

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

SHAN S. TSUTSUI
Lt. Governor



State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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SCOTT E. ENRIGHT
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
Deputy to the Chairperson

TESTIMONY OF SCOTT E. ENRIGHT
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

February 26, 2015
1:30 P.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 308

HOUSE BILL NO. 1403
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Chairperson Luke and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on House Bill No. 1403. This bill mandates the Department of Agriculture to establish a little fire ant (LFA) Pesticide Treatment Coupon Pilot Project and site map, and requires reports to be submitted to the Legislature prior to the 2016 and 2017 Regular Sessions. The Department supports the intent of this measure but would ask for the resources to carry out its intent.

The Department understands the harmful and invasive nature of LFA. As such, the Department has recently provided support to Hawaii County for a pilot program to combat LFA beginning with Hawaii County parks. The Department has also provided funding and support for the Hawaii Ant Lab, an organization that has been on the forefront in the fight against LFA and has created new and innovative methods to treat and eradicate LFA infestations. Furthermore, it is our understanding that the Hawaii Ant Lab is currently working on a map of known LFA infestations throughout the Big Island and further resources for the Hawaii Ant Lab could help them to finish this project and disseminate that information.

In regards to the coupon pilot project, the Department asks for the resources to monitor such a program. It would be very difficult for the Department, with its given



resources, to verify and monitor if the pesticides were being used for the purpose of controlling LFA or for other purposes.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

DAVID IGE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of
CARTY S. CHANG
Interim Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on
FINANCE**

**Thursday, February 26, 2015
1:30 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308**

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 1403
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

House Bill 1403 proposes to appropriate funds to the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA) to implement a pesticide coupon program for control of the little fire ant in the County of Hawaii. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) offers the following comments.**

The Department recognizes the environmental, economic, and public health impacts posed by the little fire ant, and is aware of the HDOA efforts to detect and control this species where possible. In particular, the Department notes that the Hawaii Ant Lab, a collaboration of the University of Hawaii and the HDOA, provides outreach and guidance to private individuals statewide in regard to little fire ant control. The Hawaii Ant Lab holds monthly workshops in the County of Hawaii to review control options for Little Fire Ant and provides information on best practices for pesticide use.

With regard to a coupon program for pesticides in which each coupon would entitle the bearer to a one-year supply of pesticide, the Department notes that, given the high per-unit cost of pesticide and the high number of infested properties in the County of Hawaii, such a coupon program would come at a very high total cost. The Department further notes that while the coupon program may decrease the number of ants on a property whose owner elects to use his or her coupon, larger scale reduction in ant populations across property boundaries would require a strategically coordinated effort among landowners. The Department defers to the HDOA on the fiscal requirements of implementing a pesticide coupon program as well as the efficacy of this treatment model.

The Department appreciates the opportunity to provide these comments.

CARTY S. CHANG
INTERIM CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

DANIEL S. QUINN
INTERIM FIRST DEPUTY

W. ROY HARDY
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AQUATIC RESOURCES
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CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT
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KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

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

25 Aupuni Street, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

February 25, 2014

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

Dear Chair Luke and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill No. 1403, which mandates the Department of Agriculture to establish a Little Fire Ant (LFA) Pesticide Treatment Coupon Pilot Project and site map. Requires the Department to submit reports to the Legislature prior to the 2016 and 2017 Regular Sessions.

Our parks and beaches are important resources for kama'āina and visitors to use and enjoy. But these public places have been under serious threat by the little fire ant, which has become established across the entire state.

In an effort to address this growing environmental threat, with awarded grant funding, the Hawai'i County's Department of Parks and Recreation have established an abatement strategy and protocol which have been utilized at public parks island wide since January 2014. The results have been both impressive and assuring.

A little fire ant Pesticide Treatment Coupon Pilot Project would be extremely helpful, particularly for the residents who live adjacent to the public parks that are currently being treated. A multi-pronged approach to this devastating threat is the best way to keep it from spreading further.

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.

Sincerely,

Dennis "Fresh" Onishi
Hawai'i County Council Member



HAWAII PEST CONTROL ASSOCIATION

Century Square – 1188 Bishop St., Ste. 1003*Honolulu, HI 96813-3304

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February 26, 2015

Testimony To: House Committee on Finance
Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair

Presented By: Tim Lyons, CAE
Executive Director

Subject: H.B. 1403 - RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

I am Tim Lyons, Executive Director of the Hawaii Pest Control Association. It is our members who treat structures for pests including ants. We support this bill but with some comments.

Ant control is actually not a very easy thing to do. After all, we find ants on the 36th floor of a condominium, we find them in airplanes and just about everywhere else. This bill proposes to provide for a pilot pesticide treatment project which we generally agree with however we think it will be a huge waste of money to provide the treatments directly to homeowners for their application.

Pest control operators are trained in ant control. They are taught their biology, their reproduction cycles, their foraging habits and the best ways to control them. The bill further

provides for a one year supply to individuals who have verified the presence of little fire ants. We are not sure what a one year supply is. After all, in some cases if a treatment is made correctly and effectively it takes care of the problem and there is no need to give any additional supplies to the homeowners. On the other hand, if it is a particularly heavy infestation and is not applied correctly you might have to make treatments once a month for a year.

We would highly recommend that this bill be amended to provide for a survey in two (2) phases. One, for those projects where the homeowner did their own treatment and the other where a professional pest control operator was used. The amount of chemical could be tracked, the number of applications and the success rate.

Finally, we would think that with all the "fear" going on regarding pesticides that at the very least, you would want to have applications made by individuals who have been trained. After all the majority of the misapplications that we have read about with HazMat people being called in and children going home sick have been from homeowner applications not from professional pest control operators.

Based on the above, we support this bill but believe it should be amended in order to evaluate results from applications by both professional pest control operators and by homeowners.

Thank you.



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February 26, 2015

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON HB 1403
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Room 308
1:30 PM

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

I am Christopher Manfredi, President of the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFBF is comprised of 1,932 farm family members statewide, and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

HFB is in strong support of HB 1403, which mandates the Department of Agriculture to establish a little fire ant Pesticide Treatment Coupon Pilot Project and site map.

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.



The Nature Conservancy, Hawai'i Program
923 Nu'uuanu Avenue
Honolulu, HI 96817

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Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i
Supporting the Intent H.B. 1403 Relating to Invasive Species
House Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 26, 2015, 1:30PM, Room 308

For more than 35 years, The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i has been working closely with government agencies, local businesses, private landowners, non-profit partners, and interested communities across the state to preserve the lands and waters upon which all life in these islands depends. The Conservancy is a private non-profit conservation organization that 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, and support 19 coastal communities seeking to co-manage marine resources in partnership with the State of Hawai'i.

The Nature Conservancy supports the intent of H.B. 1403 to enhance control efforts for little fire ants on Hawai'i Island by requiring the Department of Agriculture (HDOA) to map infestation sites and establish a pilot pesticide coupon project for property owners. We are concerned that providing free pesticides to property owners in an uncoordinated fashion may result in an expensive but piecemeal and ultimately ineffective treatment and control effort.

If the Legislature is inclined toward a program of subsidies for pesticide purchases, we suggest that supporting a coordinated effort possibly involving the HDOA, the UH Cooperative Extension Service, the Hawai'i Ant Lab, licensed pest control professionals, and established agricultural and nursery associations would be important. An effort coordinated by these entities could have the potential to ensure that amongst other things pesticide application sites are prioritized and coordinated, that application is done consistently, correctly and for the appropriate period of time, and that measures are in place to prevent reinfestation.

We also hope that providing the necessary and critical support for little fire ant control on Hawai'i Island will be additive and not prevent the Legislature, the Administration and partners from also devoting appropriate attention and funding to the full range of pest issues across the islands. Therefore, we respectfully ask that this Committee and the Legislature also take a comprehensive approach of providing significant and consistent funding to address the full range of invasive species prevention, early detection, rapid response, control, research and outreach priorities across the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
TESTIMONY RE: HB 1403 RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

February 27, 2015
Room 312, 8:30 AM

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and Members of the Committee on Finance,

The Maui Chamber of Commerce supports HB 1043 which serves to provide additional tools to assist the Department of Agriculture to expand the current Little Fire Ant (LFA) program in the county of Hawaii. That being said, given the level that the problem on the Big Island has grown to, it is our understanding that eradication there may no longer be possible. Therefore, we strongly support a comprehensive plan through the Department of Agriculture to aid this huge and growing problem for all islands in Hawaii.

Here at the Maui Chamber of Commerce, we believe in creating a strong economic environment that supports job growth while also protecting our environment and preserving our quality of life. We support the "triple bottom-line" view of sustainability: economy, environment and social well-being. The infestations of LFA are affecting all three of these important aspects of our islands' life.

The Maui Chamber of Commerce, therefore, has the LFA as one of its top legislative priorities this year and has recently contributed \$30,000 through the Maui Quarantine Fund for a dog program that detects LFA that can benefit the entire state. Strong investment is needed by the state now to prevent further LFA expansion on Maui and Oahu where additional sites continue to be found, but eradication is still possible.

Introduced species can have dramatic and devastating effects on the plants and animals that have evolved to live in such remote isolation, and the isolation can affect the way these species behave. Little fire ants are insidious invaders. They don't announce their presence by swarming feet and legs; instead, they sting when they are trapped against skin or in clothing. Establishing nests in trees and amongst ground cover, LFA can reach densities of 20,000 workers per meter, or a whopping 155 ants in a square inch. At that level, painful encounters become unavoidable. In 2014, LFA made it through the inspection system at least four times on Maui. LFA was detected at a high-end resort, a condominium, and a nursery on Maui. Recently, two major infestations of little fire ants were discovered in East Maui that will take significant resources to address.

Our HDOA inspectors are making heroic efforts to stop pests from breaching our borders but they still don't have adequate staffing or facilities. We need your help, a comprehensive plan and additional funding now.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

finance8-Melanie

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 25, 2015 11:26 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: mwille@co.hawaii.hi.us
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1403 on Feb 26, 2015 13:30PM

HB1403

Submitted on: 2/25/2015

Testimony for FIN on Feb 26, 2015 13:30PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Margaret Wille	Hawaii County Council Dist 9	Support	Yes

Comments: Please approve HB1403. We need to be more aggressive about the little red fire ant crisis! Thank you. Margaret Wille County of Hawaii Councilmember.

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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**Written Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 26, 2015; 1:30 pm
By
J. Kenneth Grace**

HB 1403 RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto and members of the House Committee on Finance, thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in support, with amendments suggested, of HB 1403, which mandates the Department of Agriculture to establish a little fire ant Pesticide Treatment Coupon Pilot Project for Hawai'i County, and a site map of little fire ant infestations on the Island of Hawai'i.

My name is J. Kenneth Grace. I am a resident of Kaneohe, and employed as Associate Dean for Research in the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR), University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. I am providing personal testimony on HB 1403.

As a research entomologist, I have conducted studies on the control of both ants and termites, and for a decade was a member of the national technical advisory committee for Operation Full-Stop, an area-wide pest suppression program for subterranean termites implemented by USDA-ARS focusing on termite control in the French Quarter of New Orleans, Louisiana.

In the New Orleans project, individual property owners were reimbursed for the cost of professional termite control treatments on their property by a licensed pest management professional (although the payments were made to the industry professionals rather than to the homeowner). The professionals were required to use certain methods deemed acceptable by the government agency in order for the property to qualify for the subsidy. These steps were taken to insure that was consistency in the treatments applied, and that all applications were legal and performed by trained professionals in order to avoid any pesticide misuse or incomplete and ineffective efforts. A great deal of effort also went into educational materials and public meetings to explain the program.

This was a labor intensive and expensive program, but was successful in greatly reducing termite infestations in the French Quarter (although the problem was never completely eliminated). Government funded area-wide fruitfly suppression programs in Hawaii, have also been quite effective. In all of these "area-wide" pest management programs, however rebound of pests after the funding and professional assistance and training ended has always been an issue, since it is very difficult for property owners, on their own, to maintain the concentrated effort required for success. In other studies of area-wide pest control, property owner efforts have also dropped off and pests have rebounded once government assistance ended.

HB 1403 offers a creative variation on government-led, area-wide pest management by offering a subsidy to individual property owners for purchasing ant control products, presumably products deemed effective by the Department of Agriculture. The likelihood of inconstant treatment is a concern to me though, as is the possibility of pesticide misapplication (depending on the products selected).

I would suggest that an alternative approach to consider would be to involve the professional pest management industry in this program, with subsidies for treatment for little fire ant (and/or other key invasive pests identified by the State) paid either to the property owner or directly to the pest control firm. In the New Orleans project, the subsidy was paid directly to the pest control firm (which meant that payments could be aggregated, resulting in less work for the

government), and any firms that acted fraudulently or did not perform the treatments correctly were barred from further participation in the program.

This bill points out the problem of people “left behind” in the wake of an invasive pest moving across the State, and offers a creative approach to assist them. A program that included the pest management industry might have greater impact, however. If the Department of Agriculture considers it possible to manage a program of this type and the Legislature considers it economically feasible, then I suggest committee amendments be considered to establish a joint government-industry subsidy program, rather than direct subsidies to homeowners for pesticide purchases.