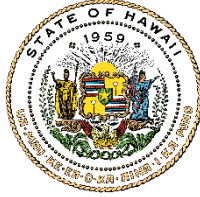
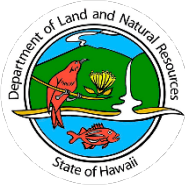


JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE  
FIRST DEPUTY

DEAN D. UYENO  
ACTING 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  
DAWN N. S. CHANG  
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on  
AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

Monday, January 12, 2024  
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 312 & Via Videoconference

In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 2131  
RELATING TO THE TWO-LINED SPITTLEBUG

House Bill 2131 proposes to: appropriate funds for the Department of Agriculture to mitigate and control the spread of two-lined spittlebug and to fund recovery efforts for areas affected by it; require a report; declare that the general fund expenditure ceiling is exceeded; and make an appropriation. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive FY 2025 Supplemental Budget Request.**

The Department recognizes that the cattle industry is a leading economic engine on Hawai'i island and throughout the State, and that a clear and present threat to this industry is the invasive insect Two-Lined Spittlebug (TLSB). This insect has already killed thousands of acres of foraging grasses in pastures used by ranchers to feed their cattle. TLSB consumes the nutrients of these foraging grasses and does not allow the grasses to regrow leaving the areas barren which then compounds the problem by allowing other invasive weeds such as fireweed and wild blackberry to take hold.

This bill states that TLSB, as of 2021, now infests almost 280 square miles on the big island, and the Big Island Invasive Species Committee advises that, like other invasive species like Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death, little fire ant, or coqui frogs, TLSB can be easily transported by people, vehicles, or through the plant trade. Making matters worse, TLSB now threatens flora in watersheds and natural areas critical to Hawai'i's environment and cultural resources.

The Department is in support of this bill to protect both the ranching industry and natural areas of Hawai'i, as well as the bill's instruction that the Department of Agriculture submit a report

prior to the start of the 2025 Legislative Session detailing the progress of activities to mitigate and control infestations of the TLSB.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
Governor

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
Lt. Governor



**SHARON HURD**  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

**DEXTER KISHIDA**  
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD**  
**CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

**FEBRUARY 12, 2024**  
**2:00 PM**  
**CONFERENCE ROOM 312**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 2131**  
**RELATING TO THE TWO-LINED SPITTLEBUG**

Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2131 relating to Two-lined Spittlebug (TLSB). This bill appropriates monies to the Department of Agriculture to mitigate and control infestations of the TLSB and undertake recovery efforts for lands damaged by the TLSB. The Department offers support for this bill with comments.

The TLSB is severely damaging the rangelands of Hawaii Island. This damage is not limited to the devastation of kikuyu grass, the dominant grazing forage for our cattle industry. The spittlebugs are creating opportunities for invasive weed species within the kikuyu forage including Christmas berry, lantana, pamakani and other weed species to surge and then dominate the landscape. These weed species in turn create a very real threat of long-term damage not just to rangelands but the watershed itself. In addition, the impacts of TLSB infestations are generating fire fuel—through dead grasses and large amount of “brown material” and by allowing weeds that are more fire prone and long-term fire resistant, to occupy the range landscape. Funding would best be used to support efforts to control TLSB and the funding of a response task force.



The Department has already formed a tentative agreement with Florida Department of Agriculture (FDACS) to launch exploration for natural enemies of TLSB which is native to the southeastern United States, including Florida. It is anticipated \$100,000 is needed to launch a joint HDOA/FDACS biocontrol program, sustainable over multiple years. A response team is needed to attack not just TLSB but for removal of invasive weeds and subsequent replacement of devastated rangelands with viable TLSB resistant kikuyu replacements. Further, the Department strongly recommends funding the \$100,000 research program for TLSB as well funding requests from the University of Hawaii and the Hawaii Cattlemen's Council as the current research project is not sufficient to address the total needs of the impacted rangelands and the threats posed by this insect and its impacts to the watershed. To run the \$800,000 program, the Department requests a 1.0 program manager at the cost of \$120,000. Finally, given the climate zones occupied by kikuyu, the development of resistant rangeland forage is essential, and this work must also be funded.

The Department supports this bill to appropriate funding for the mitigation of the impacts of TLSB.



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## ‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

### Legislative Testimony

### Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems  
Monday, February 12, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.

By

Anna Wieczorek, Interim Dean  
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources

And

Michael Bruno, Provost  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

#### HB 2131 – RELATING TO THE TWO-LINED SPITTLEBUG

Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2131 relating to the two-lined spittlebug.

The bill makes an appropriation to the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA) for the mitigation and control of the two-lined spittlebug and for the recovery of areas affected by infestation.

For several years, University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR) faculty and Cooperative Extension personnel have collaborated with HDOA Plant Industry Division administration and Plant Pest Control Branch to detect, mitigate, and control infestation of the two-line spittlebug on pasture lands on Hawai'i Island.

The cattle industry is one of the top contributors to Hawai'i's agricultural production value. The two-lined spittlebug threatens the livelihood and existence of the local cattle industry that contributes to the food security in the State.

There exists a critical need to continue and increase recovery efforts for pasture lands damaged by this invasive pest by implementing chemical and mechanical controls, biocontrol and best practices for managing pasture lands, and the reseeding of pasture.

We support HB 2131 provided its adoption does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our Board of Regents Approved Budget. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the measure.



February 12, 2024

RE: HB2131 relating to Two-lined Spittlebug

Aloha,

We would like to express our support for this measure, recognizing the serious threat posed by the introduced two-lined spittlebug and allocating funds to support HDOA in addressing this pest.

The two-lined spittlebug was only identified as a pest in Hawaii in 2016, when it had damaged 2,000 acres of ranch on the Big Island. By 2019, the number had grown to 150,000 acres. Unlike other pasture pests that we've had in Hawaii, the impacts do not recede with time. Affected ranchers have found 100% death of the grass after infestation, with no recovery. Instead, pastures are quickly invaded by aggressive brush species such as pamakani, fireweed, and blackberry, none of which are suitable for cattle forage.

Conservation partners with restoration work in pastures are also struggling with this threat. As pastures are restored to native forest, kikuyu and pangola act as "placeholders" until native species can be outplanted. These grasses are easy to control in those instances. The replacement weeds are a much more challenging and expensive problem, requiring significantly more time and effort to control.

TLSB is a threat to our food security, economy, environment, and culture, on the Big Island, and throughout the state. We urge you to respond decisively and provide the support needed for our researchers and ranchers to test and develop methods of controlling and recovering from TLSB.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this matter. Please contact me with any questions.



Frances Brewer  
Program Manager  
(808)933-3340

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

HB2131, Relating to The Two-Lined Spittlebug  
House AGR Hearing – 2:00 PM  
Monday, February 12, 2024

Testimony By: Larry Jeffs  
Position: Support

Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the House AGR 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. Our family farms grow about 1 million pounds weekly of import replacement produce. 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.

Appreciation is expressed for the Legislature's support and acknowledgment that expanding the livestock industry contributes to Hawaii's economy and is a significant employer for local communities, especially on Hawaii Island.

About 70% of all beef cattle in Hawaii are grass-fed. Two-lined spittlebug damage results in entire pastures being 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 directly impacts food production and the replacement of imported beef.

I understand that ranchers are working hard to find cost-effective ways to manage this invasive species and to keep pastures healthy and productive. It is a daunting task that requires collaboration with state agencies such as the Department of Agriculture and funding.

Your favorable consideration of HB2131 is appreciated. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



**Hawai'i Forest Industry Association**

7192 Kalaniana'ole Hwy  
Suite A-143A, #249  
Honolulu, HI 96825  
Phone: 808/933/9411  
Email: hfia@hawaiiiforest.org

**Date:** 02/10/24

**TO:** AGR Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa and AGR Committee Members Cochran, Lowen, Perruso, Woodson, Ward

**FROM:** the Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA)

**SUBJECT:** Testimony in Support for HB2131 Relating to the Two-Lined Spittlebug

Dear Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa and Committee Members,

The Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA) is in its 35th year. It is a state-wide association of landowners, woodworkers, forest professionals and concerned citizens working toward healthier and more productive forests across the state of Hawaii. On behalf of the Directors and members of the Hawai'i Forest Industry Association, please support HB2131

Hawaii cattlemen face a very difficult foe. HFIA agrees with the intent of this bill to continue appropriating monies to address the issue that is the Two-lined spittlebug, and to address lands already devastated by the pest.

While it may seem like a good idea to take advantage of the demise of Hawaii's kikuyu and pangola grass lands to reforest Hawaii; that would be a mistake. Once the spittle bug is done wreaking havoc in an area, the land would be exposed to a plethora of aggressive pyrophytic (fire-loving) weeds. Once fires are extinguished the exposed damaged soil is going to attract more weeds. This is not good for cattle ranching; it is not good for forestry; it is not good for our communities and it is highly degrading to the land and soils. To do nothing and allow "nature to take her course" is disrespectful to the land and people of Hawaii. Addressing the spittlebug appropriately, and managing the lands strategically will ultimately yield a better outcome.

This is the time not only to do the right thing by cattle ranchers; we need to do the right thing for our potential forest lands and lands that are in transition. This is an issue that should have the support of DLNR's Land Division as well as its Division of Forestry and Wildlife. Therefore, the HFIA supports HB2131 and hopes that you will support it as well.

Mahalo,

Guy Cellier, President  
Hawai'i Forest Industry Association

*Established in 1989, HFIA's is a nonprofit organization founded by people committed to sustainable forest management. HFIA's mission is to promote healthy and productive forests and a sustainable forest industry through management, education, planning, information exchange, and advocacy. HFIA has over 130 members including woodworkers, landowners, sawyers, foundations, foresters, growers, educators, environmentalists, architects, millers, ranchers, and others interested in HFIA's mission and goals.*

**HFIA Board of Directors**

Officers: President Guy Cellier, Vice President Irene Sprecher, Secretary Taylor Coons, Treasurer Wade Lee  
Directors: Jeremy Campbell, Aaron Hammer, Nicholas Koch, Michael Sowards, Aileen Yeh





# Food+ Policy Internship 2024

[food@purplemaia.org](mailto:food@purplemaia.org)

February 10, 2024

Subject: HB2131 Testimony

Aloha Chair Cedric Asuega Gates and Vice Chair Kirstin Kahaloa and and honorable members of the Committees,

Hawaii Food+ Policy is in strong **SUPPORT** of HB2131, appropriating \$800,000 for the Department of Agriculture to mitigate and control two-lined spittlebug infestations and undertake recovery efforts for affected lands. This legislation is not merely a response to an agricultural pest; it is a vital investment in the resilience of our local communities, the long-term sustainability of our agricultural sector, and the preservation of our natural ecosystems.

The livestock industry is not just an agricultural sector; it is a cornerstone of employment and economic stability for local communities, especially on the island of Hawaii, home to nearly 60% of the state's cattle. The two-lined spittlebug poses a dire threat to this industry, jeopardizing jobs and the economic wellbeing of rural areas. This investment reflects a commitment to preserving the livelihoods of those who form the backbone of our rural economies, ensuring that they continue to thrive even in the face of agricultural challenges. At a time when global food systems are increasingly under threat from climate change and geopolitical tensions, strengthening our domestic food sources has never been more critical. By protecting our pastures and crops from the devastating impacts of the spittlebug, we are safeguarding our ability to produce local, sustainable food.

Moreover, investing in the mitigation and control of the spittlebug now will result in significant cost savings in the future. Without intervention, the damage caused by these pests will escalate, leading to higher recovery costs and potentially irreparable damage to our agricultural infrastructure. Proactive measures are not only fiscally responsible but also essential for the sustainability of our agricultural sector. Beyond its impact on agriculture, the spittlebug also poses a threat to our native forest grasses, which are integral to the health and biodiversity of our forests. These ecosystems are not only vital for the environmental balance but also for the cultural heritage and the natural beauty of Hawaii. Investing in the control and mitigation of this pest is an investment in the preservation of our natural heritage.

Mahalo for your consideration and for your continued service to the people and the environment of Hawaii,

Kawika Kahiapo + Hawaii Food+ Policy Team



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

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS  
Monday, February 12, 2024 — 2:00 p.m.

**Ulupono Initiative supports HB 2131, Relating to the Two-Lined Spittlebug.**

Dear Chair Gates 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 the quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food, renewable energy, clean transportation choices, and better management of freshwater resources.

**Ulupono supports HB 2131**, which appropriates funds for the Department of Agriculture to mitigate and control the spread of the two-line spittlebug and to fund recovery efforts for areas affected by it.

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. It damaged roughly 2,000 acres of pastureland. As of September 2022, damage from infestation has skyrocketed to about 178,369 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.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata  
Director of Government Affairs

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*



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

**COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS**

Rep. Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair

Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair

**SB2131**

**RELATING TO THE TWO-LINED SPITTLEBUG**

Monday, February 12, 2023, 2:00 PM

Conference Room 312 & Videoconference

Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **strongly supports SB2131** which appropriates funds for the Department of Agriculture to mitigate and control the spread of the two-lined spittlebug and to fund recovery efforts for areas affected by it.

We are aware that there are many pressing issues that need funding, but this invasive species directly affects food production and natural resource conservation. 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. 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 pastureland. Monthly pasture surveys that began in November 2017 have revealed that the pest has rapidly expanded its range and as of September 2022 infests 178,369 acres. It is imperative that we 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 enables the establishment and proliferation of invasive weeds with no economic or other value, while significantly reducing the quality and availability 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.

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, and marine ecosystem habitats that support important food chains and thus our communities. Invasive weeds move in on these degraded lands, degrading the aesthetic 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.

Ranchers in Hawaii are working hard to try to find cost-effective ways to adapt to this new challenge and to keep their lands healthy and productive, but 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 ask that there be guidelines to ensure that the funding goes directly to actions that mitigate the invasive species, such as the actions ranchers have been taking.**

We **strongly support SB2131** and appreciate the opportunity to testify on this critical matter. You can learn more about the Two-lined Spittlebug at [www.TLSBhawaii.com](http://www.TLSBhawaii.com) and the Hawaii Rangelands Website at <https://rangelandsgateway.org/twolined-spittlebug>

Nicole Galase  
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council  
Managing Director



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 12, 2024

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

**TESTIMONY ON HB 2131**  
RELATING TO THE TWO-LINED SPITTLEBUG

Conference Room 312 & Videoconference  
2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice-Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the Committee:

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

**The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports HB 2131**, which appropriates funds for the Department of Agriculture to mitigate and control the spread of the two-lined spittlebug and to fund recovery efforts for areas affected by it.

The Two-lined spittlebug was first detected in Kailua-Kona, on the Big Island of Hawai'i 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 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 Hawai'i 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, biomass planting, fencing, and prescribed grazing.

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



COORDINATING GROUP ON  
ALIEN PEST SPECIES

House of Representatives  
Committee On Agriculture and Food Systems  
Monday, February 12, 2024  
2:00 PM Conference Room 312  
State Capitol

### Testimony in Support of HB2131

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloe, and Members of the Committee,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) is **in support of HB2131**, *Relating to the Two-Lined Spittlebug*, which provides funds to the Hawaii Department of Agriculture to control infestations of the two-lined spittlebug (TLSB), undertake recovery efforts for areas impacted by TLSB, and take measures to reduce TLSB populations.

First detected in Kealahou in 2016, the TLSB has become a serious threat to range lands on Hawaii Island. TLSB has also been reported in residential areas on Hawaii Island where it can impact lawns and sod. Now is the time to pour resources into TLSB control before it spreads further on Hawaii Island or spreads to other islands. The funding for the recovery of TLSB-impacted areas is needed as pasture areas impacted by TLSB do not recover and the grass species are replaced by invasive plants like fireweed and wild blackberry, which can spread across ranchlands and further decrease the quality of forage.

We support this increase in funding to control TLSB and develop methods to recover impacted areas.

Mahalo for the opportunity to support HB2131 and for consideration of our testimony.

Aloha,

Christy Martin  
CGAPS Program Manager

Stephanie Easley  
CGAPS Legal Fellow



# SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

## HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

February 12, 2024    2:00 PM    Conference Room 312

### In SUPPORT of:

**HB2104:** RELATING TO THE HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

**HB2131:** RELATING TO THE TWO-LINED SPITTLEBUG

**HB2132:** RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

**HB2133:** RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

**HB2139:** RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

**HB2537:** RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

**HB2644:** RELATING TO LITTLE FIRE ANTS

**HB2672:** RELATING TO LITTLE FIRE ANTS

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Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Committee Members,

On behalf of our over 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **SUPPORTS HB2104, HB2131, HB2132, HB2133, HB2139, HB2537, HB2644, and HB2672**, which will help to mitigate the ongoing and future impacts of invasive pests on our native ecosystems, cultural practices, food security, public health, economy, and the overall quality of life of present and future generations.

Hawai'i's history provides us with a host of lessons regarding the wide-ranging and potentially irreversible damage that invasive species can inflict on our islands and ways of life. Invasive plants and wildlife have overtaken entire watersheds, impacting not just native habitat but also reducing aquifer recharge, increasing our vulnerability to floods and wildfires, and smothering our nearshore reefs and waters with runoff. Parasites and other pests have impacted local food production and increased the use of toxic pesticides on farms and in home gardens, risking both public health as well as threatening stream and nearshore species critical to our aquatic ecosystems. Invasive animals have also extirpated native species, continue to threaten others with outright extinction, and continue to undermine public health by acting as vectors for zoonotic diseases. Most recently, the spread of invasive pests such as the little fire ant, coconut rhinoceros beetle, hala scale, two-lined spittlebug and others will require substantial and long-needed policies and investments over the long-term, to prevent additional and even greater impacts to our islands and our future generations.

Accordingly, the Sierra Club strongly supports the much needed policies and investments contemplated in these measures. More financial support is critical for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to fulfill its biosecurity mission; funding for targeted campaigns to address the little fire ant and two-lined spittlebug are critical to preventing the ecological, cultural, agricultural, public health, and economic impacts of these pests; financial support for



# SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

businesses and organizations to engage in invasive species control and eradication will engage more of the community in the all-hands-on-deck fight to combat their spread; agricultural invasive species placards will encourage agricultural producers to proactively employ best management practices and other measures to prevent and address invasive species on agricultural lands; and quarantine requirements will help to fill a critical gap in our regulatory toolbox that has allowed the sale of infested plants and other communities – a gap that has likely contributed to the establishment of coconut rhinoceros beetle on O‘ahu, and the ongoing spread of little fire ants across the islands.

Much remains uncertain as we continue to reckon with the consequences of Hawai‘i’s longstanding failure to enact critical biosecurity protections. However, it is certain that much stronger action, including but not limited to the proposals in the aforementioned bills, will be necessary to mitigate or prevent the worst of these and other future impacts to our lives and that of our children and future generations.

Accordingly, the Sierra Club of Hawai‘i respectfully urges the Committee to **PASS** these measures. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.



**HB-2131**

Submitted on: 2/10/2024 10:44:39 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jacqueline S. Ambrose	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

RELATING TO THE TWO-LINED SPITTLEBUG.

Appropriates funds for the Department of Agriculture to mitigate and control the spread of the two-lined spittlebug and to fund recovery efforts for areas affected by it. Requires a report to the Legislature.

Declares that the general fund expenditure ceiling is exceeded. Makes an appropriation

**HB-2131**

Submitted on: 2/10/2024 8:56:47 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
J Ashman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this bill.

Thank you.

**HB-2131**

Submitted on: 2/11/2024 10:46:16 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jimmy Greenwell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Addressing the continuing and very serious two lined spittlebug crisis requires a two-pronged attack;

1. We need to aggressively provide more meaningful feedback to our ranchers while developing effective strategies to prevent the spread of TLSB, and

2. We need to support TLSB impacted ranchers with funds to assist in their costly recovery/mitigation efforts to restore the community benefits those well-managed rangelands represent in terms of their potential as watershed, habitat, their capacity for carbon sequestration, improved soil health, biodiversity and the control of other invasive species.

I therefore strongly support HB2131 as it offers significant resources toward these goals.

**HB-2131**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 8:37:59 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Chuck Chimera	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of HB2131 which appropriates funds for the Department of Agriculture to mitigate and control the spread of the two-lined spittlebug (TLSB) and to fund recovery efforts for areas affected by it.

As a Honokaa resident, I regularly drive past cattle pastures along the Hamakua coast and on the way to Waimea and recognize the importance of a healthy and viable ranching industry as an important component of the Big Island’s agricultural economy.

As a former Maui resident and employee of Haleakala National Park, I also recognize that well managed ranchlands bordering conservation lands provide an important buffer against the establishment of invasive, woody weeds that impact native ecosystems. In addition, these ranches serve as natural fuel breaks, slowing or preventing the spread of wildfires into native ecosystems and residential areas, the tragic consequences of which we all witnessed this past year. As a resource manager, I greatly appreciated the benefits our neighbors at Haleakala Ranch and Ulupalakua Ranch provided to us by maintaining their pastures on the park boundaries.

It’s clear that the impacts of TLSB will have terrible consequences to both our economy and natural environment if they are not addressed now, while there is still time to minimize the negative effects and find solutions to mitigate their impacts.

I therefore urge you to support HB2131 and provide HDOA and the ranching industry with the resources needed to continue to combat and find solutions to this existential invasive insect.

Mahalo for your time,

Chuck Chimera

Honokaa, Hawaii

**HB-2131**

Submitted on: 2/12/2024 1:04:24 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/12/2024 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sara Moore	Kealia Ranch	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I appreciate your support of this bill for continued funding of research and mitigation efforts to battle the devastating affects of the Two Lined Spittle Bug. I consider it to be one of the worst pests to affect Kona's pastures and grazing. The amount of work and money required to regain grazing is huge and the State's support is encouraging. We feel valued and supported.

Mahalo!