

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

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Honolulu, Hawaii

February 6, 2017

RE: H.B. No. 474

Honorable Joseph M. Souki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Twenty-Ninth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2017
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture, to which was referred H.B. No. 474 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO RAT LUNGWORM DISEASE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to appropriate funds for the prevention and eradication of rat lungworm disease.

Specifically, the measure makes separate appropriations to the University of Hawaii at Hilo, the Department of Health, the Department of Land and Natural Resources, and the Department of Agriculture to fund programs, studies, and activities related to the prevention and eradication of rat lungworm disease.

The University of Hawaii at Hilo, Department of Agriculture, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Hawaii Farm Bureau, Hawaii Farm to School and School Garden Hui, Big Island Invasive Species Committee, Hawaii Farmers Union United, Pele Lani Farm, LLC, Permaculture Foundation of Hawaii, Cirque Ohana, Bevolve LLC, and over forty concerned individuals testified in support of this measure. The Department of Health and sixteen concerned individuals provided comments.

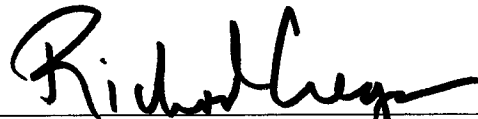
Your Committee finds that the incidence of rat lungworm disease, a serious and relatively new pathogen to the State, has been steadily increasing in number and severity over the last fifteen years. Your Committee also finds that the disease can cause a rare type of meningitis for which there is no specific



treatment, and that the meningitis is extremely painful, debilitating, long-lasting, and potentially deadly. Therefore, your Committee finds that sufficient funding is necessary to provide a comprehensive and coordinated approach to the research of rat lungworm disease and to educate the public about this food-borne illness in order to protect the health and well-being of residents and visitors.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 474 and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be referred to your Committee on Higher Education.

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



RICHARD P. CREAGAN, Chair



