based on a variety of issues including human health, safety and well-being, economic and agricultural harm, and the threat to the health and function of the natural environment.

Therefore, we respectfully ask that this Committee and the Legislature avoid a piecemeal response and instead take a comprehensive approach of providing significant and consistent funding to address the full range of invasive species priorities across the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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onishi2-Micah-Seth

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, March 15, 2014 8:42 AM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: ja@malu-aina.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2920 on Mar 17, 2014 09:00AM

SB2920

Submitted on: 3/15/2014

Testimony for AGR on Mar 17, 2014 09:00AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jim Albertini	Malu 'Aina	Support	No

Comments: Our organization supports SB2920 SD2 to control the little fire ants. Please fund this bill. Mahalo. Jim Albertini for Malu 'Aina

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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Aloha,

I live in Pa'auilo, on the Hamakua Coast of Hawaii Island. I am a small, organic farmer and have serious concerns about the Little Fire Ant and the effect it has on agriculture and the quality of life on our island.

Everywhere Little Fire Ant has established, this hazardous pest has caused a great deal of damage to humans and animals. Agriculture has stopped in contaminated fields due to injury to workers. I want our state to allocate funding to stop the spread of LFA and fight to eliminate it.

Sincerely,

Donna Mitts
PO Box 344
Pa'auilo, HI 96776

onishi2-Micah-Seth

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, March 14, 2014 2:29 PM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: pennysfh@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SB2920 on Mar 17, 2014 09:00AM*

SB2920

Submitted on: 3/14/2014

Testimony for AGR on Mar 17, 2014 09:00AM in Conference Room 312

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

Comments:

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, March 14, 2014 1:31 PM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: mmmmahalo2000@aol.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2920 on Mar 17, 2014 09:00AM

SB2920

Submitted on: 3/14/2014

Testimony for AGR on Mar 17, 2014 09:00AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mike Moran	Kihei community Association	Support	No

Comments: Please support. Our community has already learned of these devastaing creatures, when they invavded Maui on a small scale a few years back, but were seeming eradicated. but THEY'RE BACK! Let's take actions before we are overwhelmed, as this is at least a start for Hawaii. Mahalo, Mike Moran for KCA Maui

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onishi2-Micah-Seth

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, March 16, 2014 2:42 PM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: tracy@permaculture-hawaii.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2920 on Mar 17, 2014 09:00AM

SB2920

Submitted on: 3/16/2014

Testimony for AGR on Mar 17, 2014 09:00AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tracy Matfin	Individual	Support	No

Comments: The little fire ant affects agriculture at every level. Please support this bill. Sincerely,
Tracy Matfin

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onishi2-Micah-Seth

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, March 15, 2014 9:11 AM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: lynhowe1946@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB2920 on Mar 17, 2014 09:00AM

SB2920

Submitted on: 3/15/2014

Testimony for AGR on Mar 17, 2014 09:00AM in Conference Room 312

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

Comments: It is urgent that this measure is supported. In the Puna district where I live already property values have been affected, farmers cannot harvest crops without full gear protection and the ant has pretty much blanketed the area. We hear reports that the same is occurring in the Hilo district and moving rapidly up the Hamakua coast. We absolutely need more research funding to be put into this disaster. The present cost of treatment is astronomical and therefore many of our t farmers and residents do not do it or just treat around their homes and abandon their farm crops. Farmers who grow using organic methods cannot become certified as the agents used to treat the ant are not organic approved, therefore the number of registered organic farmers will continue to drop. Already it is very late in the game but we must continue to at least help farmers keep the ant at bay and find effective means to avoid spreading it to the other islands. We have watched this situation occurring over the past 8 years and have tried to get the state and dept of Ag to take more drastic measures to control it. That did not happen, education did not happen and now we are in a very very dire situation that poses a tremendous threat to the state of Hawaii's agriculture, real estate and tourism. Everything must be done to help to mitigate this situation NOW!

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