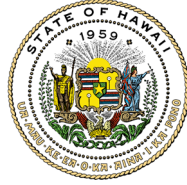


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



KENNETH S. HARA
DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT

JAMES DS. BARROS
ADMINISTRATOR OF
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
KA 'OIHANA PILI KAUA
HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
4204 DIAMOND HEAD ROAD
HONOLULU, HAWAI'I 96816-4420

STATE OF HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 948 SD1
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON **WATER AND LAND**

BY

JAMES DS. BARROS
ADMINISTRATOR
HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

MARCH 20, 2023

Aloha Chair Ichiyama, Vice-Chair Poepoe, and members of the committee:

I am James Barros, Administrator of the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA).

HI-EMA provides written testimony in **SUPPORT** of SB948 SD1.

This bill would appropriate funds to the Department of Land and Natural Resources to coordinate the removal of albizia trees pose a hazard to public and private land. While HI-EMA has a role defined in statute in mitigating certain public hazards relating to albizia trees, that role is limited and strictly circumscribed. We support the devotion of additional resources to address the hazard posed by these trees, which may readily topple or lose branches in high winds that can damage property and endanger life.

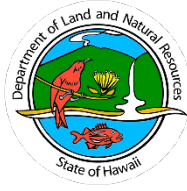
We support this bill to the extent its passage does not replace or adversely impact the priorities set forth in the administration's executive budget request.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

James Barros: james.barros@hawaii.gov; 808-733-4300

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
WATER & LAND

Wednesday, March 22, 2023
9:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 430

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 948, SENATE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Senate Bill 948, Senate Draft 1 proposes to appropriate funds to the Division of Forestry and Wildlife of the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) to coordinate the removal of hazard *Albizia* trees that potentially threaten public and private land. **The Department supports this measure provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated the Department's Executive Budget request.**

Invasive *Albizia* trees are a hazard to natural areas, private property and infrastructure. *Albizia* can thrive in a broad range of habitats and threatens native ecosystems. It produces large quantities of seeds which are wind dispersed and can be carried over long distances. *Albizia* in Hawai'i is one of the fastest growing trees on Earth. The rapid growth rate produces massive trunks and limbs that are prone to the sudden failure and collapse of enormous live branches without apparent cause.

As such, *Albizia* are a hazard to life and property in many settings. Removal of a mature *Albizia* tree can cost upwards of \$10,000 per tree in urban settings or along roadways when electricity infrastructure is involved. There is also a need to keep *Albizia* from establishing in vulnerable ecological areas and priority watersheds. In these locations, foresters use less costly methods.

There is a need to increase the pace and scale of *Albizia* removal in both urban and forested locations. The Department supports the measure to proactively deal with *Albizia* and appropriate funds to remove *Albizia* trees from priority areas. A continued and sustained effort to remove invasive *Albizia* is a benefit to the public for health and safety, economically, and ecologically.

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



Aloha Committee Members,

My name is Arwen Revere and I am a high school student from Kailua. Today, I am representing the environmental organization Wild Kids. Today we are testifying in strong support of SB948 relating to invasive species. Albizia trees can grow up to 70 feet tall and spread their branches up to 100 feet wide, rapidly taking over other plants and trees in the area. This growth can block out the sun and hinder the growth of other native plant species, ultimately leading to a decrease in biodiversity. Albizia trees can also cause soil erosion, which can impact water quality and lead to the loss of important nutrients in the soil. Due to their invasive nature, the plants have detrimental effects on our native species. Please pass this legislation and help protect our native forests.

Thank you for hearing our testimony,

Arwen Revere on behalf of Wild Kids



**Hawaiian
Electric**

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
WATER AND LAND**

SB 948, SD 1

Relating to Invasive Species

Wednesday, March 22, 2023

9:30 AM, Agenda item #6

State Capitol, Conference Room 430

Jennifer Zelko-Schlueter
Director, Government & Community Affairs (Hawai'i Island)
Hawaiian Electric

Chair Ichiyama, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jennifer Zelko-Schlueter and I am testifying on behalf of Hawaiian Electric in support of SB 948, SD 1.

Albizia trees are a hazard to public safety and critical infrastructure. Strands of brittle, invasive Albizia trees up to 250 feet tall grow on many public and private properties. Tropical Storm Iselle brought down many Albizia trees in the Puna District on Hawaii Island, blocked roadways, and caused millions of dollars in damage to homes and important electric utility lines. Broken tree trunks continue to send out new growth creating even more unstable conditions, while seedlings are rapidly germinating in disturbed areas.

The Kona Low storm in December 2021 brought down many hazardous trees in east and west Hawaii on Hawaii island, which resulted in extended outages to many customers.

Albizia trees on public and private plan threaten public roadways and utility infrastructure. This bill would appropriate funds for fiscal year 2023-2024 to the Division

of Forestry and Wildlife to coordinate the removal of albizia trees and other trees that potentially threaten public and private land.

Accordingly, Hawaiian Electric supports SB 948, SD 1. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



HAWAII FOREST INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION (HFIA)

P. O. Box 66 ❖ 'O'ōkala, HI
96774 Phone: 808-933-9411
Email: hfia@hawaiiiforest.org
Website: www.hawaiiiforest.org

Date: 03/21/2023

TO: WAL Chair Ichiyama, WAL Vice Chair Poepoe and WAL Committee Members

FROM: The Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA)

SUBJECT: In Support of SB948 SD1 Relating to Invasive Species

Dear Chair Ichiyama, Vice Chair Poepoe and Committee Members,

On behalf of the directors and members of the Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA), please support SB948 SD1 Relating to Invasive Species. We are supportive of this measure which appropriates funds to allow the Division of Forestry and Wildlife to coordinate the removal of hazard Albizia trees that potentially threaten public and private land.

Ultimately, being concerned with responsibly utilizing our natural resources, our hope is that harvested Albizia trees will be utilized by the state or private parties for innovation with the invasive wood. Being that the species is so prevalent, and Albizia trees are often removed from public and private spaces for various reasons, we see this as an opportunity to explore possible uses of the wood.

We hope that you will support SB948 SD1, and we hope that optimizing the use of harvested trees will be seriously considered in the future.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Guy Cellier, Acting President

Hawaii Forest Industry Association

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

HFIA Board of Directors

Officers: Acting President/Vice-President Guy Cellier, Secretary Peter D. Simmons, Treasurer Wade Lee
Directors: Thomas Calhoun, Jeremy Campbell, Aaron Hammer, Nickolas Koch, Tai Lake, Michael Sowards, Irene Sprecher, Michael Tam, Jorma Winkler, Ron Wolfe, Aileen Yeh

SB-948-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/18/2023 6:10:38 PM

Testimony for WAL on 3/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Please support SB948 SD1.

SB-948-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/20/2023 5:48:17 PM

Testimony for WAL on 3/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John-Carl (JC) Watson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on SB948 SD1 relating to Invasive Species and Albizia. **I strongly support of this bill.** As a natural resource manager and global expert with regards to albizia management, I cannot overstate the need to proactively manage albizia. The rapid growth rate and wide distribution across the state poses a dire threat to critical infrastructure, native forests, agricultural practices, and human health. Please seriously consider moving SB948 SD1 forward and giving some overdue support towards mitigating hazardous albizia trees.

With sincere gratitude,

JC Watson