



Testimony of the O'ahu Invasive Species Committee
Comments on H.B. 2542 HD 1 Relating to the Auditor
House Committee on Legislative Management
Wednesday February 17, 2016 2:00 PM Room 423

OISC fears that a State audit of the Department of Agriculture's Plant Quarantine branch will decrease the quality of the comprehensive biosecurity plan because the PQ branch will be distracted by the audit. HDOA has recently published an RFP for a biosecurity plan for the entire state that will include an implementation matrix. This plan is proposed to be finished in time for the IUCN meeting in August of 2016. This biosecurity plan will be done by an outside consultant, but they will require enormous amounts of information from HDOA's Plant Quarantine branch. The biosecurity plan would have to take a backseat to an audit and the quality of the biosecurity plan would therefore suffer.

Hawai'i needs this biosecurity plan. The implementation matrix will be the to-do list for the State. OISC recommends that instead of auditing Plant Quarantine now, give HDOA PQ, and the wider invasive species community a chance to put this plan together and implement it. Then the auditor can review how all agencies responsible for biosecurity are doing according to the state's comprehensive plan.

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

SHAN S. TSUTSUI
Lt. Governor



State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

SCOTT E. ENRIGHT
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
Deputy to the Chairperson

LATE

TESTIMONY OF SCOTT E. ENRIGHT
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT

February 17, 2016
2:00 P.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 423

HOUSE BILL NO. 2542 HD 1
RELATING TO THE AUDITOR

Chairperson Nishimoto and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2542 HD1. This bill requires the auditor to conduct a financial and performance audit of the duties and facilities of the plant quarantine branch. The Department of Agriculture understands the intent of this measure and offers comments.

The department agrees with the statements on the importance in preventing these pests from entering Hawaii and with the negative impact of invasive species. The department has continued to secure outside funding for its biosecurity program bringing in \$4.5 million in the past two fiscal years. This is to prevent the entry and establishment of pests such as brown tree snake, coconut rhinoceros beetle, red imported fire ant, and Africanized bees, among others. The department has also continued to assess the effectiveness of its inspection program at the ports of entry. The plant quarantine branch conducts periodic enhanced inspections to assess the risks of all agricultural commodities imported. Based on these assessments the inspectors focus inspections on the high risk commodities, thus not wasting efforts on the low risk commodities. These low risk commodities are inspected less frequently. This has allowed the branch to be more effective in its inspections and interceptions of



invasive species. This bill cites a decrease in insect interceptions from 3,416 in FY13 to 1,034 in FY15 and considers this as a failure with the branch (the actual numbers are 2,475 in FY13 and 1,595 in FY15). These numbers are not a failure but actually a testament to the effectiveness of targeting inspections to high risk commodities.

The department feels that the Plant Quarantine Branch has worked hard to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its operations over the last three years. The Department is open to an audit to assess this effectiveness and to point out new directions that can be taken to improve on this. We would like to note that such an audit will require personnel to take time from their everyday job duties and current resources in the Plant Quarantine Branch are limited.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.



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Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association

Testimony for the Twenty Eighth Legislature, 2016
State of Hawaii

COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT

Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Chair
Rep. John M. Mizuno, Vice Chair

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 17, 2016
2:00 P.M.
Conference Room 423
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

A bill for an act

HB2542 HD1 RELATING TO THE AUDITOR.

My name is Eric S. Tanouye and I am the President for the Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association. HFNA is a statewide umbrella organization with approximately 300 members. Our membership is made up with breeders, hybridizers, propagators, growers, shippers, wholesalers, retailers, educators, and the allied industry, which supports our efforts in agriculture.

The Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association (HFNA) **SUPPORTS** House **Bill 2542 HD1**.

We are thoroughly frustrated with the administration's lack of transparency and communication. The department has failed to provide annual reports required by law for the last three years. The pest interception rate has fallen in the last two years because: 1) inspectors are inspecting less and are focusing on propagative plants. Therefore, we feel the audit is necessary.

A comprehensive implementation of Hawaii's Biosecurity program is an action that is sorely needed and is essential for our industry. HFNA believes that building upon the current, though stalled, Biosecurity System, would be the most effective, cost-efficient and logical approach. We also hope to be able to provide input as an industry. As in the past, when we met regularly to discuss issues and worked together on initiatives.

This is an important and essential program, which has been stalled for too long.



Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association

We thank you for your consideration of HB2542. If you have any questions at this time, I would be happy to discuss them and can be reached by phone at 808-959-3535 ext 22, cell 960-1433 and email eric@greenpointnursery.com.

Supporting Agriculture and Hawaii,

Eric S. Tanouye
President

Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association