

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

JANUARY 31, 2024
1:00 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 224

SENATE BILL NO. 2358
RELATING TO THE HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2358 relating to the Hawaii Invasive Species Council. This bill appropriates funding for the Hawaii Invasive Species Council. The Department offers comments.

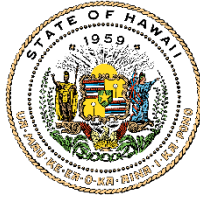
The Hawaii Invasive Species Council provides excellent coordination of effort between multiple partner agencies, especially through funding it provides through annual request for proposals. However, to be consistent with the goals of the Interagency Biosecurity Plan, data collected through HISC functions, awards, and by partners, should be entered into a database which the Department has full access as it relates to survey and control actions so the department can coordinate regulatory, response and control, and research statewide. This data should be maintained in the State's Standard GIS Data Platform, Esri, ArcGIS versus proprietary software not vetted by ETS or the State GIS Office.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important measure.



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

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'
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 Senate Committee on
AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT

Wednesday, January 31, 2024
1:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 224 and Via Videoconference

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 2358
RELATING TO THE HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COMMITTEE

Senate Bill 2358 proposes to appropriate funds to support the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to ensure its long-term viability and prevent future problems; and declares that the general fund expenditure ceiling is exceeded. **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.**

In 2002, the Legislative Reference Bureau released a report that declared invasive species are the biggest threat to Hawai'i's economy, environment, tourism, and health and way of life of its residents. Subsequently, the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) was formed pursuant to Executive Order No. 2002-03 and provided statutory authority under Act 85, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2003. HISC's purpose is to provide policy level coordination and planning for the control and eradication of harmful invasive species. The Department administratively houses HISC and the Department's Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) provides program support to HISC.

Since 2005, HISC has disbursed funds annually for innovative projects addressing invasive species prevention, control, outreach, and research. Existing programs at State agencies address some of the core needs in this area, including inspection and quarantine at ports (HDOA), control of invasive plants and animals on state lands (DLNR), detection and control of vectors of human disease (DOH), control of invasive species along public transportation routes (DOT), planning initiatives (DBEDT), and academic expertise (UH). HISC-funded projects do not replace these core programs. Interagency HISC funds are used to complement these existing programs by:

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

1. Filling gaps between agency mandates or existing agency programs, and/or
2. Advancing our collective knowledge through research and development of new tools.

Disbursement of project funding via HISC ensures that, at the cabinet level, multiple state agencies are identifying and prioritizing actions on annual basis that might otherwise go unfunded. Past HISC awards supported the initial operational equipment and supplies for the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle response in 2013, early research and development of *Wolbachia* birth control for mosquitos, exploratory work to identify natural enemies for *Miconia*, strawberry guava, and *Albizia*, and Herbicide Ballistic Technology (HBT). This funding is critical to supporting the ongoing operations of the Island Invasive Species Committees, Hawaii Ant Lab, and the Ballast Water and Biofouling Program at the Department’s Division of Aquatic Resources and has been critical to leveraging additional funds from other sources to fully support these projects.

Despite the growing threat of invasive species, HISC’s funding has not increased in over four years. Figure 1 shows the funding available for projects versus the total amount requested. With current funding amounts, HISC can only provide partial support for most proposal requests, which, on average, is less than 50% of the total requested. Every year, a handful of projects receive no funding, which is a function of the limited amount of funding rather than a lack of merit for the proposed projects.

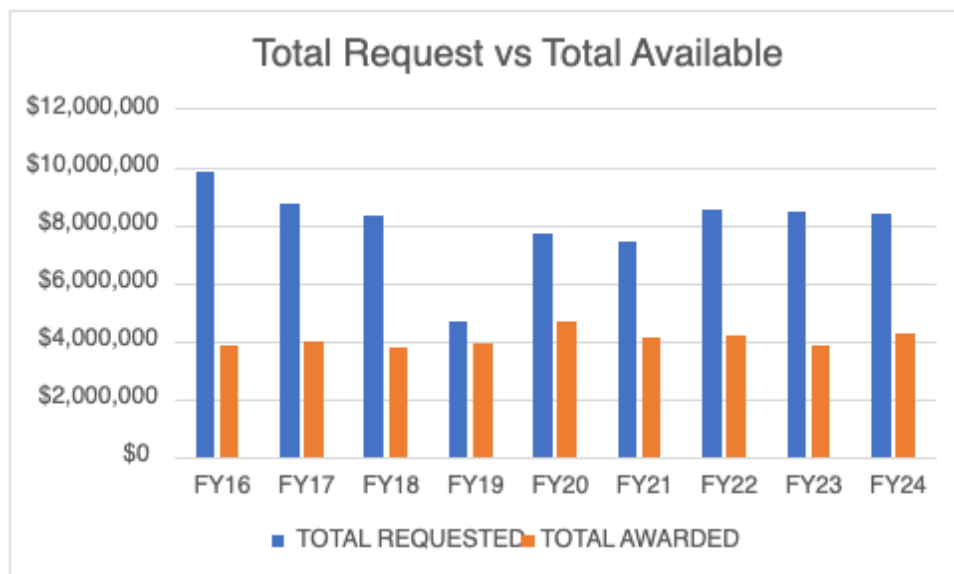


Figure 1 shows HISC funding available to support interagency projects and programs versus the amount requested, which falls short of the actual need.

The requested funding for the FY24 HISC funding cycle was \$8.5 million. This bill would benefit HISC and its partners by meeting the amount available to the total requested each year and provide additional support for growing needs such as new pests spreading throughout the State (Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle, little fire ants), increased costs of equipment (vehicles, facilities), and the need to increase wages to retain staff and counteract inflation and the high cost of doing business in Hawai‘i.

The dispersal of funding is a competitive process with HISC's review and approval as the final step. Still, there are key funding priorities that, if this measure is approved with the level of funding currently proposed, would be implemented:

- Support for emergency response efforts to new pest incursions new to the state or within the state, which is a priority outlined in the Hawai'i Interagency Biosecurity Plan and could mirror the DOFAW's Fire Contingency Response fund.
- Ports of Entry Pest Monitoring for high-priority pests at the State airports and harbors. Efforts focus on gap-filling monitoring for high-impact pests in areas where federal and state agencies are not inspecting or for pests that they are not looking for including Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle, invasive ants including Red Imported Fire Ants and Little Fire Ants, Africanized honeybees, mosquitos, and Japanese beetles.

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.

SB-2358

Submitted on: 1/28/2024 4:35:54 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/31/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy Redfeather	Testifying for Ka Ohana O Na Pua	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am not clear after reading the Bill whether any of this funding will be shared with the outer Island's Invasive Species Committees. They are the main connection with local communities, home owners, farmers, etc. for information and eradication protocols and are extremely important. BIISC, MISC, and KISC are underfunded and rely on grants to be the educational entity for the public, which isn't working. I hope that HISC will be sharing some of its funding with them.



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January 31, 2024

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

TESTIMONY ON SB 2358
RELATING TO THE HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
1:00 PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice-Chair Richards, and Members of the Committees:

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 SB 2358, which appropriates funds to support the Hawaii Invasive Species Council to ensure its long-term viability and prevent future problems.

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 not consistent with the State's goal of increasing self-sufficiency and sustainability.

Proper funding for HISC 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 HISC to help control and hopefully eradicate invasive species in Hawai'i.

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



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

January 31, 2024 1:00 PM Conference Room 224

In SUPPORT of:

SB2419: RELATING TO AGRICULTURAL BIOSECURITY

SB2358: RELATING TO THE HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

SB2359: RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

SB2411: RELATING TO THE TWO-LINED SPITTLEBUG

SB2559: RELATING TO INVASIVE PESTS

SB2560: RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

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 SB2419, SB2358, SB2359, SB2411, SB2559, and SB2560**, 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, 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; and inspection and quarantine authorities for businesses and public land lessees are vital to addressing long-



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

neglected gaps in invasive pest detection and eradication – gaps that have likely contributed to the establishment of coconut rhinoceros beetle on O'ahu, and the ongoing spread of little fire ants across the islands.

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** SB2419, SB2358, SB2359, SB2411, SB2559, and SB2560. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.



The Senate
Committee On Agriculture and Environment
Wednesday, January 31, 2024
1:00 PM Conference Room 224
State Capitol

Testimony in Support of SB2358

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

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) is **in support of SB2358**, *Relating to the Hawaii Invasive Species Council*, which will increase the amount appropriated to the Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC) for fiscal year 2024-2025.

As noted in SB2358, the vast majority of HISC funds are used to provide grants, on a competitive basis, for activities that complement existing programs in the State by:

1. Filling gaps between agency mandates or existing agency programs, and/or
2. Advancing our collective knowledge and capacity through research and development of new tools.

The need for these grants is far greater than HISC's available funds. High-impact invasive species such as coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB), coqui frog, and little fire ant (LFA) are rapidly spreading in Hawaii, and control actions and research on new control methods for these and other invasive species are desperately needed. The additional funding for HISC proposed in SB2358 will support these control actions and activities to prevent the introduction, spread, and establishment of high-impact invasive pests, including through the work of the Hawaii Ant Lab, each of the island Invasive Species Committees, and the Ballast Water and Biofouling Program at the Division of Aquatic Resources.

Mahalo for the opportunity to support SB2358 and for consideration of our testimony.

Aloha,

Christy Martin
CGAPS Program Manager

Stephanie Easley
CGAPS Legal Fellow

SB-2358

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 12:15:04 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/31/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joseph Wat	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HISC is an essential part of coordinating prompt and effective invasive species response throughout the pae‘āina. Please provide them with dependable and consistent funding.

- Joe

SB-2358

Submitted on: 1/30/2024 12:34:49 PM

Testimony for AEN on 1/31/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Councilmember Esther Kia'aina	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB2358.

LATE

SB-2358

Submitted on: 1/31/2024 1:17:55 AM

Testimony for AEN on 1/31/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kimeona Kane	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

Mahalo for supporting this effort. The Hawaii Invasive Species Council needs long term support in order to best serve Hawai‘i. I support this direction.

Mahalo nui,
Kimeona Kane