

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEXTER KISHIDA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

**MONDAY, MARCH 11, 2024
1:00 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 224**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 2133, HD1
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2133, HD1. This bill establishes an invasive species grant pilot program to provide grants through the Department of Agriculture (Department) to individuals, businesses, and organizations for the eradication of invasive species on property located in Hawaii that is owned by the individual, business, or organization. The Department supports assisting individuals, businesses and organizations as noted in this measure and offers comments.

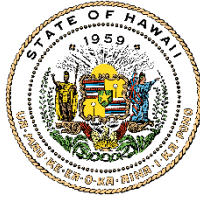
The Department understands that this bill addresses detections on private property and that responding to detections requires consent from the property owner. A condition for a grant pilot program would include, but not be limited to a program manager, staff conducting positive identification, recommending treatment that can be done by the individual, business or organization and advising of proper use and necessary PPE, as applicable. To do this work the department requests at minimum \$1,500,000 in staffing to execute so long it does not impact the budget priorities set forth in the Executive Budget Submittal.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



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

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

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY

DEAN D. UYENO
ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

Testimony of
DAWN N. S. CHANG
Chairperson

Before the Senate Committee on
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Monday, March 11, 2024
1:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 224 & Via Videoconference

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 2133 HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

House Bill 2133 House Draft 1 establishes an invasive species grant pilot program to provide grants through DOA to individuals, businesses, and organizations for the eradication of invasive species on property located in Hawai'i that is owned by the individual, business, or organization. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive FY 2025 Supplemental Budget Request.**

The Department administratively houses the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC), and DLNR's Division of Forestry and Wildlife provides program support to HISC. Since 2005, the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council has disbursed funds annually for innovative projects addressing invasive species prevention, control, outreach, and research. Only government agencies are eligible for these funds, leaving private landowners and businesses to take on the cost of controlling pests on their property themselves. Little fire ant (LFA) has been especially problematic for many landowners and businesses, especially on Hawai'i Island where this pest is widespread and creates a major challenge for workers to harvest their products.

Last November, the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council hosted the Senate Ways and Means (WAM) Committee site visit at a local banana farm on Hawai'i Island. This farm provides much of the local bananas found in Hawaii's grocery stores and spends tens of thousands of dollars per year on controlling little fire ant on the property. This is a huge cost on this farm but it's necessary

so that farm workers can harvest bananas without getting covered in painful stings, the crop remains productive, and consumers receive product free of LFA. The owner of this farm spoke to the WAM Committee and expressed the need for help. The farm is vigilant about controlling little fire ant on the property and taking on the cost but the surrounding neighbors are not, so the farm continues to get reinfested and needs to do treatment regularly.

This measure would help support farmers and landowners who want to do the right thing but struggle to have the means to do it. The Department recommends that the Department of Agriculture develop a list of pests that this grant program would support control measures for including little fire ant, coconut rhinoceros beetle, and two-lined spittlebug.

The Department recognizes the Legislature's concern for the issue and greatly appreciates the introduction of this measure. Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.



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March 11, 2024

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

TESTIMONY ON HB 2133, HD1
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
1:00 PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice-Chair Richards, 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 2133, HD1, which establishes an invasive species grant pilot program to provide grants through DOA to individuals, businesses, and organizations for the eradication of invasive species on property located in Hawaii that is owned by the individual, business, or organization.

Invasive species have become one of the most devastating problems impacting Hawai'i. Many invasive species are damaging Hawai'i's environment and economy. Agriculture has a vested interest in this matter. Agriculture suffers when invasive species are introduced. Every year, numerous new pests are introduced into the State, such as the coqui frog, coffee berry borer, macadamia felted coccid, little fire ant, coconut rhinoceros beetle, small hive beetle, and varroa mite, to name a few. Control measures take time to develop, leaving farmers and ranchers at risk. This is inconsistent with the State's goal of increasing self-sufficiency and sustainability.

Proper funding is critical for the protection of Hawai'i's environment and economy and the health and lifestyle of its people through the support of invasive species prevention, control, research, outreach, and planning. This measure will provide necessary resources to farmers and ranchers to help control and hopefully eradicate invasive species in Hawai'i.

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



Hawai'i Forest Industry Association

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Date: 03/09/24

TO: AEN Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, WAM Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, AEN Committee Members DeCoite, Rhoads, Awa, WAM Committee Members Aquino DeCoite, Hashimoto, Inouye, Kanuha, Kidani, Mercado Kim, Lee, Shimabukuro, Wakai, Fevella

FROM: Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA)

SUBJECT: Testimony in Support of HB2133 HD1 Relating to Invasive Species

Dear Chair Gabbard, Chair Dela Cruz and AEN, WAM Committee Members,

On behalf of the Directors and members of the Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA), please support HB2133 HD1 Relating to Invasive Species.

The Hawaii Forest Industry Association in support of an invasive species grant pilot program. As an association made up of diverse individuals and businesses, many of whom are landowners and/or work in the realm of natural resource management, we understand Hawaii's need to control, mitigate the effects of, and eradicate invasive species on State and public lands, as well as on private properties such as ranches, plantations, and homesteads.

We believe that Hawaii residents want to play a role as stewards of this land, however, finances are often a barrier as managing invasive species is resource intensive. In addition, these species, whether vegetation, wildlife or pathogens, do not care about boundaries, barriers and land divisions, meaning controlling and/or eradicating them will require cooperation between the State and landowners including individuals, businesses and organizations. Furthermore, investing in invasive species control now will reduce the economic, environmental, and recreational strains caused by invasive species later.

For these reasons, please support HB2133 HD1.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Guy Cellier, President
Hawai'i Forest Industry Association

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

HFIA Board of Directors

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



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

March 11, 2024

1:00 PM Conference Room 224

In SUPPORT of:

HB2104 HD1: RELATING TO THE HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

HB2131 HD2: RELATING TO THE TWO-LINED SPITTLEBUG

HB2133 HD1: RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

HB2139 HD1: RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

HB2644 HD1: RELATING TO LITTLE FIRE ANTS

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Committee Members,

On behalf of our over 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **SUPPORTS HB2104 HD1, HB2131 HD2, HB2133 HD1, HB2139 HD1, and HB2644 HD2**, which will help to mitigate the ongoing and future impacts of invasive pests on our native ecosystems, cultural practices, food security, public health, economy, and the overall quality of life of present and future generations.

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

Accordingly, the Sierra Club strongly supports the much needed policies and investments contemplated in these measures. More financial support is critical for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to fulfill its biosecurity mission; funding for targeted campaigns to address the little fire ant and two-lined spittlebug are critical to preventing the ecological, cultural, agricultural, public health, and economic impacts of these pests; financial support for businesses and organizations to engage in invasive species control and eradication will engage more of the community in the all-hands-on-deck fight to combat their spread; and



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

agricultural invasive species placards will encourage agricultural producers to proactively employ best management practices and other measures to prevent and address invasive species on agricultural lands.

The Sierra Club emphasizes that quarantine requirements will also be critical to filling a gap in our regulatory toolbox that has allowed the sale of infested plants and other communities – a gap that has likely contributed to the establishment of coconut rhinoceros beetle on O‘ahu, and the ongoing spread of little fire ants across the islands. **The provisions of HB2758 HD2, scheduled for a hearing before this Committee and the Committee on Transportation and Culture and the Arts on March 12, would help to fill this regulatory gap and many others, and the Sierra Club accordingly strongly supports that measure as well.**

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

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

Chair of the House Committee.

Regarding HB2133.

**Monday 03/11/2024
4pm PDT CR 224 & Videoconference.**

In Support.

I strongly favor HB2133 in allowing funds to invasive species eradication primarily the albizia tree.

I am currently part of The Living Life Source Foundation, a non-profit organization that oversees a privately owned 114 acre parcel of land located within the community of Hakalau on the Big Island.

Our intention is to eradicate approximately 65 acres of the 114 acre parcel that is overtaken by the albizia tree. Our intention is to reestablish native forest land and replenish the watershed that the albizia has prevented for many years.

In part of this process creating a structured program that other private landowners could use to assist in bringing the Hawaiian Islands back to their original forest to assist the ecosystem.

I have attached two comprehensive reports of well documented reports of the effects of the albizia infestation in Hawaii.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

John Mitchell

A representative of The Living Life Source Foundation.

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Kamuela, HI 96743

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HB-2133-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2024 2:47:24 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/11/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kehaulani Lum	Testifying for Waiehu Land LLC	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and the Environment,

I am writing to urge your support for H.B. 2133 HD1 which establishes an invasive species grant pilot program to provide grants through DOA to individuals, businesses, and organizations for the eradication of invasive species on property located in Hawaii that is owned by the individual, business, or organization

As the manager of over 100 acres of agricultural land located on Hawai'i Island, I have first-hand knowledge of the adverse impact of invasive species on the well-being of the 'āina, especially, the foreign-introduced Alibizia (Falcataria moluccana) trees and the tiny fire ant. We did not plant them. They walked, rather, ran, in on their own, from public lands that are themselves inundated with the pests.

The cost of remediating the harm to our land and operations by a tree that was purposely brought in over 100 years ago to support the plantation industry, far exceeds our, or any private steward's ability. And, we are but one of many private, local stewards across the State.

The problem has gotten to the point that without a systemic response, our lands are becoming unproductive and our islands will lose the iconic forests of native trees and plants as well as the fresh water for drinking upon which we depend. Help is sorely needed.

We are deeply grateful to the Committee for considering this measure and to the Department of Agriculture for their efforts to face a truly uphill challenge to preserve our beloved Hawai'i Nei. We believe, unequivocally, that this pilot grant is far overdue. And, we urge the Committee's strong support.

Me ke aloha pumehana,

Kehaulani Lum, Manager, Waiehu Land LLC. Wailea, Hawai'i

HB-2133-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/9/2024 5:18:27 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/11/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sherry Pollack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Just a few weeks ago little fire ants were found at the Punahou Carnival... do I really need to say more? I urge you to PASS this very important measure. MAHALO!

HB-2133-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2024 12:19:32 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/11/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beverly Heiser	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Committee Members,

I am in strong support of HB 2133 HD1 that establishes the invasive species pilot program.