

Honolulu, Hawaii

MARCH 25, 2014

RE: H.C.R. No. 47

Honorable Joseph M. Souki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Twenty-Seventh State Legislature
Regular Session of 2014
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture, to which was referred H.C.R. No. 47 entitled:

"HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO TAKE ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS TO PROTECT OHIA AND OTHER MYRTACEAE FAMILY PLANTS FROM THE DESTRUCTIVE RUST FUNGUS, PUCCINIA PSIDII,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to show that the legislature stands in support of preventing the spread of *Puccinia psidii* (rust fungus) to 'ōhi'a trees thus preventing devastation of our 'ōhi'a forests and the ruin of watershed health and biodiversity. This Resolution will assist in bringing public awareness to the rust fungus issue, prepare business for the ban on the *Myrtaceae* family plants, and send a message to the United States Department of Agriculture demonstrating the legislative intent to support efforts to prevent *Puccinia psidii* from being imported and spread in Hawaii.

The legislature requests that Hawaii Department of Agriculture adopt administrative rules restricting the import of *Myrtaceae* family plants. The measure also requests that the United States Department of Agriculture act upon an existing request from the Department of Land and Natural Resources to classify imports of *Myrtaceae* species as Not Authorized Pending Pest Risk Analysis.



Hawaii Department of Agriculture, Department of Land and Natural Resources, The Nature Conservancy, Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation, Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species, Hawaii Wildlife Fund, Office of Hawaiian Affairs and concerned individuals supported this concurrent resolution.

House Resolution 181 HD1 was passed out of the Committee on Agriculture last session to highlight the current biological, social and economic risks caused by the existing federal pre-emption of state laws, thus making it a very difficult and long process for Hawaii (or any other state) to stop the import of a plant which is spreading disease. This Resolution, HCR47, goes further and specifies that the legislature supports the prevention of the spread of *Puccinia psidii*, rust fungus, and the banning of *Myrtaceae* family plants imports.


Your Committee notes that an economic analysis of the effects of this rust fungus versus banning imports of *Myrtaceae* family plants was completed by the University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization in 2012. The study found that benefits of the proposed import policy largely outweigh the costs, even when potential damages to native 'ōhi'a forest are not directly accounted for. The benefit of banning imports of *Myrtaceae* family plant was estimated at \$14.3 million dollars. In addition the study estimated that the ecosystem benefits, such as recharging the aquifers, provided by the state's watersheds, which are comprised largely of 'ōhi'a forests, are upwards of \$7 billion dollars.

Your Committee notes that it is critically important to address invasive species as quickly and as early as possible. Your Committee respectfully requests that the next Committee determine whether any additional language or better methods can be crafted to address our response time to invasive species issues, particularly to promote communication from executive agencies to the legislature.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture that is attached to this report, your Committee concurs with the intent and purpose of H.C.R. No. 47 and recommends that it be referred to the Committee on Water & Land.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Agriculture,


JESSICA WOOLEY, Chair



State of Hawaii
House of Representatives
The Twenty-seventh Legislature

HSCR 1294-14

Record of Votes of the Committee on Agriculture

Bill/Resolution No.: HCR 47	Committee Referral: AGR, WAL	Date: 3/24/2014		
<input type="checkbox"/> The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on the measure.				
The recommendation is to: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended (as is) <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments (HD) <input type="checkbox"/> Hold <input type="checkbox"/> Pass short form bill with HD to recommit for future public hearing (recommit)				
AGR Members	Ayes	Ayes (WR)	Nays	Excused
1. WOOLEY, Jessica (C)	/			
2. ONISHI, Richard H.K. (VC)	/			
3. AWANA, Karen	/			
4. BROWER, Tom	/			
5. CACHOLA, Romy M.		/		
6. CHOY, Isaac W.	/			
7. OHNO, Takashi	 			/
8. TOKIOKA, James Kunane	/			
9. TSUJI, Clift		/		
10. MATSUMOTO, Lauren Kealohilani	/			
11. WARD, Gene	/			
TOTAL (11)	8	2		1
The recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted If joint referral, _____ did not support recommendation. <div style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">committee acronym(s)</div>				
Vice Chair's or designee's signature: _____ 				
Distribution: Original (White) – Committee Duplicate (Yellow) – Chief Clerk's Office Duplicate (Pink) – HMSO				