

**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 SENATE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
AND  
WATER AND LAND**

**FEBRUARY 16, 2022  
1:00 P.M.**

**VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2996  
RELATING TO ANTS**

Chairpersons Gabbard, Inouye, and Members of the Committees:

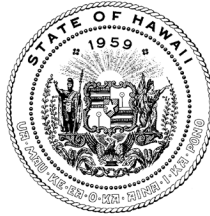
Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2996, relating to ants. The bill appropriates funds from general fund for fiscal year 2022-2023 to be expended by the Department of Land and Natural Resources to fund for the research, extension and control of the little fire ant and other harmful ant species. 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.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF  
HAWAII



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

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

POST OFFICE BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

Testimony of  
SUZANNE D. CASE  
Chairperson

Before the Senate Committees on  
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
and  
WATER AND LAND

Wednesday, February 16, 2022  
1:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 229, Via Videoconference

In consideration of  
SENATE BILL 2996  
RELATING TO ANTS

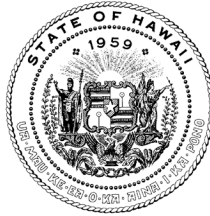
Senate Bill 2996 proposes to appropriate \$600,000 to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (LNR402) for research, extension, and control of the little fire ants and other harmful ants. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure.**

The little fire ant costs upwards of \$200 million per year to manage on Hawai'i Island alone and new invasive ant threats like red imported fire ants, which are not currently present in Hawai'i, have similar costs associated with their management elsewhere. The Hawai'i Ant Lab (HAL) has a statewide mission to prevent the entry of invasive ants into Hawai'i and to manage those that are already established. Invasive ants harm our native wildlife and can impede local food production and harm pets with their aggressive stinging. The program is a point-of-contact for the public, state, and federal conservation agencies, and a large component of the program is devoted to the management and control of little fire ants throughout the state.

Currently, HAL has no source of stable funding for their operations and last year experienced significant budget cuts that have resulted in staff working at decreased capacity to stretch funding over a longer period. This is happening at a critical time with increased detections of little fire ant infestations occurring across the state. The potential for widespread establishment is a possibility without continued and dedicated rapid response/treatment. The appropriation in this measure would directly support HAL through the Department's LNR 402.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

DAVID Y. IGE  
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**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

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**Testimony of  
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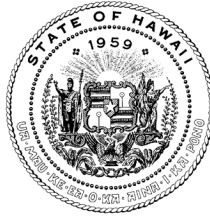
**SUZANNE D. CASE**  
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COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

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FIRST DEPUTY

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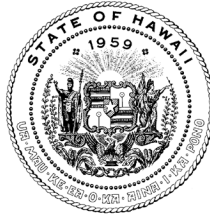
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Before the Senate Committees on  
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
and  
WATER AND LAND

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State Capitol, Conference Room 229, Via Videoconference

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Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



COORDINATING GROUP ON  
ALIEN PEST SPECIES

The Senate  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Committee on Water and Land  
February 16, 2022  
1:00 p.m. via Videoconference

### Testimony in Support of SB 2996

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Inouye, Vice Chairs Nishihara and Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committees,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) **is in strong support of SB 2996, *Relating to Ants***. The aim of this measure is to provide funding to the Department of Land and Natural Resources for work on little fire ants (LFA) and other harmful ants.

LFA were first detected on Hawai‘i island in 1999, but at that time, there were no registered ant baits for organic crops and no registered formulations and methods for applying baits to trees and foliage, there were only granular baits formulated for ground-nesting fire ant species. The Hawaii Ant Lab (HAL) was created as a partnership between the Hawai‘i Department of Agriculture and the University of Hawaii at Mānoa-Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit, with funding from a variety of sources, to fill technical and capacity gaps in responding to Little Fire Ants and other damaging ant species.

LFA’s unusual ability to nest in any protected space—on the ground, in leaf litter, or up in plants and all the way to the treetops—required specialists to do the research and development for effective control chemicals and “baits”, application tools that could stick the bait up in trees where the ants forage, and to register these new pesticides and tools for use. It is thanks to HAL that we can detect, control, and even eradicate these ants if found early enough, and HAL is working on additional tools for the toolbox.

The funding shortfall that is hitting HAL is a significant concern and CGAPS and partners are working with HAL to identify and apply for federal funds to support part of their work. However, these funds, if successful, would not become available until the summer of 2023 at earliest. We urge you to pass HB 1518 to provide gap-filling funds for work on LFA and other pest ants through DLNR. Mahalo for your consideration.

Aloha,  
Christy Martin  
CGAPS



# **HAWAII PEST CONTROL ASSOCIATION**

Century Square – 1188 Bishop St., Ste. 1003\*Honolulu, HI 96813-3304

Telephone (808) 533-6404 • Fax (808) 533-2739

February 16, 2022

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

Senate Committee on Water and Land  
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair

Presented By: Tim Lyons, CAE  
Executive Director

Subject: S.B. 2996 – RELATING TO ANTS

Chair Gabbard, Chair Inouye and Members of the Joint Committees:

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

Just about everyone is aware of the difficulties encountered in dealing with the little fire ant and the fact that they are very, very hard to control. We also think that most people are aware of the problems that the little fire ant causes.

Appropriate research, in order to study the biology, the feeding habits and the reproduction cycle of the little fire ant are extremely important to the actual control of the little fire ant.

Structural pest control operators benefit from the research that is performed since this tends to be a local problem as opposed to one on the mainland where other research might occur.

Based on the above, we highly recommend the passage of this bill and incorporation of \$600,000.00 into the state budget.

Thank you.





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

February 16, 2022

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

**TESTIMONY ON SB 2996**  
RELATING TO ANTS

Conference Room 229 & Videoconference  
1:00 PM

Alohas Chairs Gabbard and Inouye, Vice-Chairs Nishihara and Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committees:

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 SB 2996**, which appropriates \$600,000 to the Department of Land and Natural Resources for research, extension, and control of the little fire ant and other harmful ants.

HFB recognizes the harm that the little fire ant has caused to farms, businesses, and the quality of life of those affected by the pest. We agree the Hawaii Ant Lab's operational funding is critical to ensure that continued measures to stop the spread of little fire ants are not reduced or disrupted.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

**TESTIMONY OF CASPER VANDERWOUDE  
MANAGER, HAWAI'I ANT LAB, PACIFIC COOPERATIVE STUDIES UNIT, UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII  
BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT and  
COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND**

**WEDNESDAY, February 16, 2022  
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE  
10:00 A.M.**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2996  
RELATING TO ANTS**

**Chairperson Hashem and Members of the Committee:**

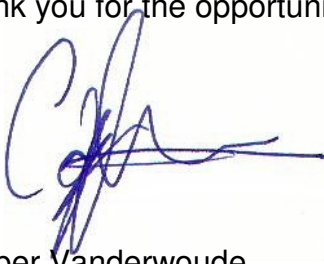
Thank you for the opportunity to provide personal testimony in support of Senate Bill 2996, relating to invasive ants. This bill appropriates \$600,000 to the Department of Lands and Natural Resources for research, extension, and control of the little fire ant and other harmful ants.

The little Fire Ant was first detected on the island of Hawai'i by the HDOA island entomologist in 1999. Since that time, it has spread throughout Hawai'i island and is now found on O'ahu, Maui and Kaua'i. The impact of this species on Hawai'i agriculture, tourism and residents has been profound: hampering crop productivity, stinging farm workers and domestic animals alike, affecting the daily lives of residents and tourists as well as well as threatening Hawaii's fragile ecosystems and wildlife refuges.

Since 2009 the Hawai'i Ant Lab (HAL) has provided support to affected industries and residents, developed more effective control methodologies and contributed to preventing the intra and inter-island spread of little fire ants in Hawai'i. Hal was funded entirely through non-recurring grants until 2018 when ongoing funding was provided to employ two extension staff. Unavailability of funds for the remaining 9 staff has resulted in a 50% reduction of working hours which will severely hamper delivery of much needed support.

SB2996 appropriates the funds necessary for Hawai'i Ant Lab to continue providing extension support to residents and affected agricultural industries, both on Hawai'i island and statewide; implementing early detection programs and eradication plans on O'ahu and other neighbor islands; and continuing the research program that has provided many of the control breakthroughs over the past decade.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



Casper Vanderwoude

**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/12/2022 10:56:36 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Marvin Min	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Committee Chair and Members,

I am in support on SB2996 regarding Little Fire Ants and the full appropriation in order to maintain this viable and necessary program. The staff at the HAL are very professional and have the passion to help control the spread of LFA.

As we all know, LFA's are detrimental to our Ag community, Environment and Residents. The harmful sting(s) have also injured/ blinded our pets and in some cases killed our pets that cannot fend for themselves if ever traversing through a LFA nest.

We need the HAL!

Mahalo,

Marvin Min

**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/13/2022 2:04:30 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Kimeona Kane	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha nui kākou,

Mahalo for taking this very important topic head on. Funding and resources must absolutely go into programs that serve the handling of invasive species. We are leading the world in extinct species. We also have become to lax with allowing species of all types to become naturalized. We must not allow this species or others take the same path. Please put funding into these projects and safeguard our people, communities, environments and others.

Mahalo nui,  
Kimeona Kane

**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/13/2022 12:16:26 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
David Lambrecht	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

The HAL needs all the support they can get to combat the continuing threat posed by the LFAs. The public needs the on going awareness, education and technical assistance the HAL provides in order for any chance of a successful outcome. I have talked to many people about LFAs only to find out they too are relying on the HAL for assistance with identification and treatment plans for infestations around Hawaii island. I have also spoken with people who are in need of assistance and have refered them to the HAL. We need a strong HAL to protect and preserve our way of life and our agricultural industry here in Hawaii. PLEASE PASS SB 2996!

**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/13/2022 3:36:03 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Ken Love	Testifying for Hawaii Tropical Fruit Growers	Support	No

Comments:

Supporting this bill to continue the work of Hawaii's agriculture is as essential as supporting agriculture itself. We must continue the work to fight these invasive ants in order to protect our land, our pets, and ourselves. The Hawaii Tropical Fruit Growers is in full support of this bill.

**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/13/2022 4:47:47 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Melody Euaparadorn	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Mahalo for accepting this testimony in favor of passing SB2996. I am testifying as a private citizen who works with Little Fire Ants on Hawaii Island. The loss of funding by the Hawaii Ant Lab comes at a critical time when an increasing number of isolated populations of Little Fire Ants are being identified across the islands. The requested funds will allow continued critical outreach, research, and rapid response to extinguish these outbreaks. I urge the committee to pass SB2996 as these efforts are imperative to prevent Little Fire Ants from spreading throughout our state and wreaking havoc in our agriculture fields, forests, and homes.

**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/13/2022 9:32:51 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Mark Suiso	Testifying for Makaha Mangoes Hawaii Tropical Fruit Growers	Support	No

Comments:

I am in support of legislation to fund efforts to control little fire ant. The invasive species is somewhat contained in parts of the Big island . They have serious impact on people and animals. Any effort to contain and control them now is needed. The spread of this invasive species has serious impact and will likely spread without serious effort to control.



**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/14/2022 7:08:23 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Drew Wilkinson	Testifying for Growing Together Edible Landscaping	Support	No

Comments:

As owner and operator of Growing Together Edible Landscaping, I fully support SB2996. The fire ant is extremely detrimental to agriculture in general. I have worked in orchards on Big Island and had these insects fall from trees and have endured painful bites. These pests are a big concern for all of Hawaii and its extremely necessary for these programs to be adequately funded to combat and contain the spread of these ants. As a fruit tree farmer and greenhouse operator, please do your best to insure there is action taken against these ants so we can try and have enjoyable work spaces in orchards and greenhouses free of fire ants.

thank you,

Drew Wilkinson

**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/14/2022 7:15:19 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Becky Erickson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear members of the senate,

Please support funding for eliminating the little fire ants in Hawaii and preventing the spread. The presence of these ants in Hawaii is dangerous to for both people and animals, and if we don't stop them soon while we can still manage the problem it will be too late.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter,

Becky Erickson

February 16, 2022

**The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair**  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

**The Honorable Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair**  
Senate Committee on Water and Land  
Via Videoconference

**RE: Senate Bill 2996, Relating to Ants**

**HEARING: Wednesday, February 16, 2022, at 10:00 a.m.**

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

I am Ken Hiraki, Director of Government Affairs Committee, testifying on behalf of the Hawai'i Association of REALTORS® ("HAR"), the voice of real estate in Hawai'i, and its over 10,800 members. HAR **supports** Senate Bill 2996, which appropriates \$600,000 to the Department of Land and Natural Resources for research, extension, and control of the little fire ant and other harmful ants.

Little fire ants are listed among the world's 100 worst invasive species. Additionally, little fire ants can cause severe economic damage and negatively affect the quality of life of our residents, homeowners and our community.<sup>1</sup>

As such, Hawai'i REALTORS® supports efforts to control invasive species and believe this research is a small price to pay for the long-term negative impacts that little fire ants would have on our State if left unchecked.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

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<sup>1</sup> Donna J. Lee, et al, Taking the Sting Out of Fire Ants  
[https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/hisc/files/2019/02/2015\\_EcologicalEconomics\\_LFA\\_Impacts\\_Hawaii.pdf](https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/hisc/files/2019/02/2015_EcologicalEconomics_LFA_Impacts_Hawaii.pdf)

**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/14/2022 8:13:43 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Susan Donlon	Testifying for susans nuts	Support	No

Comments:

The Hawaii ant lab has been a valuable resource for my macadamia nut farm in Pahala. I acquired the farm four years ago and in two years time, became aware of the presence of little fire ants when our pickers were getting bitten. The Hawaii Ant Lab came for a site visit and trained me to survey the land and treat. They continue to be available to guide me. Without their assistance, I would not have the little fire ant situation under control. They also assisted me with a house lot in Nanawale Estates which I am also grateful is under control.

Please assist the people of this island in maintaining this valuable resource.

Mahalo

**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/14/2022 10:30:01 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
J Ashman	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

A Little Fire Ant infestation can destroy livelihoods, especially of farmers, and take away even basic enjoyment of life.

**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/14/2022 12:05:40 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Edmund K Clark	Testifying for Malamaki Farm School	Oppose	No

Comments:

It pains us greatly to have to oppose this legislation. There are many dedicated and talented people working at Hawaii Ant Lab. Unfortunately, Cas Vanderwoude has been operating the agency for personal gain, since its inception. We would very much like to see appropriate funding for LFA research and control; however, Cas Vanderwoude must first be removed from his post in order to end the profiteering and mismanagement.

**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/14/2022 12:09:22 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Frank Hustace	Testifying for Stop LFA Kohala	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Members of the Committee:

My name is Frank W. Hustace III, and I am president of Stop LFA Kohala, a grassroots, community organization based in North Kohala, serving the villages of Hawi, Kapa'au and other outlying settlements.

Stop LFA Kohala works to control and eradicate LFA in our region. Our biggest challenge at present is an uncontrolled LFA infestation in the lower Ho'ea Road area, approximately 1 mile from Hawi's central business district.

Numerous business owners, realtors and restaurant owners in Hawi have expressed alarm over the proximity and spread of the current infestation, which has the potential to fundamentally change the lifestyle of our people, the financial livelihood of our businesses, and the quality experience of our visitors.

The Ho'ea Road infestation is only one of several "hot spots" we are fighting, notable among them are Ke'oke'a County Park, Kapanai'a Beach and numerous infestations in our affordable housing and kupuna communities. LFA infestation in North Kohala is spreading.

Yesterday, I received a telephone call from an individual in Hala'ula who discovered LFA in a load of firewood recently brought in from Puna. I advised them about the proper mitigation sequence, testing protocol, and eradication strategies. This person and his family are now up-to-speed about practical self-help steps they can take to eliminate the current threat.

As mentioned, Stop LFA Kohala is a grassroots organization that was formed to face the growing threat of LFA in our region. At present, tax-deductible gifts and donations to Stop LFA Kohala (a not-for-profit program under the fiscal umbrella of the North Kohala Community Resource Committee) are in excess of \$20,000, which is used to purchase chemicals, fund outreach initiatives, and underwrite fieldwork.

Stop LFA Kohala has formed partnerships of support with the teachers and students at Kohala High School and with members of the North Kohala Lions' Club. We are a community-based organization that enjoys wide approval and respect within the region for the work we do.

Everything we have learned about how to respond to North Kohala's current LFA challenge has been taught to us by staff at The Hawai'i Ant Lab and BIISC. I believe that without their ongoing support and encouragement, our work would be fundamentally compromised. We need help -- we can't do this by ourselves.

With respect, on behalf of Stop LFA Kohala and many hundreds of individuals who are directly impacted by our work, we rise in support of SB2996, which will help us continue our fight against LFA.

North Kohala is grateful for your consideration of SB2996.

With aloha,

Frank W. Hustace III

frank.hustace@gmail.com

808-640-5085



**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/14/2022 4:19:38 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Una Greenaway	Testifying for Kuaiwi Farm	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Inouye, Vice -Chairs Nishihara and Keith-Agaran;

In Strong Support of SB 2996

Please help Hawaii's farmers and residents by passing this bill. The Hawaii Ant Lab has been on a 50% furlough and desperately needs to get back to full capacity. The LFA is one of the most devastating pests in the world. Last time we checked it was in the top ten of pests in the world. They must be stopped or certainly not allowed to spread. I have used the services of Hawaii Ant Lab and they are extremely helpful in every way, research, education, outreach and support.

Please help them to continue doing this very, very important work for the future of all of our lives in hawaii.

Mahalo

Una Greenaway

Kuaiwi Farm

**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/14/2022 10:07:21 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Maki Morinoue	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha

My name is Maki Morinoue and I am a 4th generation kama'aina Kona coffee farmer. Our farm has been impacted greatly by invasive species over the last 15 years with the influx and multiple reintroductions of invasive species such as the LFA's. My generation is facing a much more challenging time with high cost of living and the pressures of LFA's and other invasive species. This makes it more difficult to keep prices reasonable and to hire farm support when LFA's are present. We now have to schedule and work even harder to rid of LFA and spend over \$1,000 a year for gel bait treatment. We can't afford to pay someone to do it for us but if my extra hours were paid that is a huge bill.

I had LFA's rain down on me on our farm and that is how I was introduced to something so foreign and painful. Growing up here we were free to run around, the only har was falling on rocks. I couldn't let my son run around our farm with LFA's dropping down from the trees when the wind blew or when you shook or climbed a tree. I had itchy scares for over 6 moths and I have alergic reactions to their sting.

In 2022 we now face CBB, LFA, Coffee Rust, Avocado Wing Worm, Mac nut beetles, and Cacao bugs just to name a few. What are we doing to support food soverenty or even luxury products and tourism? Now we are spraying posion right on our sandy beaches to treat LFA's. I was a community member that rallied my backyard community in 2017 to pass the Invasive Species Bill that was positively supported all the way to the top until it reached Ways and Means where it was killed without even coming up for a vote. How does a bill agreeet to pass on this long journey and everything dies here?

To address food security and regenerative practices we must address invasive species.

Hawaii Ant Lab has been at the fore front in the WORLD along with Big island Invasive Species to address LFA's and they support our community of farmers, residents and thoes in hospitality industries on how to manage LFAs. It is extreemly sad that they are not able to run at full capacity.

The sadder part is that LFA's are here to stay and now have spread throughout other islands as Big Island pleaded better quarentine regulations before it spread to other islands in 2017. Now it is too late. New Zealand is a great example of how much they respect their native speicies and protects their land and people from invasives.

This bill is necessary and it is a bandaid to a much larger problem that can prevent other things like snakes and other unwanted invasives to this island. There is a far worst ant more vicious

then the LFA and nature made the LFA's prolific as a food source for the predator insect from South America and with the multiple reintroduction from this LFA species it is unfortunately only a matter of time.

Please consider passing a Biosecurity Bill while this one will assist in keeping professionals running to understand how to control such an insect that causes much negative health impact.

Passing this is the Pono thing to do and pass biosecurity that mimic's New Zealand's bill as well.

Mahalo  
Maki Morinoue  
Holualoa  
96725

**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/15/2022 7:06:11 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Patrick Conant	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Senators of the Agriculture and Environment and Water and Land Committees,

I am familiar with most species of invasive ants in Hawaii, and we have some of the worst in the world. I recall a woman in Hawaiian Paradise Park here on the Big Island brought me the first little fire ant in the State from her "cut flower" farm in 1999. She complained of many stings. As a former Entomologist of the Hawaii Department of Agriculture I knew we had a problem. We did our best to try to contain that infestation, but over time we learned that many other plant nurseries were infested in Puna and South Hilo as far back as about 1993. With our small staff and only one known relatively effective granular bait (but useless in rain) there was no way we could stop the spread of the ant from nurseries nor houses landscaped with infested plants.

Fortunately. Dr. Cas Vanderwoulde was hired, and his knowledge of invasive ants is vast. He formulated his own "custom" baits for different species of ants and devised strategies for controlling and even locally eradicating little fire ants and others. Hawaii Ant Lab may be close to eradicating the ant on the entire island of Kauai! Containment/eradication on Maui is ongoing.

I have been amazed at the accomplishments of the Hawaii Ant Lab on invasive ants in Hawaii under Dr. Vanderwoulde. If we keep them fully funded, more ant species in Hawaii will be less problematic to homeowners, nurserymen and farmers and hopefully entire islands can be protected from invasions.

**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/15/2022 7:26:14 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Elizabeth Speith	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Elizabeth Speith

Regarding support for SB2996

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT, COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

February 16, 2022

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Perruso, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran & Esteemed Committee Members,

My name is Elizabeth Speith and I am an Upcountry Maui resident who has been working in invasive species management and Hawaiian conservation for two decades. I am testifying as an individual with regards to my **strong support for SB2996 RELATING TO ANTS**. It is essential to our agricultural sector, for outdoor recreation and workers, and for our general Hawaiian way of life that we continue our statewide efforts to stop the spread of little fire ant.

There are beaches on Hawai'i island where you can't swim without being stung by these ants- in the ocean! In areas where these ants are unchecked, my colleagues that conduct invasive species and landscape work have to cover themselves from head to toe to prevent the little fire ants from falling down inside of their clothes and making work unbearable due to the stings. Nurseries and farms throughout the state are adding yet another pest control cost to their bottom line so that their products can be exported and sold in the state.

We have a chance to make sure that little fire ants do not become widespread across the whole state. The Hawai'i Ant Lab works throughout the state conducting research into new control methods, educating students and raising the capacity of the public to detect and manage this invasive ant. Any reductions in the level of staffing or the work being done currently would be disastrous for stopping the spread of these ants.

Mahalo Chair Gabbard and Chair Inouye for reading and considering my testimony.



DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI  
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE**  
P.O. BOX 150  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

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 SENATE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT AND  
WATER AND LAND  
ON  
SENATE BILL NO. 2996

**February 16, 2022**  
**1:00 p.m.**  
**Room 229 and Videoconference**

RELATING TO ANTS

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

Senate Bill No. 2996 appropriates \$600,000 in general funds for FY 23 to be expended by the Department of Land and Natural Resources for research, extension, and control of the little fire ant and other harmful ant species.

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.



February 15, 2022

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senate Committee on Water and Land  
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 201  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: SB 2996 Relating to Ants

Dear Chairman Gabbard,

I am writing in **strong support of SB 2996** which seeks to appropriate \$600,000 to the Department of Land and Natural Resources. This funding will assure that the Hawaii Ant Lab will be able to operate at full capacity. The Little Fire Ant(LFA) invasion on the Big Island is exploding and we cannot afford to lose staff at the Hawaii Ant Lab. They are critical to responding to the adverse impacts the LFA is having on agriculture, businesses, visitors and residents.

I live in Volcano Village on the island of Hawaii. I am personally impacted by the presence of Little Fire Ants on our property. This is a growing concern for all of us because the LFA is spreading beyond its previous range at lower elevations (In November 2018, LFAs were discovered within the Volcanoes National Park at 4,000 feet elevation). It is a real threat to communities and the time and cost of ongoing control of LFAs are a tremendous burden to people.

More than ever the Hawaii Ant Lab provides **important and vital research** in the areas of understanding this highly invasive pest and determining the best methods to eradicate, control and prevent its spread. Their **extension services** translate latest research findings into understandable material for the public's use. And, together with its ongoing **operations** of investigating high risk areas, the Hawaii Ant Lab provides an effective three-prong approach for controlling LFAs in Hawaii.

Yes, the LFA is so small, it's hardly noticeable but it is extremely invasive. LFAs have made their way from the Big Island to Maui, Oahu and Kauai. By approving HB 1518, the Hawaii State Legislature will be helping Hawaii Ant Lab and other partners in local communities across the State to control LFA's adverse economic impact on agriculture, businesses, tourism, and homeowners.

Thank you for supporting the passage of SB 2996.



Kathleen Mishina  
P. O.Box 1257  
Volcano, HI 96785

**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/15/2022 10:00:55 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Hugh Y Ono	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**PLEASE REQUEST YOUR SUPPORT TO CONTINUE THIS VALUED SERVICE WHICH HAS ALLOWED US TO KEEP THESE "LITTLE FIRE ANTS" UNDER CONTROL.... HOPEFULLY ELIMINATED WITH THIS CONTINUED SERVICE.**

**WOULD BE ASHAMED IF THIS EFFORT DID NOT PROCEED. THIS "INVASIVE" SPECIE IS A REAL REAL PROBLEM FOR US LOCALS.....**

**RESPECTFULLY: HUGH Y ONO**

**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/15/2022 10:24:40 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Cameron david wilson	Testifying for Neudorff North America	Support	No

Comments:

Hello,

On behalf of Neudorff North America (makes of organic agriculture and gardening products) we support SB2996 which will provide the funding required for the Hawaii Ant Lab (HAL) to properly function. HAL provides a valuable service that benefits all Hawaiians. HAL works to educate the people of HI on methods to control the devastaing invasive pest, Little Fire Ants (LFAs). LFA stings are severly painful and often target kids, pets and farm workers. This pest costs HI millions of dollars per year. LFAs if left unchecked would severly limit the agriculture and tourist industries of HI. I encourage you to support SB2996. Do not let Little Fire Ants take over Hawaii.

thanks,

Cam Wilson

Vice President

Neudorff North America

**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/15/2022 10:36:26 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Nathan Dube	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Inouye, Vice Chairs Nishihara and Keith-Agaran, & Esteemed Committee Members-

I'd like to voice my strong support for increased effort toward invasive ant, especially Little Fire Ant (LFA), control and eradication. LFA is one of the worst invasive species in the world and is currently spreading throughout the state. Increased effort now will save on more costly future control and eradication measures, benefiting all residents and important statewide industries like tourism and agriculture.

Mahalo nui for your time and consideration!

**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/15/2022 10:46:32 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Ilana Stout	Testifying for Hawaii Island School Garden Network	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Kakou,

My name is Ilana Stout I am the program director of the Hawai'i Island School Garden Network and I am submitting testimony today in support of the Hawaii Ant Lab. In addition to their essential functions in supporting homeowners, agriculture, and businesses in eradicating fire ants, HAL plays an important role in advising and supporting public schools in the eradication of fire ants. This enables students to participate more freely in outdoor education activities, including school gaardens.

Please release these funds which will allow them to return to full capacity and support our island communities in the detection, treatment and eradication of this horrible pest.

**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/15/2022 11:43:31 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Heather Forester	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Senator Gabbard, Senator Inouye, and Members of the AEN/WTL Committees,

Thank you for taking the time to hear SB2996 Relating to Ants. I am writing in SUPPORT of SB2996. Though ants are small in size, they pose large problems for our State. I have personally seen the devastating impacts that invasive ants cause the people, pets, and industries of Hawaii. Invasive ants, such as Little Fire Ants (LFA), are changing our way of life, and if left unchecked will forever change Hawaii as we know it.

People become desperate when trying to find solutions to manage invasive ants. Unfortunately, there is a lot of misinformation that is spread in the public realm, which can lead to pesticide misuse. People have also been known to go to the extremes of using fire to defend against ants; one such case led to a structure fire.

The Hawaii Ant Lab educates the public on best management practices that are safe and legal. The Hawaii Ant Lab needs your support on SB2996 to continue serving the State by helping to prevent the spread of LFA, providing education on the management of LFA and other invasive ants, and early detection of invasive ants that are not established in Hawaii.

Mahalo,

Heather Forester

**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/15/2022 5:04:44 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Kenani Gramberg	Testifying for Waimanalo Neighborhood Board Member	Comments	No

Comments:

Aloha,

Invasive species have a devastating effect on the state's agriculture, food self-sufficiency, freshwater quality and quantity, human health, and on the health of native species and ecosystems. February 1st marks the start of Hawai'i Invasive Species Awareness Month (HISAM).

How does the State pick or choose which invasive species to eradicate first? How does the state choose which invasive species deserves the funding? Why only in a particular area? When does eradication work become a community effort? We need to start thinking about all the invasive species here and start to create an eradication plan, rather the State has the funding for the eradication or if it becomes a community effort as well. Bottom line is there's got to be a resonable plan.

Mahalo,

Kenani Gramberg

Waimānalo Neighborhood Board Member

**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/15/2022 6:30:23 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Roshan Manandhar	Testifying for CTAHR Cooperative Extension Services	Support	No

Comments:

I am an extension agent for UH CTAHR Cooperative Extension based on Kauai island. At times when Kauai has Little fire ant (LFA) detections, Hawaii Ant Lab (HAL) has extended a helping hand for survey, eradication, and outreach efforts. Personally, I have collaborated with HAL on the most recent detection of LFA on Kauai (Oct 2021) with a well-attended and informative webinar. As a result, Kauai growers and the community are well aware of LFA concerns and know-how in cases of suspicious LFA incidence. I consider HAL is one of the leading organizations in invasive ant research and outreach, their technology is popularly used worldwide. I fully support HAL continued forever in Hawaii.



**SB-2996**

Submitted on: 2/15/2022 8:56:05 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/16/2022 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Ersel Hensley	Testifying for Hawaii Ant Lab (Littlefireants.com)	Support	No

Comments:

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Aloha Folks,

{Big Time Supported! Hawaii **NEEDS** this support!}

Mahalo,

Ersel Hensley