

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor

JOSH GREEN
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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**TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**FEBRUARY 5, 2020
1:15 P.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 224**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2474
RELATING TO LITTLE FIRE ANTS**

Chairperson Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2474, relating to little fire ants. The bill proposes to require the use of best practices, as identified by the Hawaii Department of Agriculture and the Hawaii Ant Lab, for the treatment of little fire ants by pest control operators; authorizes the Department and the Pest Control Board (PCB) to adopt rules to carry out the requirement; and requires the posting of the best practices, and any rules that may be adopted by the Department and the PCB on their respective websites. The Department opposes this measure and offers comments.

Invasive species are a primary threat to Hawai'i's agriculture and economy. The little fire ant is a significant pest of Hawaii's natural resources, agriculture, economy, and to the health and lifestyle of Hawaii's residents and visitors. The Department is a funder and partner of the Hawaii Ant Lab, a project of the University of Hawaii Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit. The Department also works with the county invasive species committees on response to little fire ants as necessary.

This measure would mandate insect control by statute. This would restrict pest control operators to only using "approved" pesticides, thereby prohibiting the use of



other pesticides that may be registered in Hawaii for the same purpose. The implementation of this measure would necessitate that the Department and the Hawaii Ant Lab evaluate every single pesticide product that is labelled for ant control to produce a list of those allowed to be used by pest control operators for little fire ant. This would be burdensome and could result in challenges by the makers of those products which do not get approved. In addition, technology is constantly changing, insects can also evolve and change, over time, and repeated exposure to the same chemicals can lead to the development of resistance in little fire ant populations, so locking in a limited array of options by statute is neither desirable nor prudent.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Harry Kim
Mayor



Roy Takemoto
Managing Director

Barbara J. Kossow
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i Office of the Mayor

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January 27, 2020

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Russell E. Ruderman, Vice Chair
Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Ruderman, and Committee Members:

RE: SB 2474, Relating to Little Fire Ants

The little fire ant, for those who have experienced it, is a horrific species. It causes great pain in humans and has been reported to cause blindness in pets and horses. It has proliferated so widely that some have given up on eradication, and may even be ready to throw in the towel on control efforts. That is not acceptable. We must fight back, and that is why I appreciate the opportunity to testify on SB 2474.

I do not have the expertise to judge the most effective way to treat this menace, but if there is a scientific consensus that the Ant Lab approach is best, then I endorse the specific provisions of SB 2474. More broadly, whether you pass this bill or not, I ask that you please provide as much funding for an anti-LFA initiative as you can justify in your budget recommendations for the coming fiscal year. In that way, government efforts to control, and even eliminate, LFA from Hawai'i can be maximized. The threat is great and warrants your much-appreciated attention.

Respectfully Submitted,

Harry Kim
MAYOR

Testimony of the Pest Control Board

**Before the
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Wednesday, February 5, 2020
1:15 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 224**

**On the following measure:
S.B. 2474, RELATING TO LITTLE FIRE ANTS**

Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lei Ana Green, and I am the Executive Officer of the Pest Control Board (Board). The Board opposes this bill.

The purposes of this bill are to: (1) require the use of best practices, as identified by the Department of Agriculture (DOA) and Hawaii Ant Lab, for the treatment of little fire ants by pest control operators; (2) authorize DOA and the pest control board to adopt rules to carry out the requirement; and (3) require DOA and the Board to post any rules and best practices on their respective websites.

The Board appreciates the bill's intent to help mitigate the harmful effects and active spreading of an invasive species. However, the Board has the following concerns regarding this bill: (1) the cost of this additional regulation could be passed onto customers by mandating a sole entity, such as an organization or a government office, to be the approver of best practices, regardless of other government or educational research; and (2) best practices should not be included in statutes and rules. The industry is dynamic and dictates best practices, as not only do the pesticides, technologies, and methodologies change, but the insects themselves change and evolve. An effective method for mitigating an invasive species may exist, but regulating methodology with statutes and rules will make it challenging for the industry to quickly adapt with more effective solutions that may arise through current and future research and application.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



HAWAII PEST CONTROL ASSOCIATION

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February 5, 2020

Testimony To: Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair

Presented By: Tim Lyons, CAE
Executive Director

Subject: S.B. 2474 – RELATING TO LITTLE FIRE ANTS.

Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

I am Tim Lyons, Executive Director of the Hawaii Pest Control Association and we are opposed to this bill.

Our opposition lies not in its intent because we, after all, do recognize the problem of the little fire ants and the horrible situation that our Big Island residents are in as they have to cope with this pest. We also are, of course, not opposed to any efforts and any advice or information from the Hawaii Ant Lab. Our opposition is that the Hawaii Ant Lab is not the “be all to end all”. It is not the only expert and authority on controlling ants.

Under the terms of this bill the Board at DCCA and the Department of Agriculture would post best practices on its website formulated as offensive rules subject to penalties. The industry is

going to know those best practices far before the Department of Agriculture and the Pest Control Board will know about them and particularly before they could develop any rules in order to implement them. In fact, by the time they did, those "best practices" would probably be out moded.

While to some people controlling pests might seem like just "stomping on them", in fact it is a very scientific industry and huge companies are doing research on all types of household pests including ants and expending millions of dollars doing so. The results of that research are translated to new products that appear on the marketplace on an almost monthly basis and we think the industry should be able to take advantage of those and not have to wait for rules to be developed by the State.

We are not quite sure what section 460J – 3(2)(B)(i) involves when it requires a pest control operator to make reports to the Board that improves enforcement of the Chapter. We are not sure why we don't want to let pest control operators do their job. In short, while this bill is well intentioned, it will accomplish nothing but make information available that is already well known in the industry who will be utilizing it well before the two (2) governmental departments will be able to develop rules to enforce it.

In consideration of the above, we cannot recommend passage of this bill.

Thank you.

SB-2474

Submitted on: 2/4/2020 12:45:16 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
janice palma-glennie	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

aloha,

as a landscape designer and landscape nursery owner for over 25 years in Kona, i know first-hand the damage LFA continue to cause in our islands.

This bill requires the use of best practices, as identified by DOA and Hawaii Ant Lab, for the treatment of little fire ants by pest control operators. It authorizes DOA and the pest control board to adopt rules to carry out the requirement. Requires DOA and the pest control board to post any rules and best practices on their respective websites.

I'd like to add that "best practices" should include using a minimum of toxic chemicals to control LFA as opposed to resorting to more toxic substances like Talstar which, though it kills LFA, also kills many other insects, including beneficials.

Mahalo and sincerely,

Janice Palma-glennie

Keauhou Gardens and Irrigation

Kailua-Kona



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February 5, 2020

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

TESTIMONY ON SB 2474
RELATING TO LITTLE FIRE ANT

Room 224
1:15 PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Ruderman, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawaii Farm Bureau supports HB 2474, which requires the use of best practices, as identified by DOA and Hawaii Ant Lab, for the treatment of little fire ants by pest control operators, authorizes DOA and the pest control board to adopt rules to carry out the requirement, and requires DOA and the pest control board to post any rules and best practices on their respective websites.

Invasive species have become one of the most challenging problems impacting Hawaii. Many invasive species are damaging Hawaii's environment and the state's economy. Agriculture has a vested interest in this matter. Agriculture is one of the major casualties when invasive species are introduced. Every year, numerous new pests are introduced into the State, such as the coqui frog, coffee berry borer, axis deer, macadamia felted coccid, little fire ant, coconut rhinoceros beetle, small hive beetle, and varroa mite, to name a few.

HFB recognizes the harm that the little fire ant has caused to farms, businesses, and the quality of life of those affected by this pest. We agree that continued measures must be undertaken to stop its spread to other areas.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this important subject.

SB-2474

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 5:52:37 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Simon Russell	Testifying for Farm Maui LLC	Support	Yes

Comments:

SB-2474

Submitted on: 1/27/2020 8:11:20 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-2474

Submitted on: 1/29/2020 8:23:18 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sherry Pollack	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-2474

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 11:47:54 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jennifer Azuma Chrupalyk	Individual	Comments	No

Comments:

Club soda works like a charm to destroy their colonies, organically.

SB-2474

Submitted on: 2/5/2020 9:46:37 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2020 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Christy A Logan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

The Little Fire Ant could devastate our local communities not only potentially blinding our pets but hurt people as well, such as our coffee pickers not being willing to pick in land that may have them. They must be stopped and I support any legislation that takes a step in that direction.