

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF
HAWAII



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

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

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

ROBERT K. MASUDA
FIRST DEPUTY

M. KALEO MANUEL
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
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on
WATER & LAND**

**Thursday, February 3, 2022
9:30 AM**

State Capitol, Via Video Conference, Conference Room 430

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 1497
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

House Bill 1497 proposes to require the Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) to establish a two-year pilot program to remove invasive species such as *Albizia* in and around Waiahole stream on O‘ahu. **The Department appreciates the intent and offers the following comments.**

The Department has jurisdiction over certain public lands throughout the state and assists private forest landowners through the Forest Stewardship Program, the Watershed Partnership Program, and the Hawai‘i Invasive Species Committee. The governor recognizes the need for improved forest management as reflected in his budget request. Forest management projects have the potential to increase water infiltration and reduce runoff, thereby mitigating downstream flooding. Forest management also improves forest health and reduces invasive species impacts, allowing the forest to perform the ecosystem services that healthy forests naturally deliver. Reducing invasive trees such as *Albizia* would also benefit the debris and sediment loading to the downstream drainageways commonly seen in extreme weather events. The Department highlights the benefits of an actively managed watershed in their educational outreach video entitled “The Rain Follows the Forest”. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N0oHdMPYSq8>

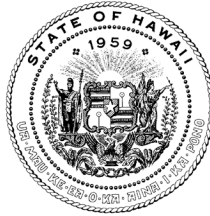
The Department understands the value of a pilot program in Waiahole to remove invasive species, specifically *Albizia*, and the Hawaii Invasive Species Council has developed the *Strategic Plan for Control and Management of Albizia in Hawaii*. Funding would allow DOFAW to contract with partners like the Ko‘olau Mountains Watershed Partnership and O‘ahu Invasive Species Committee to research the feasibility of establishing a two-year pilot program

for forest management in Waiahole that could serve to quantify the positive impact of forest management and strategic *Albizia* control.

The Department would like to note that the Governor's budget request includes forest health line items including Restore Recurring Funds for Operating Costs for Forest Resource Management and Development (\$589K), Fire and Emergency Response (\$1.8M), Forest Health (\$1.7M), Biological Control of Forest Pests (\$250,000), and Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (\$1M), and a CIP request for Watershed Protection and Initiatives Statewide (\$4M).

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

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HAWAII



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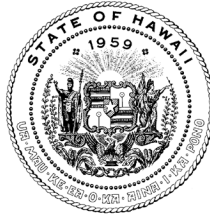
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Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



DENISE ISERI-MATSUBARA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
HAWAII HOUSING FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
677 QUEEN STREET, SUITE 300
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
FAX: (808) 587-0600

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Statement of
DENISE ISERI-MATSUBARA
Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation
Before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

February 3, 2022 at 9:30 a.m.
State Capitol, Room 430

In consideration of
H.B. 1497
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES.

The HHFDC supports H.B 1497, which requires the division of forestry and wildlife of the department of land and natural resources to establish a two-year pilot program to remove invasive species in and around Waiahole stream on Oahu.

The HHFDC owns nearly 900 acres of leased and open-space lands in the ahupuaa of Waiahole. Over 90 lots are subject to long-term leases for residential and agricultural uses, with many of the lots abutting Waiahole Stream. Under the lease agreements, lessees are responsible for clearing the stream along their property. Many lessees lack the financial means to remove large albizia trees that may fall in or near the stream, thereby exacerbating existing flooding risks. Additionally, the climate crisis is causing more frequent and extreme weather events, as witnessed during the particularly damaging March 2021 floods in Waiahole.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written comments on this bill.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE**

P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 1497

**February 3, 2022
9:30 a.m.
Room 430 and Videoconference**

RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

House Bill No. 1497 requires the Division of Forestry and Wildlife of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) to establish a two-year pilot program to remove invasive species in and around Waiahole stream on O'ahu; appropriates an unspecified amount of general funds for FY 23 to be expended by DLNR for the pilot program; and requires a report to the Legislature.

B&F notes that, with respect to the general fund appropriation in this bill, the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act requires that states receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II funds and Governor's Emergency Education Relief II funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and

- Higher education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

Further, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires that states receiving ARP ESSER funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

The U.S. Department of Education has issued rules governing how these maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements are to be administered. B&F will be working with the money committees of the Legislature to ensure that the State of Hawai'i complies with these ESSER MOE requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

HB-1497

Submitted on: 2/1/2022 9:35:10 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Darlene S Yoshizumi	WWCA	Support	Yes

Comments:

Strongly support HB1497.

HB-1497

Submitted on: 2/2/2022 6:42:22 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Paul Zweng	'Ohulehule Forest Conservancy, LLC	Support	No

Comments:

This bill is very important to the welfare of the Waiāhole-Waikāne community. This community is grounded in taro farming. Because the Waiāhole-Waikāne area is experiencing larger storms and more flash-flooding events now, the removal of invasive trees is more important than ever.

What's the connection between invasive trees, flash flooding, and taro farming? Invasive trees like hau form tangled thickets across the main streams like the Waiāhole Stream. Invasive giant trees drop huge limbs into the tangled thickets. Sometimes the huge trees topple over. When flash floods occur, the violent and massive volumes of water are diverted out of the stream channels as a result of fallen albizia limbs and trees in the tangled hau thickets damming the streams. These waters flow through taro lo'i, resulting in tremendous damage. It's not only the taro farmers who are being impacted. Many other farmers in Waiāhole have lost portions of their planted fields to the violent flow of stream waters diverted by invasive trees.

HB1497 addresses this issue by removing invasive albizia and hau, the main culprits causing the diversion of the flood waters. Please help to pass this bill. Farming is hard enough as it is without without having to bear the added burden of flood damage. And unless something is done, taro farming may cease to exist in the future. That would be an unthinkable tragedy given the importance of taro to Hawaiian culture. Mahalo for your consideration.

SUBJECT: HB1497 Relating to Invasive Species, Committee Hearing - Thursday February 3, Conference Room 430.

To: House Committee on Water And Land, Committee Chair Representative David Tarnas/Committee Members

Mōhala i ka wai ka maka o ka pua; Unfolded by the water are the faces of flowers (‘Ōlelo No‘eau #2178). This ‘ōlelo no‘eau is a great representation of our Waiāhole valley waters, as we are heavily dependent on the water to grow kalo, maintain our infrastructure, and support our local farmers. It is clear that invasive plants and large albizia have threatened our water source for years, and most recently the Waiāhole bridge. As we, the community adapt to climate change and increased rain, we need to ensure that our waterways are clear from blockage. I would like to share my **support** as a resident of Waiāhole Valley for HB1497, as it will be one step towards cleaner kahawai, decreased stream clogging, and replenished aquifers.

Mahalo nui,
Rainbow Uli‘i

HB-1497

Submitted on: 2/1/2022 9:58:52 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
penny rapoza	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

i support bill HB1497

mahalo~

HB-1497

Submitted on: 2/1/2022 11:18:08 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Sherry Pollack	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support HB1497 that would require the division of forestry and wildlife of the department of land and natural resources to establish a two—year pilot program to remove invasive species such as albizia in and around Waiahole stream on Oahu.

This bill will help protect our precious aquifer which is critical, particularly in light of the water contamination crisis from the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility. The Board of Water Supply says Oahu could face water shortages this summer as it continues to operate under what it calls “stress conditions” linked to the Navy’s contaminated water system. It is vital that we protect what clean, safe drinking water we still have left.

Please pass this important legislation. Mahalo!

HB-1497

Submitted on: 2/1/2022 11:25:44 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Ching Salas	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am in support of HB1497

HB-1497

Submitted on: 2/1/2022 12:11:15 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Lilia Galicinao	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please accept my position.

HB-1497

Submitted on: 2/1/2022 1:59:08 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Sam ?Ohu Gon III	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this for the sake of our native ecosystems and our vital watersheds

HB-1497

Submitted on: 2/1/2022 3:04:48 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Cynthia Hopkins	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To: Committee Chair Representative David Tarnas and Members of the House Committee on Water and Land

Subject: HB 1497 Relating to Invasive Species in and around Waiahole Stream

Having grown up and lived in the Waiahole Waikane area and experienced the many floods and road closures throughout the 68 years of my lifetime, I support the HB 1497.

The invasive albizia and other alien species have grown amuk, clogging the Waiahole stream and causing overflow, flooding, road closures and property damage to both residents and farmers. Not to mention the thousands of people who travel the one and only Kamehameha Highway to get from one end of the island to the other. Something has to be done..

HB 1497 will help protect the flow of our stream and make life safer especially during high winds and stormy, rainy weather.

Mahalo for this opportunity for me to express my support to HB 1497.

HB-1497

Submitted on: 2/1/2022 5:16:11 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
John Morgan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is John Morgan. I am the president of Kualoa Ranch. Please support this bill.

This is a pilot project for a very important environmental issue that faces many parts of Hawaii today: the threats of invasive species of trees, especially albisia trees. Albisia trees pose a threat to not only native ecosystems, but to the health and safety of our residents.

At Kualoa Ranch, we have spent a considerable amount of time and money eradicating albisia from our property and we know it can be done, relatively safely and efficiently.

Please pass this bill so the the DLNR can use it as a pilot project to develop efficient methods to control the spread of albisia in Waiahole, and serve as a model for other areas in Hawaii.

mahalo

HB-1497

Submitted on: 2/1/2022 6:01:37 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Norman Sadoyama	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I believe this is a much needed bill because Albezia trees have uprooted and broken the water line (M cCandless water system that the farmers use in Waiahole Valley) The trees are voracious in their continued growth to overtake much native plants in the valley. Thank you.

Norman Sadoyama

HB-1497

Submitted on: 2/1/2022 8:04:12 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Lynette Williams	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To: Committee Chair Representative David Tarnas and Members of the House Committee on Water & Land

I support HB 1497, related to invasive species. Removing alien trees now will avoid the much higher expense of repairing the damage to infrastructure, roads, homes, and businesses that these dangerous trees can cause. More importantly, the invasive species are a dangerous threat to human health and lives. The benefits of this bill far outweigh the cost. Please vote for HB1497.

Mahalo,

Lynette Williams

HB-1497

Submitted on: 2/1/2022 8:21:14 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Larry Williams	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support HB1497. Albizia are out of control in Windward Oahu. We need to act now!

HB-1497

Submitted on: 2/1/2022 8:44:34 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Barbara Barry	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I support HB 1497,

Mahalo,

Barbara Barry

HB-1497

Submitted on: 2/1/2022 9:40:49 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Ryan Ringuette	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support HB1497.

HB-1497

Submitted on: 2/1/2022 9:41:49 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Louella Aquino	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support HB1497

HB-1497

Submitted on: 2/1/2022 9:49:41 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
John L Reppun	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Committee Members:

The Waiāhole-Waikane region of Northern Ko'olaupoko is one of the areas on O'ahu that is most overgrown with extremely fast-growing Albizia. Curbing growth in these ahupua'a is an urgent matter to stop further spread and protect this important watershed, local farms and help to minimize flood hazards.

I urge this committee's support in moving this measure forward.

Mahalo, John L Reppun (808)277-8686

HB-1497

Submitted on: 2/2/2022 7:46:21 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Henry and Violet Roberts	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My ohana has been in these Waiahole Waikane valleys for more than 150 years as farmers and residents. The invasive trees especially albizia has cause a lot of damage and is unsafe. Clogged stream have severely affected travel thoroughfare on Kamehameha Hwy. As a farmer the clogged Waiahole stream has caused water diversion affecting the auwai farmers their crops and kalo farmers. Erosion is also very significant.

Please do something about them. This rural farming community has been greatly affected.

We are strongly in support of HB 1497.

HB-1497

Submitted on: 2/2/2022 8:33:20 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Sam Kakazu	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

For years, I have been exploring scenerios to repurpose the invasive species of Mangrove and Albizia because unchecked, they cause major problems from mauka to makai. There were encouraging conversations at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Hawaii and I sought the advice of Representative Cynthia Theilen on occasion.

When I revisited my roots through the Waiahole Waikane Community Association, I heard first hand how devastating Albizia in particular, can be to homes and farmlands. When coupled with flooding, Albizia creates immediate hardship and long-term, frustrating and hazardous conditions when redirecting the streams and auwai.

I support HB1497 as a step towards addressing and managing the deliterious effects of invasive species, potentially repurposing the wood into a regional economy that can be used to perpetuate these efforts, as well as other community-building agendas of the association.

Mahalo

HB-1497

Submitted on: 2/2/2022 9:25:18 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Vivien Lee and Charlie Reppun	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

We strongly support this bill as members of the WWCA. Please check out THE ALBEZIA PROJECT which uses the wood and replants native trees. This could be a creative solution to the Statewide problem. Mahalo, Charlie Reppun

HB-1497

Submitted on: 2/3/2022 6:43:09 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/3/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
TONI LYNNE M CANO	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HIGHLY support this Bill.