

JAN 17 2025

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 the coconut
2 rhinoceros beetle, scientifically known as *oryctes rhinoceros*,
3 is an invasive species that threatens coconut palms and other
4 vegetation. The beetle bores into the crowns of coconut trees,
5 feeding on the sap and causing severe damage. The beetle's
6 appetite is not limited to coconut palms, and it threatens other
7 tropical plants such as hala, sugarcane, taro, banana, and
8 pineapple. From reduced property values and loss of tourism due
9 to dying palms to increased costs for pest control and tree
10 replacement, the economic consequences are vast and significant.

11 The legislature further finds that the coconut rhinoceros
12 beetle endangers Hawaii's cultural heritage by damaging plants,
13 such as hala and taro, that are integral to native Hawaiian
14 practices. The protection of these plants is essential for
15 preserving local traditions and maintaining a balanced
16 ecosystem. Wreaking havoc since it was discovered in 2013 at



1 Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, the beetle has spread across
2 Oahu and to the islands of Kauai, Maui, and Hawaii.

3 The purpose of this Act is to establish a two-year
4 community-based incentive pilot program under the department of
5 land and natural resources to eradicate the coconut rhinoceros
6 beetle in Hawaii.

7 SECTION 2. For the purposes of this Act:

8 "Coconut rhinoceros beetle" means the invasive species in
9 Hawaii that is scientifically known as *oryctes rhinoceros*.

10 "Community member" includes residents, military personnel,
11 farmers, cultural practitioners, golf course staff, green waste
12 and compost facility workers, retailers, landscape
13 professionals, botanical garden staff, and maintenance
14 personnel.

15 SECTION 3. (a) The department of land and natural
16 resources shall establish a two-year pilot program to
17 incentivize community members to collect and submit to the
18 department the beetle and its larvae. The Hawaii invasive
19 species council shall oversee the pilot program; and ensure the
20 participation of stakeholders, including community members.



(b) The department of land and natural resources shall compensate community members for the collection and submission of beetles and larvae. The compensation shall be determined by the department in consultation with the Hawaii invasive species council.

SECTION 3. No later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2026, the department of land and natural resources shall submit to the legislature a report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation.

SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for a two-year community-based pilot program to eradicate the coconut rhinoceros beetle in Hawaii, including but not limited to:

- (1) Compensation to community members;
- (2) Program administration;
- (3) Community engagement, workshops, and training events;
- (4) Digital and social media campaigns;



1 (5) Media advertising; and

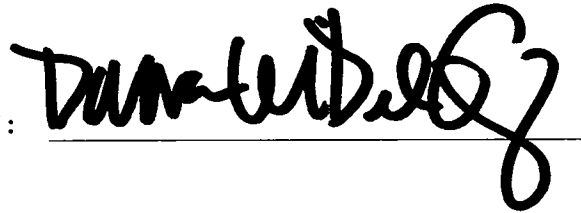
2 (6) Educational materials and outreach.

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

5 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

6

INTRODUCED BY:





S.B. NO. 746

Report Title:

Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle; Invasive Species; DLNR; Pilot Program; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes and appropriates moneys for a two-year pilot program under the Department of Land and Natural Resources that incentivizes community members to collect and submit the coconut rhinoceros beetle and its larvae for compensation.

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