

JAN 19 2024

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that little fire ants are
2 an invasive species that are spreading rapidly throughout the
3 State. They are widespread on Hawaii island and, over the past
4 year, have spread on Oahu with numerous confirmed infestation
5 sites.

6 Little fire ants have a painful sting that can cause long-
7 lasting itchy rashes or welts and also irritate, and sometimes
8 blind, household pets. Additionally, these pests have caused
9 significant disruption and economic damage on Hawaii island.

10 The legislature further finds that the Hawaii ant lab was
11 established in 2009 to address the overwhelming need for
12 research, advice, and technical assistance to address and
13 eradicate rapidly spreading little fire ant infestations.
14 Effective treatment is labor-intensive as it requires careful
15 surveying to delimit the boundaries of the infestation, repeated
16 treatment that spans a year, and monitoring thereafter.



1 Previously, the Hawaii invasive species council and Hawaii
2 department of agriculture had provided the majority of funding
3 for the Hawaii ant lab. However, that funding ceased due to
4 budget cuts and the repeal of the agriculture development and
5 food security special fund. The Hawaii ant lab has survived due
6 to the legislature making one-time appropriations of \$500,000 in
7 2022 and 2023. However, this amount is insufficient to fully
8 fund current staff, with a reduction of hours taken in past
9 years and planned again in 2024. Furthermore, the Hawaii ant
10 lab needs to increase staff on Oahu by five positions in order
11 to fight the growing threat there while there is still hope of
12 eradication. On Hawaii island, the Hawaii ant lab expenses have
13 increased as they are no longer housed in department of
14 agriculture office space.

15 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to support
16 the Hawaii ant lab in mitigating the effects of little fire ants
17 in the State.

18 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
19 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$1,168,000 or so much
20 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 for
21 LNR402, native resources and fire protection program, to support



1 the Hawaii ant lab in mitigating the effects of little fire ants
2 in the State.

3 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
4 land and natural resources for the purposes of this Act.

5 SECTION 3. In accordance with section 9 of article VII of
6 the Hawaii State Constitution and sections 37-91 and 37-93,
7 Hawaii Revised Statutes, the legislature has determined that the
8 appropriations contained in H.B. No. , will cause the state
9 general fund expenditure ceiling for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be
10 exceeded by \$ or per cent. In addition, the
11 appropriation contained in this Act will cause the general fund
12 expenditure ceiling for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be further
13 exceeded by \$ or per cent. The combined total
14 amount of general fund appropriations contained in only these
15 two Acts will cause the state general fund expenditure ceiling
16 for fiscal year 2024-2025 to be exceeded by
17 \$ or per cent. The reasons for exceeding the
18 general fund expenditure ceiling are that:

- 19 (1) The appropriation made in this Act is necessary to
20 serve the public interest; and



1 (2) The appropriation made in this Act meets the needs
2 addressed by this Act.

3 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2024.

4

INTRODUCED BY:





S.B. NO. 2359

Report Title:

Department of Land and Natural Resources; Hawaii Ant Lab;
Appropriation; Expenditure Ceiling

Description:

Appropriates funding for the Hawaii Ant Lab to support little
fire ant mitigation and eradication efforts.

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