

JAN 17 2025

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE HAWAII ANT LAB.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the Hawaii Ant Lab
2 was established in 2009 to address the overwhelming need for
3 research and assistance to address and eradicate rapidly
4 spreading little fire ant infestations. Effective treatment of
5 little fire ant infestations is labor intensive and involves
6 surveying, treatment, and long-term monitoring duties that can
7 take a number of years to scientifically document efforts. In
8 recent years, the Hawaii invasive species council and the
9 department of agriculture have helped fund the Hawaii Ant Lab,
10 but current funding levels, including \$500,000 from the
11 legislature in fiscal year 2024, have not been sufficient to
12 prevent the Hawaii Ant Lab from furloughing staff in
13 January 2024.

14 The legislature further finds that little fire ant
15 infestations on the islands of Oahu, Maui, and Kauai are on the
16 rise and it is critical that the management and control of these
17 infestations continue. Kauai has two large active infestations,



1 one that is located along a major waterway and will need a
2 dedicated on-island team, which currently does not exist, to
3 manage and control the infestation. The legislature recognizes
4 that the Hawaii Ant Lab is the only organization solely
5 dedicated to the research, prevention, and management of
6 invasive ants in Hawaii.

7 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to appropriate
8 funds to support the Hawaii Ant Lab in mitigating the effects of
9 little fire ants in the State.

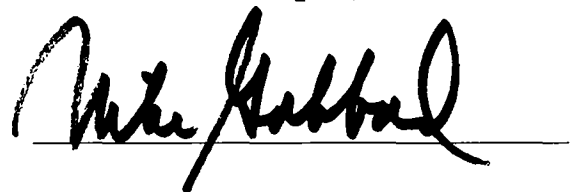
10 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
11 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$1,000,000 or so much
12 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the
13 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
14 2026-2027 to support the Hawaii Ant Lab in mitigating the
15 effects of little fire ants in the State.

16 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
17 of agriculture for the purposes of this Act.

18 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

19

INTRODUCED BY:



S.B. NO. 658

Report Title:

DOA; Little Fire Ants; Hawaii Ant Lab; Appropriations

Description:

Appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture to support the Hawaii Ant Lab in mitigating the effects of little fire ants in the State.

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