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

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**Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committee on
WATER AND LAND**

**Wednesday, March 27, 2019
1:20 PM**

State Capitol, Conference Room 229

**In consideration of
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 145/SENATE RESOLUTION 112
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE IN THE COUNTY OF HAWAII TO
PRIORITIZE THE CONTROL OF HIGH-THREAT INVASIVE SPECIES**

Senate Concurrent Resolution 145/Senate Resolution 112 requests that the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) Division of Forestry and Wildlife prioritize the control of high-threat invasive species in the county of Hawaii. **The Department offers the following comments.**

The Department recognizes the impact that invasive species have on Hawaii's natural resources and is committed to mitigating those impacts through work done by the Hawaii Island Branch of the Division of Forestry and Wildlife. The Department is also a major fiscal supporter of the Big Island Invasive Species Committee, which works collaboratively with the Department and other entities to identify those invasive species on Hawaii Island that have both the highest impact on Hawaii's environment, agriculture, and health, as well as the highest chance of being contained and/or eradicated.

Eradication of invasive species in Hawaii is a difficult task, and typically the complete eradication of a species is only possible when that species is a relatively new introduction (i.e., its population size and distribution are limited). For species that are beyond our ability to eradicate, we must do a cost/benefit analysis that considers the costs of controlling a species in perpetuity, versus scaling back or suspending control activities until new technological advances provide more effective control methodologies.

On Hawaii Island, *Miconia* was aggressively controlled by the Big Island Invasive Species Committee and partners, including the Department, when control and eradication were considered feasible. Over time, *Miconia* continued to spread on Hawaii Island due to the sheer size of the island, and insufficient funding to sustain an effort at the scope and scale necessary to contain the pest. Available resources for controlling *Miconia* decreased following the economic downturn in 2008, restricting control efforts and effectively putting eradication out of reach with existing tools. Shortly thereafter, the Big Island Invasive Species Committee removed *Miconia* from its target list due to limited resources and the rapid expansion of this species beyond our ability to manually control its spread. Manual control at current funding levels will not impede the spread of *Miconia* on Hawaii island.

Focus on *Miconia* control for Hawaii Island and Maui, where *Miconia* is also widespread, has shifted from mechanical control to the potential for biological control. This biocontrol process uses rigorous scientific testing to evaluate the natural control mechanisms of an invasive species from its native range, and to test their efficacy as potential tools to control that species in Hawaii. The evaluation, undertaken by regulatory entities including the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA) and the US Forest Service, ensures that there is negligible risk that the biocontrol agent will impact species in Hawaii other than the desired target. For *Miconia*, several potential biocontrol agents have been identified. The Department is working with HDOA and the US Forest Service on fulfilling the regulatory requirements to allow the use of these biocontrol agents in Hawaii. These agents represent the best and most cost-effective tool for controlling *Miconia* on Hawaii Island.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these measures.

LATE

SR-112

Submitted on: 3/27/2019 12:21:04 PM
Testimony for WTL on 3/27/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for O`ahu County Democrats Committee on Legislative Priorities	Support	No

Comments:

SR-112

Submitted on: 3/22/2019 1:25:58 PM

Testimony for WTL on 3/27/2019 1:20:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
cheryl	Individual	Comments	No

Comments:

Are high threat invasive species inclusive of corporations and foreign governments? If so, I support this SR.