

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

**TESTIMONY OF SCOTT E. ENRIGHT
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

**FEBRUARY 15, 2017
8:40 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 312**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1472
RELATING TO RAPID OHIA DEATH**

Chairperson Creagan and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 1472. This bill appropriates general funds to support research on Rapid Ohia Death (ROD) prevention and mitigation. The Department supports this measure provided that it does not impact the priorities submitted in the department's executive budget.

Rapid Ohia Death (ROD) is known to infest at least 50,000 acres on the Big Island and continues to spread throughout that island and has not been found on other islands. It has left a devastating impact to the forests killing nearly 100% of the trees in infested areas. The Department of Agriculture (HDOA) established a quarantine on August 25, 2015 to prevent its spread from the Big Island to the neighbor islands. This is under HDOA authority which enables the Department to create an interim rule to govern the transport of flora and fauna into and within the State to protect agriculture and the environment.

ROD is a serious disease of Hawaii's Ohia forests and the loss of these trees would have a devastating impact on our forest lands and natural resources. The purpose of this bill is to fund research to study the pathogen that causes ROD. This research is critically needed in order to move forward with the control and mitigation of this disease.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony.



DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF
HAWAII



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

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on
AGRICULTURE**

**Wednesday, February 15, 2017
8:40 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 312**

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 1472
RELATING TO RAPID OHIA DEATH**

House Bill 1472 proposes to appropriate funds for the United States Pacific Basin Agricultural Research Center (PBARC) to conduct pathology research on Rapid Ohia Death (ROD). **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure provided that this appropriation does not adversely impact appropriations for other priorities in the Executive Supplemental Budget request or any existing funding to the Department's programs.**

The recent spread of the disease causing ROD on Hawaii Island threatens the State's most important tree and requires urgent action. Surveys conducted by the Department on Hawaii Island in 2016 estimated that 50,000 acres of ohia forest are affected by this disease. To date, surveys have not detected the disease on other islands. The Department is working closely with the Hawaii Department of Agriculture, United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service and Agriculture Research Service, University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, and others to understand ROD and mitigate its spread where possible. Due to the lack of knowledge about the disease, many questions urgently need to be answered to effectively manage the outbreak and inform the public.

Funds appropriated by the Legislature for research by PBARC would be used to answer many of these questions, and this bill is supported by the Department. However, additional resources are needed to fund other disciplines of scientific inquiry, survey and monitoring, on-the-ground management, statewide outreach, and other activities described in the ROD Strategic Response Plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

SUZANNE D. CASE
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

KEKOA KALUHIWA
FIRST DEPUTY

JEFFREY T. PEARSON, P.E.
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
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KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS



HB1472
RELATING TO RAPID ‘ŌHI‘A DEATH
House Committee on Agriculture

February 15, 2017

8:40 a.m.

Room 312

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Committee on Beneficiary Advocacy and Empowerment will recommend that the Board of Trustees **SUPPORT** HB1472, which would appropriate funds for research on the prevention and mitigation of Rapid ‘Ōhi‘a Death (ROD), which has prompted a state of emergency for Hawai‘i’s native ‘ōhi‘a forests.

Found nowhere else in the world, ‘ōhi‘a, or *Metrosideros polymorpha*, is a key component of Hawai‘i’s culture, ecology, and environment. Native Hawaiians have developed a range of medicinal, spiritual, practical, and other uses for all parts of ‘ōhi‘a. Many aspects of our islands’ ecosystems also depend upon the unique characteristics of ‘ōhi‘a, and a number of endemic and often endangered species have evolved to form close relationships with what is still one of the most common trees in Hawai‘i. Moreover, ‘ōhi‘a forests are recognized as critical to watershed protection and aquifer recharge, a growing concern given the anticipated impacts of an increasing population base, decreasing rainfall trends, and climate change.

This keystone species now faces the unprecedented threat of ROD, which has the potential to eliminate ‘ōhi‘a throughout the Hawaiian archipelago. ROD has been observed across Hawai‘i Island, killing off vast tracts of ‘ōhi‘a, and threatening the integrity of the island’s native forest ecosystems. ROD can be observed on OHA’s own lands, affecting approximately 60% of the 26,000-acre Wao Kele o Puna (WKOP), the largest native, low-land forest left in Hawai‘i.

To combat this threat, OHA has conducted widespread surveys of Wao Kele o Puna, attended or participated in a number of ROD forums, solicited community input on mitigation and prevention ideas, hosted ROD experts at OHA’s community meetings, and encouraged preventative measures by all seeking to access WKOP. ROD mitigation and adaptation initiatives will be heavily considered in OHA’s Comprehensive Management Plan for WKOP, and OHA is currently in the process of granting the University of Hawai‘i access to WKOP to conduct a range of ROD research.

Given the imminent threat ROD poses on ‘ōhi‘a and the cultural and natural practices and resources that depend on it, the appropriations considered by this bill are a timely and necessary investment, to protect one of our most significant plant species.

Accordingly, OHA urges the Committee to **PASS** HB1472. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Agriculture
Wednesday, February 15, 2017 at 8:40 a.m.

By

Rachel Novotny, Interim Dean

And

J. Kenneth Grace, Associate Dean
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 1472 – RELATING TO RAPID OHIA DEATH

Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite, and members of the House Committee on Agriculture:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support, with a suggested amendment, of HB 1472, which appropriates moneys for research to combat Rapid Ohia Death.

Researchers from state and federal agencies and the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) are working to address the spread and management of this severe plant disease, and drafted the interagency Rapid Ohia Death Strategic Response Plan in November 2016. Their efforts are limited by resources and by the absence of prior information on this devastating and very rapidly spreading forest disease.

We strongly support the intent of HB 1472 to provide continued funding for these research efforts. However, as written the bill appropriates funds to a federal agency, the USDA-ARS Daniel K. Inouye Pacific Basin Agricultural Research Center. Since we are not sure that it is feasible for the state legislature to appropriate funds to a federal agency, we suggest that the recipient of this funding be amended to a State of Hawai'i agency, such as the Department of Land and Natural Resources or Department of Agriculture.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2017 12:18 PM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: sue.leeloy@hawaiicounty.gov
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB1472 on Feb 15, 2017 08:40AM*

HB1472

Submitted on: 2/13/2017

Testimony for AGR on Feb 15, 2017 08:40AM in Conference Room 312

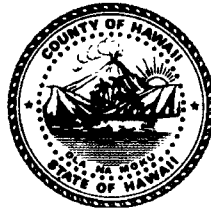
Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Council Woman Sue Lee Loy	Hawai'i County Council	Support	No

Comments:

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Harry Kim
Mayor



Wil Okabe
Managing Director

Barbara J. Kossow
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i

Office of the Mayor

25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2603 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 • (808) 961-8211 • Fax (808) 961-6553
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(808) 323-4444 • Fax (808) 323-4440

February 13, 2017

Representative Richard Creagan
Agriculture Committee
Hawai'i State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Creagan and Members:

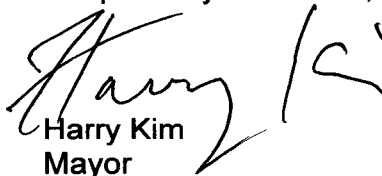
RE: HB 1472

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 1472.

The way in which the ohia forests of the Big Island have been decimated cannot be overstated, and is difficult to comprehend if not seen in person. It seems that one day there is a forest that one assumes will exist for millennia, and the next day there are barren trees comparable to a severe northern winter, but you must accept that they will not regenerate in the spring, or ever again.

The modest funding requested in HB 1472 would be a small price to pay to save what remains of this vital natural resource.

Respectfully submitted,


Harry Kim
Mayor



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

February 15, 2017

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

TESTIMONY ON HB 1472
RELATING TO RAPID OHIA DEATH

Room 312
8:40 AM

Aloha Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite, and Members of the Committee:

I am Randy Cabral, President of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,900 farm family members statewide, and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interest of our diverse agricultural community.

Hawaii Farm Bureau **strongly supports HB 1472**, which appropriates funds to combat rapid ohia death.

Traditionally management of invasive species falls under the responsibility of the Biosecurity Plan. However, the Rapid Ohia Death syndrome has major consequences across the state if control measures are not identified on the Big Island. Many of our watersheds have significant ohia populations. The findings that the spores exist in the soil around infected trees make it an easily spread disease with feral animals and hunters.

HFB respectfully requests your strong support of this to help the Big Island and protect the rest of the State from this serious disease.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comment on this important subject.



Hawai'i Green Growth is a public-private partnership that catalyzes action across government, private sector and civil society to achieve Hawai'i's Aloha+ Challenge 2030 sustainability goals and serve as a model for integrated green growth

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Cooperative

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Hawaiian Electric Company

Ulalia Woodside
The Nature Conservancy

William J. Aila Jr.
Department of Hawaiian
Homelands

Testimony of Hawai'i Green Growth In Support of HB1472 Relating to Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death House Committee on Agriculture 15 February 2017, 8:40 am, Room 312

Aloha Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite, and Members of the Committee:

Hawai'i Green Growth strongly supports HB1472 to appropriate funding for implementation of the Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death Strategic Response Plan.

Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death is a devastating new fungal disease impacting native 'ōhi'a forests, priority watershed areas and cultural resources. Surveys conducted in 2016 estimate that 50,000 acres have been infected. Hawai'i Green Growth supports funding, research and a coordinated response effort to address this urgent threat, as part of the broader Hawai'i Interagency Biosecurity Plan. The Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (or the proposed Hawaii Invasive Species Authority) is leading the multi-agency effort to address Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death and other critical biosecurity threats that impact Hawai'i's economy, human health and safety, agricultural industry and environment.

Hawai'i Green Growth partners agreed that biosecurity, including HB1472, is an important priority to support implementation on Hawai'i's *Aloha+ Challenge 2030* sustainability goals. The *Aloha+ Challenge* is a joint leadership commitment launched by the State Legislature (SCR69), Governor, four County Mayors, Office of Hawaiian Affairs and Hawai'i Green Growth public-private partners. This statewide framework outlines six ambitious 2030 sustainability goals in the areas of clean energy, local food, natural resource management, solid waste, smart sustainable communities, and green education and workforce. The *Aloha+ Challenge* has been recognized nationally and internationally as model that can be scaled to support the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Climate Agreement.

With leadership and support from the State Legislature, Hawai'i hosted the first U.S. held IUCN World Conservation Congress with over 10,000 global partners from 190 countries in 2016. This bill is an opportunity to continue important local action on sustainable development and resiliency through implementation of the Hawai'i Interagency Biosecurity Plan.

As a public-private partnership, Hawai'i Green Growth strongly supports **HB1472** and appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony.

Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i
Supporting H.B. 1472 Relating to Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death
House Committee on Agriculture
Wednesday, February 15, 2017, 1:55PM, Room 213

The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i is a private non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of the lands and waters upon which life depends. The Conservancy has helped to protect nearly 200,000 acres of natural lands in Hawai'i. We manage 40,000 acres in 14 preserves and work in 19 coastal communities to help protect the near-shore reefs and waters of the main Hawaiian Islands. We forge partnerships with government, private parties and communities to protect Hawai'i's important watershed forests and coral reefs.

The Nature Conservancy supports H.B. 1472 and a strong and coordinated response to the Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death (ROD) fungal disease that is threatening the dominant native tree species in the Hawaiian forest—a tree that is central to the forests' ecological, cultural and watershed values statewide.

We appreciate the crisis situation that exists with respect to Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death (ROD) and the acute circumstances on Hawai'i island with this disease and other pests of the environment, agriculture, and human health and well-being. For more information about ROD, see the [ROD Strategic Response Plan](#) and www.rapidohiadeath.org.

We also hope that providing the necessary and critical support for Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death 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. We are concerned about unintended financial impacts of a piecemeal approach to invasive species funding. For example, in Fiscal Year 2007 the Legislature's provision of specific funding for coqui frog control was really a shifting of existing funds from other important invasive species programs, which then caused layoffs in the Island Invasive Species Committees and a hiatus in the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council's research grant program.

Therefore, we respectfully ask that the Committee and the Legislature also take a comprehensive approach of providing significant and consistent funding to address invasive species prevention, early detection, rapid response, control, research, and outreach priorities across the state. The Hawai'i Invasive Species Council—or the proposed Hawai'i Invasive Species Authority ([HB1339/SB776](#))—is the appropriate multi-agency venue for this broader effort. This approach necessarily results in prioritization based on a variety of issues including human health, safety and well-being, economic harm, and the threat to the health and function of the environment.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 13, 2017 10:15 AM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: kteger@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB1472 on Feb 15, 2017 08:40AM*

HB1472

Submitted on: 2/13/2017

Testimony for AGR on Feb 15, 2017 08:40AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Katharine T. Cannon-Eger	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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To: AGRtestimony
Cc: launahele@yahoo.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB1472 on Feb 15, 2017 08:40AM*

HB1472

Submitted on: 2/13/2017

Testimony for AGR on Feb 15, 2017 08:40AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Benton	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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AGRtestimony

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To: AGRtestimony
Cc: d.bt@live.com
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HB1472

Submitted on: 2/13/2017

Testimony for AGR on Feb 15, 2017 08:40AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Diane Brucato	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 9:55 AM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: ambyr@hawaii.edu
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1472 on Feb 15, 2017 08:40AM

HB1472

Submitted on: 2/14/2017

Testimony for AGR on Feb 15, 2017 08:40AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ambyr Mokiao-Lee	Rapid Ohia Death Statewide Coordinator	Support	No

Comments: I am in full support of this bill. Funding from this bill will help us in combating this fungal disease before it damages more ohia then it already has. Mahalo for your help with this matter.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 9:31 AM
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Cc: christym@rocketmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1472 on Feb 15, 2017 08:40AM

HB1472

Submitted on: 2/14/2017

Testimony for AGR on Feb 15, 2017 08:40AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Christy Martin	Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS)	Support	No

Comments: We are in strong support of this bill. Mahalo for your help.

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Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 1:16 PM
To: AGRtestimony
Cc: gordines@kauaiflowers.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB1472 on Feb 15, 2017 08:40AM*

HB1472

Submitted on: 2/14/2017

Testimony for AGR on Feb 15, 2017 08:40AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
John R. Gordines	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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