

McCandless Ranch **strongly supports HB237 HD1** to appropriate funds to the Department of Agriculture for the control of the Two-lined Spittlebug (TLSB) and recovery of rangelands damaged by the invasive pest.

While there are many pressing issues that have arisen from the effects of COVID-19, agriculture should continue to be a priority topic. We are aware that there are many pressing issues that need funding, but this invasive species directly affects food production. Hawaii Island is responsible for 80% of the state's cattle production, so an outbreak of this invasive species will be devastating not only to cattle ranchers, but to our endeavor for food security. This invasive species issue affects all of Hawaii, not just the cattle ranchers.



February 19, 2021

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Finance

**Testimony in Support of HB 237, H.D.1, Relating to Invasive Species (Appropriates funds to be expended by the Department of Agriculture [DOA] for the mitigation and control of the two-lined spittlebug and recovery of the rangelands damaged by the invasive pest.)**

**Tuesday, February 23, 2021, 2:00 p.m., in Conference Room 308, via Videoconference**

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF) is a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers, and utility companies. LURF's mission is to advocate for reasonable, rational, and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural and cultural resources, and public health and safety.

LURF appreciates the opportunity to express its **support of HB 237, H.D.1** and of the various agricultural stakeholder groups who defend the goals of viable agricultural operations and the conservation and protection of agriculture in Hawaii.

**HB 237, H.D.1.** This bill proposes to appropriate funds out of the Pest Inspection, Quarantine, and Eradication Fund to be expended by the DOA to mitigate and control two-lined spittlebug infestations in the State. The moneys shall be used to fund recovery efforts including reducing the two-lined spittlebug population using insecticides, integrating weed management measures in affected rangelands, and reseeded pastures damaged by infestations.

**LURF's Position.** Invasive species such as insects, disease-bearing organisms, snakes, weeds, and other pests pose the greatest threat to Hawaii's economy, agriculture, tourism, the natural environment, native species and to the health and lifestyle of Hawaii's people. Invasive species already cause millions of dollars in crop losses, the extinction of native species, the destruction of native wet, moist and dry land forests, and the spread of disease, but many more harmful pests, such as the two-lined

spittlebug now threaten to infest and damage pasture lands, reducing the quality of forage pastures, and thereby impairing livestock ranching, which is a highly productive, expanding, and extremely valuable industry on all islands with an estimated current annual value of more than \$68 million.

LURF members include property owners, farmers and ranchers who own, maintain, and engage in agricultural enterprises, and who consider efforts to protect and support agriculture significant to the continued conduct of their operations and to help sustain and preserve farming and ranching businesses into the future. The two-lined spittlebugs threaten job and food security in the agricultural and ranching industries, as well as throughout the State, making it vital to address infestations and restrict further uncontrolled spread.

As potentially devastating threats to and food safety and security continue to be a significant concern, LURF and its members appreciate this measure being taken to assist agricultural stakeholders.

For the above reasons, LURF **supports HB 237, H.D.1** and respectfully urges your favorable consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding this matter.

**HB-237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2021 11:53:47 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Alan Gottlieb	Ponoholo Ranch Limited	Support	No

Comments:

Please support this bill. The Two Lined Spittle Bug, an invasive species to Hawaii, has had a devastating impact to the Kona Region of the Big Island and continues to spread towards the largest cattle producing region in the state: Kamuela & Kohala. Left unchecked, it will eventually spread to other islands like Maui County, Honolulu and Kauai, and potentially the demise of the Hawaii Cattle Industry. Not only does it hurt the cattle industry, but it will wreck havoc on grass lands leading to erosion and loss of soil. We realize there are huge other needs for funds at this time of the pandemic, but if research does not continue, it will cost many times more in the future to address this problem after it has spread further.

Personal Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 237  
RELATING to INVASIVE SPECIES

by  
Jenee S. Odani, DVM, DACVP

House Committee on Finance  
Tuesday, February 23, 2021  
2:00 pm; via Video Conference

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and members of the committee:

My name is Jenee Odani, and I am the Extension Veterinarian with the University of Hawaii at Manoa's College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources. I am grateful for the opportunity to provide personal testimony in **SUPPORT of HB 237**. This testimony does not represent the position of the University of Hawaii nor CTAHR.

I know that this year brings with it many challenges for the State, including fiscal restrictions. However, I believe that the ongoing and growing threat posed by the Two-lined Spittlebug to Hawaii's lands and the ranchers that steward these lands warrants special consideration. Please appropriate funds to the Dept. of Agriculture for the control of the Two-lined spittlebug and recovery of the rangelands damaged by the invasive pet.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

**HB-237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2021 10:48:34 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jimmy Greenwell	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support HB237HD! and commend the Legislature for recognizing the critical urgency of addressing the serious threat the Two-lined Spittle Bug represents to our environment. I have seen first hand its devastating effects on Kona rangeland over the past three years and understand that controlling its spread and developing practical recovery strategies will require the combined, coordinated efforts of the public and private sectors.

These are indeed challenging financial times for everyone yet invasive species threats of this magnitude must be dealt with and prioritized as best we can. Thank you for your favorable consideration of this bill. It is vitally important to protecting the resource base represented by Hawaii's rangelands.

**HB-237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2021 3:18:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Gregory FRIEL	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As an independant Rancher on Maui, we worry of all of the invasive species that have made their way to different parts of the State. The devastation that this species is wreaking ocross the district of Kona is devastating. It has continued it's march further into the North Kona district and is heading towards Puu Wa'a Wa'a with Waimea in the not to distant future. Studies must be done to see what can be done to stop this further spread. This is not a problem for the Ranching Industry but the destruction of these pastures will also mean the erosian of soils that will make it's way down to the shore where it will also impact marine life. Personally I am working to diversify the forages in our pastures in order to have forages growing that maybe resistant to the Two Line Spittlebug. Please continue to fund the research into this invasive species and continue to place inspectors across the State that helps to curb the annual introduction of invasive species into Hawaii.

**HB-237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2021 7:20:23 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Alex Franco	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I'm in support of HB237. Our industry has been impacted by a number of invasive species, of these a very low number have been kept under control. Unfortunately, the majority we have learned how to live with. each one these continue to reduce production and profitability. The Two-lined spittle bug is by far the biggest invasive threat our industry has ever faced and its negative impact will dwarf the impact currently realized by all other invasives combined.



**LARRY JEFTS FARMS, LLC  
PO BOX 27  
KUNIA, HAWAII 96759  
(808) 688-2892**

HB237hd1, Relating to Invasive Species  
House FIN Hearing – 2:00pm  
Tuesday, February 23, 2021

Testimony by: Larry Jeffs  
Position: Support

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the House FIN Committee:

I am Larry Jeffs, owner and operator of Larry Jeffs Farms, LLC. We have more than 42 years of Hawaii farm experience on Molokai and Oahu. I am a volunteer director, serving as Chair of the West Oahu Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). I have been an officer of the Hawaii Farm Bureau for many years.

Livestock ranching has an estimated annual value of \$68 million with 142,000 beef cattle on more than 1,300 ranches---60% are raised on the Big Island. It's an industry that is striving to bring local food to Hawaii consumers.

Two-lined spittlebug damage results in entire pastures reduced to dust and replaced with weeds that cattle cannot eat. This damage causes runoff and affects the surrounding land and water. More importantly, it has a direct impact on food production and replacement of imported beef.

As such, please consider the appropriations request to mitigate and control the spittlebug and restoration of pasture lands among the budget priorities during these challenging times.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

**HB-237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2021 5:05:53 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Taylor Kellerman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

It is imperative that we continue to fund efforts to mitigate the negative impact TSLB can have on the Ranching Industry of Hawaii. This pest has a very real potential to impact rancher's ability statewide to provide local beef for our Hawaii communities, and stopping this now is paramount. This bill is necessary in this process.

Mahalo for your consideration

Taylor Kellerman

Director of Diversified Agriculture and Land Stewardship

Kualoa Ranch Hawaii

**HB-237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2021 6:53:31 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Woody Child	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this bill HB237HD1.

**HB-237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2021 8:07:42 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kristin Mack Almasin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill, which will help to advance the research and control of the TLSB and give relief to the ranchers which have been affected.

**HB-237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2021 8:44:32 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Randy Cabral	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Strongly support

**HB-237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2021 8:56:36 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dr. Brent Buckley	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

The two line spittle bug, an invasive insect, has already done significant damage to pastures on the Island of Hawaii. The insect has continued to spread and threatens the livelihood of ranchers, and supply of beef to consumers. This bill, if funded, would help to address this threat.

**HB-237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2021 2:26:15 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
J Ashman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please pass this bill. Thank you.



Bobby Farias  
President  
Hawaii Meats, LLC  
91-319 Olai Street  
Kapolei, HI 96707

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Representative Ty Cullen, Vice Chair

**Re: HB 237 - SUPPORT**  
Tuesday, February 23, 2021, 2:00pm  
Conference Room 308  
VIA Video Conference

Aloha e Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Bobby Farias, part owner of Hawaii Meats LLC, I am a 3<sup>rd</sup> generation rancher from Kauai. I **strongly support** HB237, which appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture for the control of the two-lined spittlebug and recovery of the rangelands damaged by the invasive pest. With 25% of the state's land area covered by ranches, we support this effort to keep ranching alive and pastures healthy.

We respectfully urge the legislature to provide the funds needed to aid in the recovery

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter,

Bobby Farias  
President of  
Hawaii Meats, LLC





Email: [communications@ulupono.com](mailto:communications@ulupono.com)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
Tuesday, February 23, 2021 — 2:00 p.m.

**Ulupono Initiative supports HB 237 HD 1, Relating to Invasive Species.**

Dear Chair Luke and Members of the Committee:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food; renewable energy and clean transportation; and better management of freshwater and waste.

**Ulupono supports HB 237 HD 1**, which appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture for the control of the two-lined spittlebug and recovery of the rangelands damaged by the invasive pest.

Ulupono supports the State's goal to increase local food production, which includes strengthening the local livestock industry. The two-lined spittlebug was first detected in Kailua-Kona on Hawai'i Island in September 2016 where it damaged roughly 2,000 acres of pastureland. As of October 2019, damage from infestation has skyrocketed to about 142,468 acres of rangelands on Hawai'i Island. In highly infested areas, there is 100% die-off of key pasture grasses such as Kikuyu and Pangola. Rapid spread and die-off due to this pest are affecting the local livestock industry and pose a massive threat to production on Hawai'i Island. Increasing State resources to support the local livestock industry will be crucial in maintaining the growth of local livestock production and meeting State food production goals.

We recognize that you face many difficult decisions this year to balance the budget in the midst of this economic crisis, but we hope that this support for local agriculture can be considered.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata  
Director of Government Affairs

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*

**HB-237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2021 6:47:14 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jimmy Gomes	Ulupalakua Ranch	Support	No

Comments:

I am in support and stand by Hawaii Cattlemens Council testimony



**Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.**

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair

Rep. Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair

**HB237 HD1**

**RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES.**

Tuesday, February 23, 2020, 2:00 p.m.

VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Hashem, and Members of the Committee,

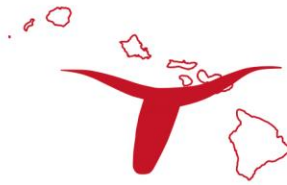
The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **strongly supports HB237 HD1** to appropriate funds to the Department of Agriculture for the control of the Two-lined Spittlebug (TLSB) and recovery of rangelands damaged by the invasive pest.

While there are many pressing issues that have arisen from the effects of COVID-19, agriculture should continue to be a priority topic. We are aware that there are many pressing issues that need funding, but this invasive species directly affects food production. Hawaii Island is responsible for 80% of the state's cattle production, so an outbreak of this invasive species will be devastating not only to cattle ranchers, but to our endeavor for food security. This invasive species issue affects all of Hawaii, not just the cattle ranchers.

**Economic Impact:** Ranchers anticipating the devastating effects of the Two-lined Spittlebug reaching their pastures know that they will need to reduce their herds to ensure enough forage is available. They know that many of their pastures will become ungrazeable if the pest spreads to them. On one affected ranch, at least 70% of the available pasture acres is impacted by the Two-lined Spittlebug. The pest has killed off Kikuyu and Pangola, high quality forage, leaving undesirable forage and weeds. With huge swaths of land now ungrazeable, the ranch has had to reduce their herd, creating a situation in which the operation is now losing money. Understanding that investing in managing the invasive pest is a prudent use of funds, the ranch invested almost \$70,000 into herbicide treatment of invasive weeds and some seeding of new forages to reclaim the ungrazeable pastures. These efforts positively impacted 400 acres, at a cost of \$175 per acre. The takeaway from this scenario is that we CAN make a big difference in preventing the spread if efforts are concentrated strategically. With further research into effective methods and funding to implement those methods in high impact areas, we can suppress the spread of the invasive species. Let's invest money now, when it will make the most impact in salvaging Hawaii's food production capacity and we can target efforts. The last thing we want is for the Two-lined Spittlebug to show up in Waimea, where the majority of Hawaii's cattle are raised because of its high quality grazing land. We remain positive, but ranchers are painfully budgeting for mitigating for this pest and working hard to try to find cost-effective ways to adapt to this new challenge and to keep their lands healthy and productive and the task is too big for them to take on alone. HDOA has provided funds for research efforts and we respectfully urge the legislature to provide them with funding to continue supporting this effort.

We **strongly support HB237 HD1** for funds to be appropriated to aid in recovery from the damage from the Two-lined Spittlebug and preventing the spread of the invasive species.

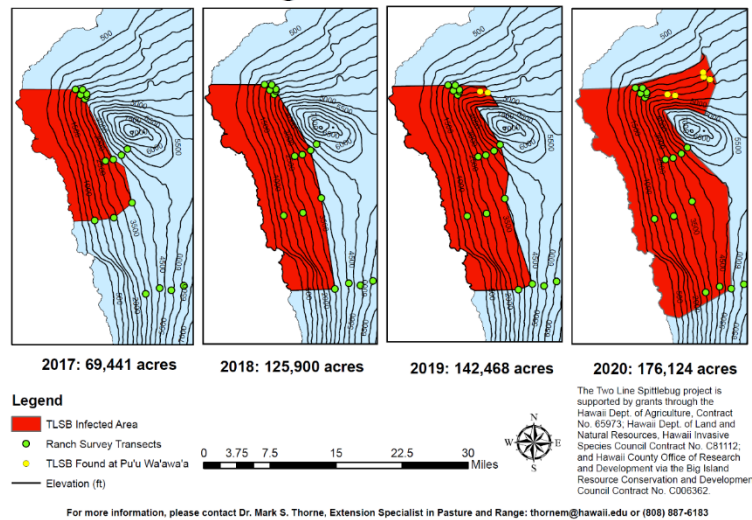




## Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

**Background:** Two-lined Spittlebug was first detected in Kailua-Kona, on the Big Island of Hawaii in September 2016 where it had caused damage to nearly 2,000 acres of pasture land. Monthly pasture surveys that began in in November 2017 have revealed that the pest has rapidly expanded its range and as of 2020 infests 176,124 acres. It is imperative that we stop the spread of the Two-lined Spittlebug and assist ranchers affected in recovery efforts.

### Acreage of Infected Area



Two-lined Spittlebug infestations in Hawaii have been shown to dramatically reduce the forage quantity and quality of pastures by killing key forage species outright, or by decreasing the nutritional value, palatability, and productivity of key forages. This promotes the establishment and proliferation of invasive weeds with no economic or other value, while significantly reducing the quality of foraging grasses. Reseeding areas denuded by the Two-lined Spittlebug will protect from runoff and provide forage for cattle. Recovery efforts for ranches affected by Two-lined Spittlebug include brush management, herbaceous weed treatment, range planting, forage and biomass planting, and fencing and prescribed grazing. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council has been holding consistent meetings to keep up to date on this issue and work towards finding solutions. This group includes CTAHR researchers, HDOA, HISC, BIISC, affected ranchers, and ranchers who are at threat.

Healthy grazing lands are integral to watershed health and function in Hawaii. The Two-lined Spittlebug severely disturbs the Hawaiian grazing land plant community by killing the grass. This loss of living ground cover leaves the land vulnerable to soil loss which contributes to sediment-laden runoff into our near shore coastal waters, affecting coral reef health. Healthy coral reefs provide important services such as shoreline protection, marine ecosystem habitats that support important food chains that also help support our communities. Invasive weeds move in on these degraded lands, changing the entire character of the landscape hindering not only agriculture, but also other land management efforts, and recreational uses such as forest and wildlife conservation projects, hiking and hunting, not to mention the change to the aesthetic value of the land.

Nicole Galase  
Managing Director





# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Finance  
Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.

By  
Nicholas Comerford, Dean  
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### HB 237 HD1 – RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and members of the House Committee on Finance:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 237 HD1.

The two-lined spittlebug is just the next challenge to the biosecurity of Hawai'i agriculture. This is a continuing story accurately depicting biosecurity as one of the most, if not the most, important management issues in agriculture and natural resources.

The bill does a credible job of describing the problem and its economic effect. The spittlebug will continue to degrade Hawai'i Island pasture and affect livestock operations if a coherent integrated pest management program is not identified and extended to producers. This problem will require the combined efforts of the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA), the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (UHM/CTAHR), and the appropriate federal agencies on Hawai'i Island.

UHM/CTAHR is currently involved with spittlebug research and Extension efforts through an Extension Specialist on Hawai'i Island and a Professor of Entomology on the Mānoa campus. There is also a clear role for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Interregional Research Project No. 4 (IR-4) program, which could also be a source of federal funds. The IR-4 mission is to test the efficacy of pesticides and develop data to label the chemistry for specific uses.

HB 237 HD1 budgets funds to combat this pest, and puts those funds and decision making authority in the hands of the HDOA. We strongly support this effort as UHM/CTAHR already works closely with HDOA on this and on other biosecurity issues.

We support HB 237 HD1, but recognize that the State is in a challenging economic time where funds are low and responsibilities are high. We defer to the HDOA as to their priorities and availability of personnel to support this measure.



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

February 23, 2021

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**TESTIMONY ON HB 237, HD1**  
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Conference Room 308  
2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Cullen, 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.

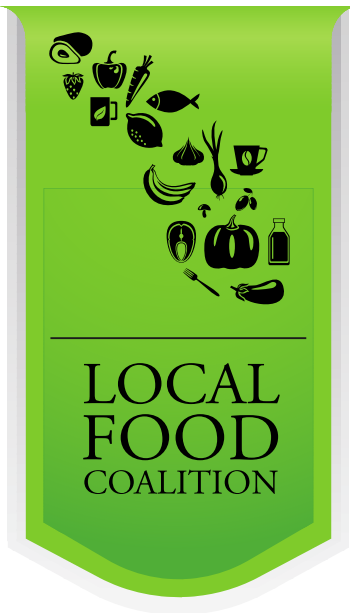
**The Hawaii Farm Bureau supports HB 237, HD1**, which appropriates funds to the department of agriculture for the control of the two-lined spittlebug and recovery of the rangelands damaged by the invasive pest.

The Two-lined spittlebug was first detected in Kailua-Kona, on the Big Island of Hawaii in September 2016 where it had caused damage to nearly 2,000 acres of pasture land. Monthly pasture surveys that began in November 2017 have revealed that the pest has rapidly expanded its range and as of October of 2019 infests over 222 sq. miles or about 142,468 acres. We must stop the spread of the Two-lined Spittlebug and assist ranchers affected in recovery efforts.

Two-lined Spittlebug infestations in Hawaii have been shown to dramatically reduce the forage quantity and quality of pastures by killing key forage species outright, or by decreasing the nutritional value, palatability, and productivity of key forages. This promotes the establishment and proliferation of invasive weeds with no economic or other value, while significantly reducing the quality of foraging grasses. Reseeding areas denuded by the Two-lined Spittlebug will protect from runoff and provide forage for cattle.

Recovery efforts for ranches affected by Two-lined Spittlebug include brush management, herbaceous weed treatment, range planting, forage, and biomass planting, and fencing and prescribed grazing.

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



Hawai'i Aquaculture & Aquaponics Association

Hawai'i Cattlemen's Council

Hawai'i Farm Bureau Federation

Hawai'i Farmers' Union United

Hawai'i Food Industry Association

Hawai'i Food Manufacturers Association

Kohala Center

Land Use Research Foundation of Hawai'i

Maui Farm to School Network (Maui F2SN)

Ulupono Initiative

College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources - University of Hawai'i at Manoa

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
February 23, 2021 – 2:00 p.m. – Via Videoconference

**RE: HB 237 HD1 - Relating to Invasive Species – In Support**

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen and Members of the Committee:

The Local Food Coalition **supports** HB 237 HD1, which appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture for the mitigation and control of the two-lined spittlebug and recovery of the rangelands damaged by the invasive pest.

Two-lined spittlebug was first detected in Kailua-Kona, on the Big Island of Hawaii in September of 2016 where it had caused damage to nearly 2,000 acres of pasture land. In September 2020, CTAHR published “Twoline Spittlebug: A Pasture Pest In Paradise” which revealed that the two-line spittle bug is expanding its range on Hawaii Island at about 35,000 acres/year. At this rate it will cover all the important ranchlands on the Big Island within the next ten years.

The potential impact on the cattle industry could be devastating as the two-lined spittlebug was discovered at similar elevations to those of the areas around Waimea, where the majority of the cattle in Hawaii are raised. The two-lined spittlebug kills the grasses completely, providing conditions conducive for the growth of invasive species, weeds and lower forage quality grasses. Financial support is critically needed now to provide the necessary tools for controlling this pest. If research does not continue to find ways to stop the spread of the two-lined spittlebug, there could be a negative impact of local food production.

The Local Food Coalition is an organization comprising of farmers, ranchers, livestock producers, investors and other organizations working to provide Hawaii's food supply.

We respectfully request your support of HB 237 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

John Garibaldi  
808-544-8319  
[jgaribaldi@wik.com](mailto:jgaribaldi@wik.com)



# HALEAKALA RANCH

• EST. MAUI 1888 •

February 22, 2021

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Chair

Rep. Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair

HB237 HD1

RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES.

February 23, 2021, 10:00 a.m.

VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and Members of the Committee,

**Haleakala Ranch strongly supports HB237 HD1** to appropriate funds to the Department of Agriculture for the control of the Two-lined Spittlebug (TLSB) and recovery of rangelands, conservation lands, and other key lands that contribute to the quality of life in Hawaii.

As far as we know, TLSB is limited only to the Big Island, where it has catastrophic impacts on Kikuyu and other grasses. An immediate well thought-out management response is needed to **control existing infestations**; keep it from **spreading on** the Big island, where it spreads at roughly 35k acres/year; and to keep it from **vectoring to** other islands.

Healthy grazing and grasslands are not only critically important as forages supporting the Ranching industry and our state's pressing food security issues, they also play a key land stewardship role. The loss of living ground cover facilitates rapid and sometimes irreversible changes in Hawaii's vegetation and ecology at scale. Highly invasive weeds like Blackberry, fireweed, and gorse move very quickly onto lands infested by TLSB, changing the entire character of the landscape. ***This compromises agriculture, watershed protection efforts, wild land fire prevention, hiking and other recreational activities, the aesthetic value of open spaces, as well as our overall quality of life.***

Restoration of landscapes compromised by TLSB will very likely require **significant** additional investment, expertise, and coordination. If this pest continues to spread, we will inevitably have to lower our expectations of local food production and watershed protection.






# HALEAKALA RANCH

• EST. MAUI 1888 •

As with most invasive species issues, especially with highly invasive species like TLSB, the sooner this can be addressed the better....damage, cost and consequence over time is exponential.

Haleakala Ranch strongly supports HB237 HD1 for funds to be appropriated to aid in the recovery from the damage from the Two-lined Spittlebug and to prevent the spread of this invasive species.

Thank you for your time and attention to this very important matter.



Jordan Jokiel

Haleakala Ranch

Vice President of Land Management

CC: Don Young, President and CEO

Greg Friel, Vice President of Livestock

**HB-237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2021 10:37:46 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Darcy Oishi	AGR	Comments	No

Comments:

Present for questions and comments

**HB-237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2021 11:53:24 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Peter De Luz	Peter De Luz Ranch, LLC	Support	No

Comments:

We highly support this bill because these bugs are a huge threat to our pastures and the livelihood of our ranchers and farmers and all the businesses and customers that they supply food to. These bugs have already invaded one too many pastures and are a threat to many more, and are going to be taking over if we cant control them. Once these bugs invade pastures, herds will have to be minimized because of the lack of feed. The expense to get rid of them once these bugs take over, will be detremetal to ranchers and farmers. For the sake of the local ranchers and farmers, please continue your efforts to work with us get rid of these bugs.

**HB-237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2021 12:44:21 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jonathan Braley	New Island Feed, Inc	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Legislature:

I fully support HB237 HD1. The issue being addressed is of great importance to one of the State's top agricultural industries, cattle ranching. I believe that supporting them with the requested funding should be a top and immediate priority. The sooner we can develop and deploy solutions that will stop the spread of the invasive pest, the sooner we can return these pastures to cattle ranching.

Respectfully, Jonathan Braley of New Island Feed Inc.

**HB-237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2021 1:13:35 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Sara Moore	Kealia Ranch	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly ask for your support of House Bill 237 for funding of invasive species research and control.

I am manager of two ranches in South Kona that have been severely impacted by the Two Lined Spittle Bug. One is 300 acres that I took over in 2017. The cattle were dying of malnutrition because there was no forage. The TLSB had wiped out all palatable grasses. We have since reduced the herd from 50 cattle to 18 head and have been trying to combat the weeds that have taken over. We lost the first crop of calves, again because of malnutrition. We are only in the beginings of any type of rebound to a sustainable operation, even after 3 years. Much work is needed to fight back the weeds and invasive grasses, find suitable grasses that can be established, and then find a sucessful method to establish those grasses.

The second ranch I manage is 10,000 acres. It is in the beginning stages of infestation, and so I am starting the planning for devastation of the primarily kikuya grass pasturres.. We will have to reduce our herd from 500 to 350 cows within the next 3 years, and another 100 after that. I am looking to the State experts to help with finding suitable resistant grasses and effective methods to replant the pastures, but herd reduction will be necessary until then.

I hear the old timers say that this TLSB is going to be the worst thing to effect ranching in Kona, and that says a lot considering all the other pests and diseases they have faced over the years. I did not believe it, until I saw it myself - it is devastating! We are in deep trouble with this pest and need all the support that can be found.

I appreceiate your immediate attention to this HB237 and request for funding.

Humbly,

Sara Moore

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**  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**FEBRUARY 23, 2021  
2:00 PM  
VIDEO CONFERENCE**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 237, H.D. 1  
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

Chairperson Luke and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 237, H.D. 1, relating to invasive species. The bill appropriates funds from the invasive species fund the sum of \$659,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2021-2022 to be expended by the Hawaii Department of Agriculture to mitigate and the two-lined spittlebug, including but not limited to reducing the two-lined spittlebug population using insecticides, integrating weed management measures in affected rangelands, and reseeding pastures damaged by infestations. The Department supports this measure.

Invasive species are a primary threat to Hawai'i's agriculture and economy. Funding for control of invasive species is critical to ensure that appropriate responses can be implemented and maintained which mitigate negative impacts on agriculture, the environment, and the economy. The Hawai'i Interagency Biosecurity Plan guides these efforts. Although the primary target of the spittlebug is kikuyu grass, the grass is widely used for pastures and the Department feels that protecting these pastures is in the best interest of the State, as it is in line with the Department's mission of increasing local food production and protecting agricultural capacity.

The Department appreciates the additional resources provided by this measure to address this invasive species threat and respectfully requests that the Legislature increase the expenditure ceiling for the special fund to allow it to carry out the objectives



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of the appropriation without limiting the Department's ability to fund other critical pest control responsibilities for ongoing programs and activities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

**HB-237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2021 1:34:43 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Bud & Katy Gibson	Rocker G Livestock	Support	No

Comments:

Ranchers in Hawaii are working very hard to find ways to adapt to yet another invasive pest but the task is to big for us to take on alone without help. This bug has a direct impact on our for production and so therefore our food security.



**HB-237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/22/2021 3:40:06 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
William G. Jacintho	Maui Cattlemen's Association	Support	No

Comments:

Strongly Support. these are much needed funds.

Thank you for your support



TESTIMONY OF JACOB D. TAVARES, LIVESTOCK OPERATIONS BUSINESS MANAGER,  
PARKER RANCH, INC.  
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
February 23, 2021 10:00 am  
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

MEASURE: H.B. No. 237 HD1

TITLE: RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Perruso, and Members of the Committee:

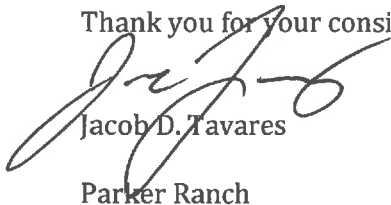
**Parker Ranch, Inc. strongly supports House Bill 237 HD1** to appropriate funds to the Department of Agriculture for the control of the Two-lines Spittlebug (TLSB) and recovery of rangelands damaged by the invasive pest.

TLSB is one of the greatest threats to Hawaii's local beef production. The TLSB is already affecting more than 175,000 acres of land on the Big Island, and is spreading rapidly. Fellow rancher's whose grazing lands have been impacted by this invasive species, are dramatically reducing their herd sizes, and thus revenue streams. The livestock business is very low margin to begin with, and in light of Covid-19, we risk losing more of our family ranchers if a solution to this pest is not discovered soon.

We at Parker Ranch are fortunate that the TLSB has not yet reached our grazing lands, however the potential impacts that it would have on our grazing operations are, quite frankly, terrifying. The University of Hawaii CTAHR, Hawaii Department of Agriculture, HISC, BIISC, affected ranchers, those of us who are at threat, and other stakeholders within the Hawaii conservation and livestock industries have been hard at work to develop a solution to this growing infestation. That being said, more resources are needed if our industry is to combat this challenge in a timely manner.

Beyond affecting the livestock industry, this pest will continue to impact other food security concerns, watershed lands, and the further spread of invasive weeds. Healthy grazing lands are integral to watershed health and function in Hawaii. The Two-lined Spittlebug severely disturbs the Hawaiian grazing land plant community by killing the grass. This loss of living ground cover leaves the land vulnerable to soil loss which contributes to sediment-laden runoff into our near shore coastal waters, affecting Hawaii's delicate ecosystems. Invasive weeds move in on these degraded lands, changing the entire character of the landscape hindering not only agriculture, but also other land management efforts.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.



Jacob D. Tavares

Parker Ranch

Manager, Livestock Business Operations

**LATE**

**HB-237-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/23/2021 7:40:45 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2021 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Springer Kaye	Big Island Invasive Species Committee	Support	No

Comments:

**The Big Island Invasive Species Committee** strongly **supports** this measure. The Two-lined Spittlebug is a threat to agriculture, food supply, and the recovery of natural areas. Kikuyu grass, although considered an invasive species of natural areas, is also a key forage grass, and due to its vast extent, now plays an important role in holding off other, more problematic forest weeds. Where native forest restoration efforts are underway, kikuyu can be managed by gradually opening up small areas for forest planting. By contrast, the diverse array of much harder-to control weeds, which are not eaten by cattle, will be able to take over thousands of acres of ranchlands and natural areas if the Two-lined Spittlebug is not kept in check.

Native Hawaiian grasslands still thrive across thousands of acres of protected area, including the Hawaii Island saddle region, between Mauna Loa and Mauna Kea. The loss of these soil-stabilizing grasses to Two-lined Spittlebug could turn that landscape into a dustbowl with significant consequences to air quality, water quality through soil run-off, interrupt military training, and impact our native biodiversity.

Your support is greatly appreciated.