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LATE

TESTIMONY OF SCOTT E. ENRIGHT
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON WATER, LAND AND AGRICULTURE AND
PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

February 10, 2016
2:45 P.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 224

SENATE BILL NO. 2129
RELATING TO THE ROSE-RINGED PARAKEET

Chairpersons Gabbard and Nishihara and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2129. This bill would appropriate general funds to the department to: 1) fund the National Wildlife Research Center's assessment of the impacts of the parakeet and; 2) to develop a control program to reduce the impacts of the parakeet. The department supports part 1 of this measure but has reservations with part 2.

The department recognizes that rose-ringed parakeet is an environmental pest and agricultural pest. It spreads seeds of noxious weeds into the forests causing the dispersal of these weeds into the forest areas which compete with and often overwhelm the native plants, changing the ecology of the forests. This then has secondary negative impacts on the native birds, insects, bats, etc. In addition, the rose-ringed parakeet feeds on fruit grown in agriculture and have a negative impact on agriculture production. The National Wildlife Research Center has begun, but has not completed, studies on the impacts of these birds in Hawaii. This funding will continue that research which will be needed to develop effective control measures.

The second part of this bill mandates the department to develop a control program to manage these birds. Any control program will need to be based on an



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understanding of the bird's biology, ecology, and behavior. The National Wildlife Research Center's study should provide some of this needed information. However, the department does not have any expertise in the control of birds and in particular very large populations of birds such as this that are having an impact in nonagricultural areas such as the forests.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.