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Governor

JOSH GREEN
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

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

BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2021

1:05 PM

VIIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

SCR 258 / SR 217

**URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO IDENTIFY HOW COFFEE
BERRY BORER AND COFFEE LEAF RUST ENTERED INTO HAWAII AND
MEASURES TO PREVENT THE FLOW OF THESE INVASIVE SPECIES INTO THE
STATE TO PROTECT THE ONGOING VIABILITY OF HAWAII'S COFFEE INDUSTRY**

Chairperson Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Concurrent Resolution 258 and Senate Resolution 217. These resolutions ask the Department of Agriculture ("Department") to trace the introduction of coffee berry borer ("CBB") and coffee leaf rust ("CLR") into Hawaii, determine what role the importation of green coffee from regions with known infestations played in the introduction of these pests, and report on its findings and recommendations to the legislature no later than 20 days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2022. The Department supports the intent of this resolution and offers the following comments.

The Department lacks adequate staffing, training, and expertise for conducting the comprehensive investigations necessary to accurately determine the origin of these two invasive species. Further, as this represents a likely foreign pathway, this falls within the expertise and broader jurisdiction of the U.S. Department and Agriculture (USDA). When the CBB was detected in 2010, the Department requested the assistance of the USDA, Animal Plant Health Inspection Services-Plant Protection and



Quarantine (APHIS-PPQ) to aid in determining the origins of CBB infestations in Hawaii. While that investigation was inconclusive regarding the pathways through which CBB entered Hawaii, it was not linked to the importation of green coffee from foreign sources. The Department has requested a similar analysis be performed by APHIS-PPQ for CLR.

A broader pathway analysis is critical for the long-term management of CLR in Hawaii. It may identify gaps within our biosecurity program that require closing. Further, knowing the point of origin of the CLR will provide us with valuable information on expected impacts of the disease, varieties of coffee that may be resistant to the strain of CLR we have, and other information that will be useful for both the Department and coffee growers. Ongoing work by research partners of USDA Agricultural Research Service will likely provide insights into some of these questions later this year, but access to more timely information will be extremely valuable to the Department and local coffee industry.

The Department's Plant Quarantine Branch already inspects all known coffee plants and plant parts that enter the state. Entry requirements are stringent and require inspections, permits, treatments, and extended quarantines, as appropriate, depending on the proposed imported coffee product. The existing regulations are designed to target any coffee pest, not just CBB or CLR.

Since the initial detection of CLR, the Department has been working with industry groups, the University of Hawaii and USDA APHIS-PPQ on an almost weekly basis. The Department and partners are actively surveying all islands, developing measures to prevent spread while surveying, providing outreach through fliers and radio advertisements, implementing interim rules to limit spread throughout the state, informing stakeholders on the processes to import CLR-resistant coffee cultivars, and working through the regulatory framework to allow for additional treatment options to become available to farmers. Each of these tasks will be ongoing for the foreseeable future.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SCR-258

Submitted on: 3/18/2021 12:00:39 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/24/2021 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Chet Gardiner	Testifying for Cassandra Farms	Support	No

Comments:

Please accept this as my strong recommendation that this bill be passed.

The relatively recent introduction of CBB and CLR that has caused Hawai'ian coffee farmers a great deal of extra work and expense indicates that we need to identify and implement measures, procedures and legislation to protect not only our most visible and important crop, coffee but to also fully utilize our geographic advantage to protect all of our agricultural products.

Our survival depends upon it.

Mahalo

Chet Gardiner, VP and Board Member KCFA, Coffee farmer

SCR-258

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 5:02:29 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/24/2021 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Bruce Corker	Testifying for Rancho Aloha	Support	No

Comments:

Members of the Agriculture and Environment Committee:

As a Hawaii coffee farmer I strongly support this Resolution.

Hawaii's system of preventing the introduction of invasives has failed coffee farmers twice in the last decade with the entry of CBB, and then CLR.

How the system failed needs to be determined in order to strengthen the system and to protect against future introductions damaging to Hawaii agriculture.

Hawaii needs to protect the interests of its farmers.

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Corker

Rancho Aloha

North Kona District, Hawaii County



Hawaii Coffee Association
PO Box 168, Kealahou, HI 96750

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

March 24, 2021

RE: Testimony in Support of SCR258

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara and Senators,

I am Chris Manfredi, President of Hawaii Coffee Association (HCA).

The Hawaii Coffee Association supports the intent of SCR 258.

We may learn something from an investigation and report that can demonstrate from where CBB and CLR originated and therefore take steps to prevent further introduction of invasive species that are extremely damaging to crops and expensive to manage.

Importation of raw coffee from infested areas of the world directly into uninfested growing regions in Hawaii has a predictable, although perhaps not a provable outcome.

We must also ask why are outbound airline passengers screened by USDA, and inbound passengers are not.

In an effort to protect Hawaii from CBB and CLR the Federal Register / Vol. 63, No. 229 / Monday, November 30, 1998 § 319.73-2 *Products prohibited importation* includes language relating to the importation of coffee plant material to Hawaii and Puerto Rico.

Reportedly in 2006 Alan Green, APHIS' Plant Health Programs' executive director, wrote in a letter to Lyle Wong, an administrator with the Hawaii Department of Agriculture, "Neither the methyl bromide fumigation nor moist heat treatments as currently proposed in the docket are efficacious against the two major pests of concern coffee bean borer and coffee leaf rust,"

The HCA has not seen this letter. If the opinion expressed is untrue, we need to see the research to the contrary. If it is true, we must ask why was it ignored and what technology can we employ to protect Hawaii's farmers from further introduction of harmful invasive species.

Respectfully submitted.

SCR-258

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 6:24:37 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/24/2021 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cecelia Smith	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Yes!

SCR-258

Submitted on: 3/22/2021 8:02:11 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/24/2021 1:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Andrea Quinn	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Honorable Committee Members,

Please support SCR258.

Thank you,

Andrea Quinn