

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 20 2023

RE: H.B. No. 1149
H.D. 2

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2023
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture and Environment, to which was referred H.B. No. 1149, H.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE COCONUT RHINOCEROS BEETLE PROGRAM,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to appropriate funds for existing positions and activities related to coconut rhinoceros beetle infestation control.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources; Department of Agriculture; East Oahu County Farm Bureau; Pacific Agricultural Land Management Systems; Palakamoon Farms; Waimanalo Agricultural Association; Happy Plants Nursery; Island Grower Supplies, LLC; Natura Nursery; Coastline Landscaping; Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species; Island Food Scaping; Waimanalo Agricultural Association; University of Hawaii Professional Assembly; and six individuals.

Your Committee finds that the coconut rhinoceros beetle is a major pest of coconut and ornamental palms and can also be found in betelnut, Pandanus species, banana, pineapple, papaya, sugarcane, and taro plants. The coconut rhinoceros beetle damages living palms and either kills the trees by direct damage, or exposes the tree for damage and death by other insects. The



coconut rhinoceros beetle thrives on islands in the Pacific due to a lack of natural predators and in Palau, where the beetle first invaded in 1942, the coconut palm was eradicated entirely on some islands. Your Committee further acknowledges that the coconut rhinoceros beetle was initially identified on Oahu in 2013 at the Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam during a routine survey by the Department of Agriculture and the University of Hawaii. The unregulated movement of green waste has led to the spread of the coconut rhinoceros beetle throughout Oahu and continued investment in monitoring, research, and management is necessary to mitigate further damage on Oahu and prevent the beetle's spread to other islands. Therefore, this measure appropriates funds to support existing coconut rhinoceros beetle response positions and activities to mitigate and reduce the presence and detrimental impacts of the coconut rhinoceros beetle.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture and Environment that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1149, H.D. 2, and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Agriculture and
Environment,



MIKE GABBARD, Chair



