

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

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



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

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

Testimony of
DAWN N. S. CHANG
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on
FINANCE

Thursday, February 23, 2023
11:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 1149, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO THE COCONUT RHINOCEROS BEETLE PROGRAM

House Bill 1149, House Draft 1 proposes to appropriate funds for positions and activities related to the coconut rhinoceros beetle infestation control. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources supports this measure provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the University of Hawaii's Executive Budget request.**

The coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB) is a major pest of coconut palms (*Cocos nucifera*) and African oil palm (*Elaeis guineensis*). It can be also found in betelnut (*Areca catchu*), Pandanus species, banana, pineapple, sugarcane, and even the native Hawaiian palms, loulou. Adults damage living palms, either killing the tree due to direct damage, or opening the tree to mortal damage from other insects or pathogens. On Pacific Islands with no natural enemies of this beetle, the damage can be extreme. In Palau, where the beetle first invaded in 1942, the coconut palm was eradicated entirely on some islands, with overall mortality across the archipelago reaching 50%.

CRB was found on O'ahu in 2013 at the Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam during a routine survey by the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture and the University of Hawai'i-Hilo. An intensive, multi-agency effort was initiated and the CRB Response Team continues monitoring and outreach to this day. The unregulated movement of green waste has led to this species spreading throughout O'ahu, but the efforts to control this pest have been successful at containing CRB to a single island. Continued investment in monitoring, research, and management is necessary to mitigate further damage on O'ahu and prevent CRB's spread to other islands, thus protecting important natural, cultural, and agricultural plant species.

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

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

LAURA H.E. KAAKUA
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



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 23, 2023 at 11:30 a.m.

By

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

And

Michael Bruno, Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 1149 HD1 – RELATING TO THE COCONUT RHINOCEROS BEETLE PROGRAM

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 1149 HD1 relating to *Oryctes rhinoceros* or coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB) which adversely impacts palm species that are important to the State's agricultural economy, cultural heritage, and ecosystems.

CRBs feed on emerging palm fronds that cause damage and often severe enough to cause die back and plant mortality. There exists a CRB response program which is a coordinated partnership with the University of Hawai'i, U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Hawai'i Department of Agriculture, and other key organizations.

Since the detection of CRB on O'ahu, funding for CRB response has primarily been through federal partners such as USDA and the U. S. Navy. The purpose of this measure is to appropriate \$720,000 or so much thereof out of the general revenues of the State of Hawai'i to support existing CRB response positions and core activities involving research, response, education, and investigative work needed to maintain a successful and effective program to control the spread of CRB.

Specifically, this bill will provide funding for:

- one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) permanent junior researcher to serve as the deputy incident commander under HDOA leadership;
- one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) permanent administrative professional/technician for program administration and maintenance;
- one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) permanent data collection, management, and GIS analysis supervisor;
- three full-time equivalent (3.0 FTE) permanent data technicians;

- two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) permanent outreach and education specialists;
- one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) permanent canine supervisor for the CRB response canine program;
- two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) permanent canine handlers for the CRB response canine program;
- administration and other related costs for the CRB response canine program, including kenneling and veterinary support; and,
- supplies for maintaining research colonies and potential biological control agents.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 1149 HD1, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our Board of Regents approved budget.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
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 HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

FEBRUARY 23, 2023
11:30 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 308

HOUSE BILL NO. 1149, HD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairperson Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 1149, House Draft 1 relating to coconut rhinoceros beetle program. This bill appropriates funds for positions and activities related to the coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB) infestation control. The Department strongly supports this measure.

The state has reached a turning point to protect our palm and culturally related resources from the invasive CRB. Utilizing federal funding through a variety of agencies, the department has formed an interagency program known as the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle Response (the Response). The Department leads the Response through a unified incident command system. Unfortunately, despite the efforts of the Response over the past nine years, CRB population densities in central Oahu are significantly increasing most likely through the routine movement of green waste. The fight to eradicate CRB from Oahu is now at a pivotal moment.

Our collaboration with Joint Base Pearl Harbor Hickam (JBPHH) has demonstrated that through the implementation of a comprehensive green waste management plan, landscape level control of CRB populations is achievable, especially



when combined with the judicious and strategic use of pesticide treatments. The state must follow the Navy's lead in environmental protection through the adoption of a comprehensive green waste management program. The Department, with the passing of an interim rule to Hawaii Revised Statutes 4-72 last year, has been working towards a rough legal framework to manage green waste on Oahu, using compliance agreements. However, the compliance agreements are not as comprehensive as the green waste management plan implemented by JBPHH needed to minimize populations of CRB. Without significant increases in funding and resources, the Response will be forced to shift its response strategy from eradication to containment to the island of Oahu. Federal funding obtained through the US Department of Agriculture Animal Plant Health Inspection Service Plant Protection and Quarantine (USDA APHIS PPQ) is already beginning to change the focus of efforts to containment and early detection on the island of Oahu. Additional funding will allow the Response to continue funding for control and eradication programs.

The Department greatly appreciates the legislature's action in the funding of this measure. Funding core staff and programs will allow the Response to properly leverage resources in an effective and sustained manner.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
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e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

February 23, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON HB 306, HD1
RELATING TO ORNAMENTAL GINGER

Conference Room 308 & Videoconference
11:30 AM

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Kitagawa, 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 306, HD1, which appropriates funds for statewide research into ornamental ginger pathogens, prevention of the spread of ornamental ginger pathogens, production and distribution of pathogen-free ornamental ginger plants, and outreach to ornamental producers.

Alpinia purpurata, known commonly as ornamental ginger, is a popular plant that is commonly used in tropical landscape designs. Commercial production of ornamental ginger has been on the decline for over a decade on Oahu. Red ginger growers in Windward Oahu have recently experienced a further decline in the growth of their ornamental red ginger plant production due to a variety of unknown viruses and fungi

Producers in the affected areas are excavating their lands as they can no longer economically produce ornamental ginger in these areas. Neighboring farmers and off-island customers are concerned about the spread of pathogens. Reports of crop decline which originally started in the Kahaluu area of Oahu have spread to surrounding areas such as Waihole and Waikane Valley.

In response, researchers and extension agents at CTAHR performed a statewide survey and causal agent identification study. The study determined that a combination of six viruses, including two viruses never before identified, is the cause of the red ginger decline, with other pathogens and ornamental ginger genetic variation as possible contributing factors. The viruses are found statewide but are most prevalent on Oahu and Hawai'i Islands. Virus-infected plants cannot be cured, and virus-infected plants are currently the main plants being propagated for more plantings, worsening the problem. Most large-scale operations have virus-infected plants.

Without more research and prevention protocols through a multi-agency outreach approach, these pathogens could spread further and impact the profitability and long-term sustainability of the local ornamental and landscape production industries.

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



House of Representatives
Committee on Finance
February 23, 2023
11:30 a.m. Conference Room 308
State Capitol

Testimony in Support of HB 1149 HD1

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) is in strong support of HB 1149, HD1 Relating to the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle Program.

As set out in House Bill 1149 HD1 the coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB) is a devastating invasive pest that impacts palm species, including coconut trees, native loulu palm species, and, potentially, crops in Hawaii. CRB was first detected on O‘ahu in 2013, and the State and Federal Departments of Agriculture launched an immediate and unprecedented multi-agency response. Although the response did not succeed in eradicating this pest, it has kept the population out of the interisland transportation network.

In 2022, the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA) adopted an interim rule intended to reduce the risk of spreading CRB in Hawaii.¹ The rule requires businesses on O‘ahu (e.g. nurseries, landscapers, and green waste processors, etc.) that work with CRB host materials (e.g. dead or dying plant material like tree trimmings, leaves, mulch, compost, stumps, greenwaste, and CRB host palms, etc.) to enter into compliance agreements and take steps to prevent inadvertently spreading CRB. The compliance agreements and associated training require businesses to enclose or cover CRB host material when it is moved on O‘ahu and to report detections of suspected CRB. The compliance agreements also require employees that work with CRB host materials to receive training to ensure they understand the compliance agreement requirements, the risks posed by CRB, and how to identify the life stages of CRB and evidence of CRB damage.

HB1149, HD1 would provide funding to continue to operate the compliance agreement and training work, to continue operating the response work island-wide, and to continue to develop detection and control methods that can further reduce harm and the likelihood of spread to new areas and to neighbor islands.

The compliance agreement program is new to affected businesses and the CRB Response is doing the outreach and has developed and conducted the training to promote its success. CRB

¹ §4-22.1-1 Hawaii Administrative Rules

Response provides the boots-on-the-ground to educate businesses and the public on how to detect and prevent the spread of CRB. CRB Response has field crews that monitor thousands of CRB traps and apply treatments to CRB-infested areas and researchers working to develop new treatments and best practices to respond to CRB. The work CRB Response does is critical to protecting Hawai'i from the impacts of CRB. In addition, state funds are needed to leverage federal funding to ensure there is no lapse at this critical time as HDOA continues to roll out its permanent CRB program.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

Aloha,



Christy Martin, CGAPS Program Manager



Stephanie Easley, CGAPS Legal Fellow



The House Committee on Finance
11:30 AM, February 23, 2023
Room 308 & Videoconference

RE: **HB 1149, HD 1, Relating to the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle Program**

Attention: Chair Kyle Yamashita, Vice Chair Lisa Kitagawa and members of the Committee

The University of Hawaii Professional Assembly (UHPA) appreciates the opportunity to testify in **support of HB 1149, HD1**, Relating to the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle Program.

HB1149, HD1 appropriates funding for ten full-time positions, as well as funding for administrative costs and supplies for the purpose of decreasing the spread of new coconut rhinoceros beetle infestations and other invasive species. This bill provides for the essential staffing vital to the research, response, education, and investigative work needed to maintain the effective program required to tackle the infestation on Oahu.

UHPA supports and encourages the committee to **pass HB 1149, HD 1**.

Respectfully submitted,

Christian L. Fern
Executive Director
University of Hawaii Professional Assembly

University of Hawaii
Professional Assembly

1017 Palm Drive ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-1928
Telephone: (808) 593-2157 ♦ Facsimile: (808) 593-2160
Website: www.uhpa.org

February 22, 2023

**Testimony in Support of HB 1149
RELATING TO THE COCONUT RHINOCEROS BEETLE PROGRAM**

House Committee on Agriculture
February 8, 2023
X:XX a.m. Via Video Conference and CR XXX

Dear Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa and Committee Members,

My Name is Justin Franzmeier representing Waimanalo Agricultural Association and Island Foodscaping and am writing in **strong support of HB 1149, relating to the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle Program**. As a landscaping contractor, Waimanalo Agricultural Association Ambassador and farmer in Waimanalo I can honestly say I have been blessed not having to deal first hand with this pest yet and want to keep it that way.

Earlier this month an infestation in Waimanalo was found just down the road from our farm and I am guessing this is going to be the beginning of more populations found if we don't act with haste. HB 1149 proposes to appropriate additional funds for position and mitigation activities to fight against the coconut rhinoceros beetle, commonly known as CRB. The funding for the University of Hawaii to is to support key positions within the CRB response program to help combat this devastating insect.

This level of damage to coconut trees and palms could devastate the landscape industry and particularly, the Waimanalo plant nurseries. The devastation to coconut trees and palms will have grave impact upon Hawaii's unique natural landscape among our most popular destinations in Hawaii including our beaches along Waikiki's gold coast, world class golf courses and hotels and resorts statewide.

More attention is necessary to address this invasive pest and we sincerely request that you pass HB 1149. Thank you for your consideration.



ISLANDFOODSCAPING



PO Box 42
Waimanalo, HI 96795-0042
<http://waimanaloag.com>

Waimanalo Agricultural Association

February 23, 2023

**Testimony in Support of HB 1149, HD1
RELATING TO THE COCONUT RHINOCEROS BEETLE PROGRAM**

House Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 23, 2023 at 11:30 a.m.
Via Video Conference and CR 308

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Committee Members,

The Waimanalo Agricultural Association (WAA) is writing in **strong support of HB 1149, HD1, Relating to the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle Program**. WAA was originally formed in 1995 to address agricultural theft in Waimanalo and has since grown to represent agribusiness in Waimanalo, including plant nurseries, flower and turfgrass farms, growers of fruit and vegetables, equestrian ranches, and distributors of agricultural supplies. WAA is dedicated to the preservation and perpetuation of agriculture in Waimanalo. HB 1149, HD1 proposes to appropriate additional funds for position and mitigation activities to fight against CRB. While the funding request may be a bit high, any amount of funds to address the CRB issue would be welcomed to help combat this devastating insect.

The threat of the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle is of grave concern to the Waimanalo community as there have been over ten confirmed cases of the CRB in Waimanalo in the last six months alone. The most recent infestation was just last month. WAA recently hosted a Kunia farmer at its November 2022 meeting and was able to hear firsthand of the devastation his farm is facing due to CRB. While some farmers have opted to voluntarily comply with the Hawaii Department of Agriculture's monitoring program, most of Hawaii is not familiar with important best practices that would mitigate the beetle's spread.

Per the Hawaii Department of Agriculture "CRB is a serious pest of palm trees, primarily coconut palms, as the adult beetles bore into the crowns of the palms to feed on the tree's sap. New unopened fronds are damaged in this way and when fully opened, may break and fall unexpectedly. If CRB kill or damage the growing point of the palm, the tree may die. Secondary fungal or bacterial pathogens may also attack the wounds caused by CRB, thereby killing the tree as well. Tree mortality after CRB attack has been reported to be anywhere from 10 percent to 50 percent. Dead trees then become a safety hazard as they may fall unexpectedly after the trunk rots, potentially resulting in bodily injury or property damage." This level of damage to coconut trees and palms could devastate the landscape industry and the Waimanalo plant nurseries in particular. The devastation to coconut trees and palms will have grave impact upon the natural landscape among our most popular destinations in Hawaii including our beaches along Waikiki's gold coast, world class golf courses and hotels and resorts statewide.

More attention is necessary to address this invasive pest and we sincerely request that you pass HB 1149, HD1. Thank you for your consideration.

Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle

Best Management Practices for O'ahu

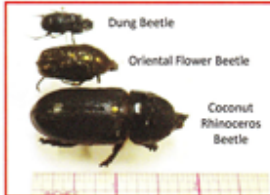
Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle

Best Management Practices for O'ahu



CRB are about 2-2.5 inches long

Detected in 2013, Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle (CRB) is the largest beetle on O'ahu. Native to Southeast Asia, CRB has invaded the Western Pacific Region. Early detection and containment are essential to prevent the spread of CRB throughout Hawai'i.



Oriental Flower Beetle is a common look-a-like for CRB. However, it's only 1 inch long, has no horn, and is active during the day.

CRB grubs (larval stage of beetles) can grow up to 3 inches long, but look similar to the Oriental flower beetle grubs in their smaller stages. Grubs live in decaying material like dead trees, compost, and mulch.

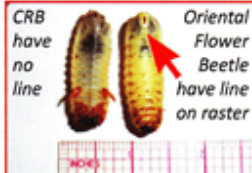
Below are some key differences:



CRB grubs crawl on their sides in a C-shape.



Oriental Flower Beetle grubs straighten out and crawl on their backs.



CRB have no line

Oriental Flower Beetle have line on raster



Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle-large head

Oriental Flower Beetle-small head

MULCH

- Chip green waste on site & transport to dump site immediately.
- Do not hold material in trucks overnight.
- Spread mulch **2 inches or less**.
- If mulch and green waste piles cannot be removed:
 - turn piles once a month and check for CRB.
 - keep mulch (including bags) in sealed containers.



PROPER DISPOSAL AND SANITATION

- Do not move green waste from infested to un-infested areas.
- Inspect trucks, buckets & tools for hitchhiking pests.
- Dump green waste at approved sites listed below:

Hawaiian Earth Products

Waimanalo 41-740 Mokulama St. (808) 208-1121
 Wahiawa 65-1101 Wilikina Dr. (808) 682-5895
 Kapolei 91-400 Malakole Rd. (808) 682-5895

REPORT

Suspect CRB damage, beetles, and larvae should be reported to the CRB Response at **643-PEST (7378)** or email: BeetleBustersHI@gmail.com



Bore holes caused by CRB



V-Cuts caused by CRB

For the latest information about CRB, visit:
<http://hdoa.hawaii.gov/pi/main/crb/>

This publication was made possible with a grant from the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council

Images of CRB Infestation at a Kunia Farm



Images of CRB Infestation at a Kunia Farm





Contemporary Landscaping LLC
5713 Haleola St.
Honolulu, HI 96821

February 23, 2023

**Testimony in Support of HB 1149, HD1
RELATING TO THE COCONUT RHINOCEROS BEETLE PROGRAM**

House Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 23, 2023 at 11:30 a.m.
Via Video Conference and CR 308

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Committee Members,

My name is Mark Fukui of Contemporary Landscaping, LLC and I am a tree farmer in Waimanalo writing in strong support of HB 1149, HD1 Relating to the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle. Our situation with CRB currently favors complacency. It has been declared uncontrollable by the Department of Agriculture and many of its effects aren't visible to the general population. CRB will catch up to us. This bill is essential to bring attention to CRB and bolster efforts to control it.

Treatment of palms for CRB is costly. The reality is only the wealthy will be available to afford control. CRB will disproportionately impact lower income families. Treatment requires chemistry. Once coconut palms are treated, the fruit cannot be eaten. In the future eating a fresh Hawaiian coconut may be a delicacy. With the way things are going, I suspect my grandkids won't get to try a fresh coconut and experience spoon meat or how sweet and fizzy they can be.

Waimanalo already has infestations of little fire ants and coqui frogs, and now there's CRB. But when farmers see a problem, we don't give up. We solve it. It's frustrating to see many throw in the towel. I hope this bill helps change that. Please pass HB 1149, HD1.

Mark Fukui
Manager
Contemporary Landscaping

Island Grower Supplies, LLC
41-1143 Waikupanaha Street
Waimanalo, Hawaii 96795

February 23, 2023

**Testimony in Support of HB 1149, HD1
RELATING TO THE COCONUT RHINOCEROS BEETLE PROGRAM**

House Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 23, 2023 at 11:30 a.m.
Via Video Conference and CR 308

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Committee Members,

My name is Fred Humphrey from Island Grower Supplies LLC and I am writing in **strong support of HB 1149, HD1, Relating to the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle Program**. Island Grower Supplies LLC is located in Waimanalo and we grow lime, avocado and coconut trees which we sell to the landscape industry and we are extremely concerned about the coconut rhinoceros beetle infesting Windward Oahu, particularly Waimanalo.

HB 1149, HD1 proposes to appropriate additional funds for position and mitigation activities to fight against the coconut rhinoceros beetle, commonly known as CRB. The funding for the University of Hawaii to is to support key positions within the CRB response program to help combat this devastating insect.

The threat of the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle is of grave concern to Waimanalo as there have been over ten confirmed cases of the CRB in Waimanalo in the last six months alone. The most recent infestation was just last month in a stagnant compile post made from tree trimmings. WAA recently hosted a Kunia farmer at its November 2022 meeting and was able to hear firsthand of the devastation his farm is facing due to CRB, where he has been forced to treat his coconut trees, palms and other palm type species with weekly herbicide regimens to kill off the beetle. While some farmers have opted to voluntarily comply with the Hawaii Department of Agriculture's monitoring program, most of Hawaii is un familiar with the pest's threat - and important best practices that would mitigate the beetle's spread.

This level of damage to coconut trees and palms could devastate the landscape industry and particularly, the Waimanalo plant nurseries. The devastation to coconut trees and palms will have grave impact upon Hawaii's unique natural landscape among our most popular destinations in Hawaii including our beaches along Waikiki's gold coast, world class golf courses and hotels and resorts statewide.

More attention is necessary to address this invasive pest and we sincerely request that you pass HB 1149, HD1. Thank you for moving this bill forward.

Aloha

Fred H Humphrey

Sandro Toffola
Natura Nursery

February 23, 2023

**Testimony in Support of HB 1149, HD1
RELATING TO THE COCONUT RHINOCEROS BEETLE PROGRAM**

House Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 23, 2023 at 11:30 a.m.
Via Video Conference and CR 308

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Committee Members,

My name is Sandro Tassan Toffola from Natura Nursery and I am writing in **strong support of HB 1149, HD1, Relating to the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle Program**. Natura Nursery is located in Waimanalo and we grow palm trees and we are extremely concerned about the coconut rhinoceros beetle infesting Windward Oahu, particularly Waimanalo, which is nestled in Ko'olaupoko, is part of an enterprise zone with fertile soil and with close proximity to the largest markets and transportation hubs on the island.

HB 1149, HD1 proposes to appropriate additional funds for position and mitigation activities to fight against the coconut rhinoceros beetle, commonly known as CRB. The funding for the University of Hawaii to is to support key positions within the CRB response program to help combat this devastating insect.

The threat of the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle is of grave concern to Waimanalo as there have been over ten confirmed cases of the CRB in Waimanalo in the last six months alone. While some farmers have opted to voluntarily comply with the Hawaii Department of Agriculture's monitoring program, most of Hawaii is unfamiliar with the pest's threat - and important best practices that would mitigate the beetle's spread.

The level of damage that CRB can cause to coconut trees and palms could devastate the landscape industry and particularly, the Waimanalo plant nurseries. The devastation to coconut trees and palms will have grave impact upon Hawaii's unique natural landscape among our most popular destinations in Hawaii including our beaches along Waikiki's gold coast, world class golf courses and hotels and resorts statewide.

More attention is necessary to address this invasive pest and we sincerely request that you pass HB 1149, HD1.



Happy Plants

41-724 Kumuhau Street

Waimanalo, Hawaii 96795

February 23, 2023

Testimony in Support of HB 1149, HD1 RELATING TO THE COCONUT RHINOCEROS BEETLE PROGRAM

House Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 23, 2023 at 11:30 a.m.
Via Video Conference and CR 308

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Committee Members,

My name is Lena McCormack from Happy Plants Nursery in Waimanalo and also a member of the Waimanalo Agriculture Association. I am extremely concerned about the coconut rhinoceros beetle that are infesting our island and now have been found in Waimanalo. In our Waimanalo Valley, we have the largest and most concentrated nurseries in all Oahu.

HB 1149, HD1 proposes to appropriate much needed funds for our fight against this devastating beetle. We desperately need the funds to declare an all-out war against the CRB. We cannot stand by and watch the beetles take over our island. At a recent WAA meeting we listened to a farmer and his firsthand devastation of his farm due to the CRB. It was heartbreaking and scary to hear his story. I realize how this Beetle can harmfully impact on the Waimanalo Plant Nurseries who supply a good number of plants throughout the island but the beetles are also known to attack some food plants such as banana, pineapple, taro and other food producing plants.

It is imperative that we provide funding to help reign in this huge, huge beetle problem. Secondly, I am support of HB 1149, HD1 which helps to provide more funds for this program. Waimanalo has been hugely affected by these little ants and need more funds to hire more help. It is not feasible to eradicate or at the very least control the ants with only a few part time workers to cover the whole island. The ants are increasing and moving into communities island wide. We need help, period. I thank you for any support that you can give me and my fellow nursery members. It is of utmost importance that we try to nip these two horrible and problematic problems before it really does become too late. If it becomes too late we all lose. Please help to protect the aina, our tourism and life in general.

Let me close in saying that Waikiki, with the ancient coconut trees, are in jeopardy. Can you envision the island without palm trees. Our food sources will be changing as well. We need help right now!

Thank you and Aloha,
Lena McCormack
Happy Plants Nursery
Member of Waimanalo Agriculture Association

HB-1149-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 5:33:38 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scot Willson	Plant Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Scot Willson, owner of Plant Hawaii. A nursery located on Kakaina street. I have personally seen the devastation of the CRB. I ask that we fund the process to irradiate this pest. The coconut and palm trees are iconic to this island both for tourists and our local way of life. We must do what we can to preserve the natural beauty of our aina. We have taken all recommended actions to do our best to prevent creating a habitat for the CRB and let me tell you, not having a compost pile in our nursery is very difficult.

Mahalo to the team that has taken this on and I pray they are blessed with the support to protect this place and our economy.

Scot Willson

Plant Hawaii

HB-1149-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 10:14:06 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cards Pintor	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support this bill.

Mahalo nui,

Cards Pintor

HB-1149-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 10:49:27 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carol Kwan	Carol Kwan Consulting LLC	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support maximizing funding to combat Coconut Rhinoceros Beetles. I am an ISA Certified Arborist with my own consulting company. There is some progress being made in our battle against CRB with the new HDOA regulations that went into effect 7/1/2022, but so much more needs to be done. Not only does CRB attack the iconic coconut palms that Hawaii is known for, it also attacks many other species, including all of our native loulu palms and others in the Pritchardia genus, as well as other palm species, hala, banana, and sugarcane.

We need all of the tools that we can get in order to eradicate CRB from Hawaii. Please help by passing HB1149.

Mahalo,

Carol Kwan

Chair Rep. Kyle Yamashita
Vice Chair Rep. Lisa Kitagawa
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
House Bill 1149
February 23, 2023 11:30 am
Conference Room 308
State Capitol, 415 South Beretania Street

Testimony in Support of HB1149

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and members of the committee. My name is Kailee Lefebvre, I am **in strong support of HB1149** *Relating to the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle Program*.

Between 2014 and 2020 I was employed by the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle (CRB) Program and started the outreach and education portion of the program as the Outreach Specialist for 5 of those years. During this time, I had the opportunity to inform and learn from thousands of concerned citizens and individuals from impacted industries, departments, and agencies. I've witnessed members of the public who were genuinely concerned, had a history and connection to their palms and took every action they could to eradicate CRB in their backyards and in their community. I've listened to stories of Hawaiian cultural practitioners that were restoring native lands using native and sustainable farming practices who felt as though there were no good solutions because using green waste material like mulch would breed CRB which would then feed on and kill their native plants and crops. I've listened to the frustrations of conventional farmers and landscapers who have staged, moved, or donated mulch around the island with good intentions of recycling and giving back to the land who then were encouraged to stop these types of handling of green waste and now could be penalized for doing so under the CRB Interim Rule enacted by HDOA in July 2022.

Since it has been acknowledged by HDOA that the program has shifted its goal from eradication to containment of CRB to Oahu, I believe the time for legislative action is now. The fact that CRB hasn't been found on any other island 9 years after its arrival is a testament to the CRB program's efforts. I believe this bill will give the program the chance to prevent CRB from detrimental effects to the people, culture, and environment across the rest of the state. I humbly ask for your support of this bill. I may be reached at kaileehl@hawaii.edu for any follow up to my testimony. Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Kailee Lefebvre
Concerned citizen

HB-1149-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 10:30:44 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Will Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB1149 HD1.

HB-1149-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 10:26:17 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Heather McMillen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I write in strong support of HB1149. The impacts of CRB threaten lifeways, knowledge systems, food security, and cultural identity. I strongly advocate for additional positions and activities related to the CRB infestation control. More needs to be done to mitigate impacts on Oahu and prevent its transmission to other islands. Urgent investments to containment and prevent the spread are needed to protect our invaluable natural and cultural resources threatened by CRB.

February 22, 2023

House Committee on Finance

In strong support of HB 1149 HD1

Feb. 23, 2023, House Conference Room 308, Hawai'i State Capitol

To: Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

Members: Rep. Micah P.K. Aiu, Rep. Cory M. Chun, Rep. Elle Cochran, Rep. Andrew Takuya Garrett, Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa, Rep. Darius K. Kila, Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Rep. Rachele F. Lamosao, Rep. Dee Morikawa, Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Rep. David Alcos III, Rep. Gene Ward.

Dear Chair Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair Lisa Kitagawa and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

Kumustakayo amin (greetings)! My name is Rouel Velasco and **I submit this testimony in strong support for HB 1149 HD1**, which appropriates funds for positions and activities related to coconut rhinoceros beetle infestation control. **I am urging you to support this measure.**

I provide this testimony on behalf of myself as a Hawai'i-Born Filipino private citizen from Kapolei, O'ahu. I am a proud graduate of the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, twice (with a bachelor and master's degrees). I am truly proud to call Hawai'i home. I am honored to share my thoughts and story with you.

The niu or coconut is an important plant to Hawai'i and the world beyond for the many uses for everyday life, nourishment and sustainability as demonstrated by our ancestors. The coconut is the tree of life. The coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB) is a detriment to the growth and advancement of coconut. The CRB, native to Southeast Asia, feeds on emerging palm fronds, causing damage that can often be severe enough to kill the plant. CRB populations can have devastating impacts on palm species that are foundational to cultural heritage, agriculture, ecosystems, and economies.

The coconut has a deep relationship rooted in community and aloha 'āina. Now is the time to reclaim coconut as the tree that nourishes and provides for humanity and generations to come.

Niu Now is a homegrown movement committed to coconut agroforestry. A movement has begun to reframe how we view and treat coconut as a vital relative. In order for the coconut to thrive, we as a collective must do our part to care for the land and coconuts. Just like the Hawaiian proverb, "when coconuts flourish, humanity thrives." As humanity in deep connection and relationship to 'āina, we must be stewards of all natural resources.

Today, actions must be taken to stop the spreading of CRB, especially the potential migrating into the neighbor islands. I encourage you to view this as an issue in our collective control to which measures could be adopted for effective outcomes.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of HB 1149 HD1. Thank you for your time and consideration. Agyamanak! (I am grateful!)

Respectfully submitted,
Rouel Velasco

HB-1149-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 11:02:06 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Koki Atcheson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Finance Committee of the 2023 Hawai‘i State Legislature,

Please consider my testimony in support of HB1149 and appropriating funds to sustain the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle Response. Although I submit this testimony as an individual, as an outreach specialist with the CRB Response for two years (2020 - 2022) I saw the beginning of the exponential growth of CRB population numbers and the impacts that followed. I fielded increasing numbers of daily calls from Hawai‘i residents who had lost their loulu, niu, and other palms after the trees attacked by CRB. Our team also frequently engaged with business owners who were concerned about their loss of inventory and impacts to their management practices should CRB continue to spread. The worst case scenario for CRB, which is expected with no intervention, is widespread death of niu, loulu and other palms, and crop damage to kalo, banana, papaya, and other host species. At this point in the infestation CRB are established on O‘ahu, but new technology and innovation, plus widespread public support of the CRB Response, show promise for preventing spread to vulnerable uluniu (coconut groves) on neighbor islands and relatively uninfested areas on O‘ahu. The ability for the CRB Response to implement learnings and new research from ten years of active eradication to minimize the worst case scenario for CRB will depend on secure and sustained funding for staff capacity and program continuity.

Mahalo for your time and all you do to protect Hawai‘i from the threats and impacts of invasive species including CRB.

Koki Atcheson

HB-1149-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 12:51:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mohsen Paryavi	UHM	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I highly support HB 1149, this beetle is island hopping(in the Pacific) every two years, and we should limit this to Oahu and control it.

For that, I think we can use engineering tools, like smart trap camera boards, to detect them swiftly, which helps realize the infestation locations for quick response. Smart camera boards that send the trap location. Moreover, we can deploy smart trap camera boards to other Hawaii islands to eradicate beetle infestation if there is a sign of infestation.

Best Regards,
Mohsen Paryavi

HB-1149-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 6:33:52 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
DAVID N FELL	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Ants are a threat to our farm and life. Support research for biological and other controls.

February 22, 2023

**Testimony in Support of HB 1149
RELATING TO THE COCONUT RHINOCEROS BEETLE PROGRAM**

House Committee on Agriculture
Thursday, February 23, 2023
11:30 a.m. 308 Via Video Conference

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Committee Members,

My name is Brian Boltz and I am a farmer in Waimānalo. **I am writing in strong support of HB 1149, Relating to the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle Program.** As a person connected to the land both economically and personally, I am deeply concerned about the damage that coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB) will cause to the state, our farming community, and our culture here in Hawai‘i

HB 1149 will allocate funds for much needed positions and activities related to coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB) **elimination**. We cannot allow CRB to spread and acclimatize themselves to our islands as they are a major threat to most palm species, such as the coconut tree, as well as our beloved hala tree. Once they have decimated our palms and hala trees, they will move on to secondary crops, such as kalo, causing further damage to our agriculture, but also local culture. Can you imagine a shoreline without coconut trees? Can you imagine aunties without pāpale made from hala trees? Can you imagine a table without haupia or poi? If we don't take steps now to eliminate this beetle, CRB will devastatingly transform Hawai‘i's into a much different place than we know today.

As for my farming community in Waimānalo, CRB poses an imminent threat to our agriculture industry. Our neighborhood has seen over ten confirmed cases of the CRB in the last six months alone. The most recent infestation was just last month in a compost pile made from tree trimmings. Many farmers in Hawai‘i are unaware of the CRB's threat and the best practices for mitigating its spread.

According to the Hawai‘i Department of Agriculture, the CRB is a serious pest of palm trees, primarily coconut palms, as the adult beetles bore into the crowns of the palms to feed on the tree's sap. This results in damaged fronds and can cause the tree to die if the growing point is attacked. Tree mortality has been reported to range from 10% to 50%. Dead trees also pose a safety hazard as they may fall unexpectedly after the trunk rots, potentially causing injury or property damage.

The impact of the CRB on coconut trees and palms WILL have disastrous consequences for Hawai‘i's landscape industry and economy. Popular tourist destinations such as Waikiki's beaches, golf courses, and hotels and resorts could be severely impacted, as well as the state's unique natural landscape. The Oahu's plant nurseries WILL also suffer greatly from this damage.

It is imperative that action is taken immediately to address this invasive pest. I urge you to pass HB 1149 to secure the necessary funding for CRB management and protect Hawaii's coconut trees and palms, as well as its economy and culture. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Aloha

Brian Boltz

HB-1149-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 8:11:14 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry SUPPORT HB 1149 RELATING TO THE COCONUT RHINOCEROS BEETLE PROGRAM. To include the Waianae community.

HB-1149-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2023 8:19:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2023 11:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Hamamoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Representstives,

I am a farmer in Waialua providing fresh local produce to Hawaii's residents for the last 25 years. I have seen first hand the devastation of my coconut and fan palm trees this last year. I have eradicated them from my 6-acre farm after many hours of efforts. We can not let these pests devastate our beautiful, economically valuable and culturally significant coconut trees. Please support this bill.

I am willing to have dogs trained and lodged on my farm to help with eradication efforts. They will be used as a community resource here on the north shore. Please, let's do this!!

mahalo,

mark hamamoto

mohala farms