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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

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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 the State's cultural heritage by damaging  
13 plants, including hala and taro, that are integral to native  
14 Hawaiian practices. The protection of these plants is essential  
15 for 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 coconut  
4 rhinoceros beetle eradication pilot program under the department  
5 of land and natural resources to provide community-based  
6 incentives to eradicate the coconut rhinoceros 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" means any resident, military personnel  
11 member, farmer, cultural practitioner, golf course staffer,  
12 green waste or compost facility worker, retailer, landscape  
13 professional, botanical garden staffer, or maintenance worker.

14 SECTION 3. (a) There is established within the department  
15 of land and natural resources a two-year coconut rhinoceros  
16 beetle eradication pilot program to incentivize community  
17 members to collect and submit to the department the coconut  
18 rhinoceros beetle and its larvae. The Hawaii invasive species  
19 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 coconut rhinoceros beetles and larvae captured in the wild. The compensation shall be determined by the department in consultation with the Hawaii invasive species council; provided that in no event shall the department compensate any person for collecting or submitting any beetle or larva that was bred by human intervention.

SECTION 4. The department of land and natural resources shall submit a report regarding the coconut rhinoceros beetle eradication pilot program, including its findings, recommendations, and any proposed legislation, to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the regular session of 2026.

SECTION 5. 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 the costs of operating the coconut rhinoceros beetle eradication pilot program, including:

(1) Compensation to community members;



- 1 (2) Program administration;
- 2 (3) Community engagement, workshops, and training events;
- 3 (4) Digital and social media campaigns;
- 4 (5) Media advertising; and
- 5 (6) Educational materials and outreach.

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

8 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on January 1, 2050.



# S.B. NO. 746 S.D. 2

**Report Title:**

DLNR; Hawaii Invasive Species Council; Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle; Invasive Species; Pilot Program; Report; Appropriations

**Description:**

Establishes a 2-year coconut rhinoceros beetle eradication 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. Requires a report to the Legislature. Appropriates moneys. (SD2)

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