

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 2025
2:15 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 325 & VIDEOCONFERENCE

SENATE BILL NO. 252, SD2, HD1
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Chair Kahaloa, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill No. 252, SD2, HD1, relating to invasive species. The bill seeks to clarify that the importation of any item or material infested or infected with an insect or other animal, disease, or other pest is prohibited; authorize the Department of Agriculture to inspect any item imported or moved into the State from another part of the continental United States or between the Hawaiian Islands; prohibit the sale of merchandise that a seller knows is infested or infected with a pest; authorize the Department of Agriculture to compel the quarantine, treatment, or destruction of certain materials; and clarify penalties for violations. The Department supports the measure, agrees it would increase biosecurity efforts, and offers comments to request the resources the Department requires to expand the biosecurity work of the bill.

The Department believes the intent of the changes to HRS 150A-5(5) to enable the inspection of other commodities that are not currently subject to required inspection prior to entering the State can assist with determining commodity risk analysis. However, the Department has some concerns that because this measure appears to



enable ad-hoc administrative inspections of every item imported into the State or moved inter-island, including persons, there would be a reasonable expectation of the Department to conduct these administrative inspections in a fair and consistent manner. In order to reasonably accomplish this, significant financial investments, such as those listed below, would be required:

- Significant increases in staff including inspectors, administrative support, and supervisory staff. To effectively implement these inspections, necessary personnel increases are likely orders of magnitude above current staffing levels.
- Consistent funding to obtain and maintain commensurate physical resources (office space, vehicles, equipment, supplies, etc.) needed to conduct the inspections.
- Requires the development of departmental policies to create thresholds on when/where/how these inspections would occur to ensure that they are not being done arbitrarily, with subsequent re-training of all staff statewide; and
- Significant outreach to all importers statewide, interisland shippers, transportation companies, and interisland passengers, the vast majority of which are not currently subject to inspections by HDOA.

The Department understands the reinsertion of the prior amendments to HRS 150A-8. However, the Department reiterates that much of what this section seeks to implement already exists in HAR 4-72. The Department believes the term “pest host material” on page 18, line 8, should be removed as there is no definition as to what this is. The Department does not believe that this would affect the measure’s intent as “any other item or material” would appear to cover any presumed “pest host material.” The Department acknowledges that there is no explicit statutory prohibition on the selling of pest infested materials, however HRS 150A-14(3) contains penalties for movement of pests themselves. The Department has concerns that as currently drafted, there could be unintended consequences with the term “otherwise make available” on page 18, line

15. As currently drafted, should there be a need to provide a partner agency with access to a pest or infested material for research or testing, it would appear to be prohibited.

The Department is appreciative of the clarifications to HRS 150A-14, but notes that as currently drafted, if during the course of an administrative inspection, should a criminal violation under the “knowingly” standard be discovered, the Department would be unable to enforce these provisions.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 252 SD2 HD1
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPEICES**

House Committees on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
Hawai'i State Capitol

March 18, 2025

2:15 pm

Room 325

Aloha Chairs Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe and members of the Committee:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **strongly supports HB252 SD2 HD1**, which strengthens efforts by the Department of Agriculture to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species throughout Hawai'i. This measure is a necessary step in protecting our islands' fragile ecosystems, native species, and cultural heritage from the devastating impacts of invasive plants, animals, and insects.

Invasive species pose a significant threat to the health and stability of Hawai'i's environment, economy, and way of life. The unchecked introduction of pests has already led to habitat destruction, the endangerment of native species, and increased wildfire risks. These impacts extend beyond the natural world, affecting the livelihoods of local farmers, the sustainability of traditional practices, and the overall resilience of our communities. Strengthening biosecurity measures is not only a matter of environmental stewardship but of cultural and economic survival.

The protection of Hawai'i's biodiversity is integral to Native Hawaiian identity and practices. Many endemic species found only in Hawai'i are essential to traditional practices, ceremonies, and ways of life. From the forests that shelter sacred species to the taro fields that nourish our people, the preservation of native plants and animals is a kuleana that cannot be ignored. By ensuring stronger biosecurity protections, Hawai'i can take a proactive approach in safeguarding its natural and cultural resources for future generations.

This bill expands the Department of Agriculture's authority to conduct inspections and enforce penalties against those who knowingly violate quarantine and import laws. Strengthening these measures ensures that all cargo, vehicles, and shipments into Hawai'i, whether from the continental United States or between the islands, are subject to rigorous inspection. The reinstatement of provisions that prohibit the sale or distribution of infested materials and allow for their quarantine, treatment, or destruction is a necessary enforcement tool to prevent further spread. The increased penalties for repeat violations

further reinforce the importance of compliance in protecting the state from new and emerging threats.

OHA particularly appreciates the bill's emphasis on preventing the introduction of snakes, which pose an existential threat to Hawai'i's native birds and fragile ecosystems. The presence of even a small number of snakes could have irreversible consequences, leading to widespread predation on endangered species and causing cascading ecological disruptions. Additionally, the movement of military transport into and out of ecologically sensitive areas, such as the Pōhakuloa Training Area, remains an ongoing concern due to the risk of transporting invasive species that could impact endangered species populations.

The passage of this measure is essential to reducing long-term control costs, mitigating future ecological and agricultural damage, and strengthening the state's ability to respond to new biosecurity threats. Ensuring a rigorous inspection process and enforcing penalties against those who knowingly endanger Hawai'i's environment will help maintain the ecological and cultural integrity of our islands.

OHA urges the committee to **pass** this measure, affirming our collective responsibility to protect our 'āina, our resources, and our people from the continued threat of invasive species. By taking action now, we can ensure a sustainable and resilient Hawai'i for generations to come.

RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

JOSIAH K. NISHITA
Managing Director



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 SOUTH HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.mauicounty.gov

TO: Representative David A. Tarnas, Chair
Representative Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair
Committee on Judiciary & Native Affairs

FROM: Richard T. Bissen, Jr., Mayor
Rogerene Arce, Director of Agriculture

DATE: March 17, 2025

SUBJECT: SUPPORT OF SB252 SD2 HD1 RELATED TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of this important measure. The act clarifies that the importation of any item or material infested or infected with an insect or other animal, disease, or other pest is prohibited. Authorizes the Department of Agriculture to inspect any item imported or moved into the State from another part of the continental United States or between the Hawaiian Islands. Prohibits the sale of merchandise that a seller knows is infested or infected with a pest. Authorizes the Department of Agriculture to compel the quarantine, treatment, or destruction of certain materials. Clarifies penalties for violations.

We **SUPPORT** this measure for the following reasons:

1. Hawai'i is the endemic species, meaning found here and no where else, capital of the world. We have the rarest native and endemic plants, animals, and micro organisms. All of these species are foundational to our ability to live, our islands ability to produce water, and achieve food and nutrition security here in Hawai'i.
2. We support HDOA having the increased authority and added legal mechanisms to protect Hawai'i from the introduction and spread of invasive species, both from the continent and interisland. Increasing the scope of HDOA to refuse and treat items that are infested more broadly to any item, not just plants, animals, and agricultural commodities, increases our overall ability to be bio secure. With increased resources, capacity, and

infrastructure HDOA can address high risk non agricultural items, materials, and vector pathways, while not having to change inspection practices.

3. Implementing these measures are of the highest priority to protect our Native ecology, which is incredibly vulnerable and fragile, due to the countless invasive species present across our Pae ‘Āina. This bills purpose is in alignment with the Hawai‘i Interagency Biosecurity plan aimed to improve our biosecurity. Our improved biosecurity is needed to protect billions of dollars in potential economic losses, as well as, ensuring the health and vitality of our ‘āina.

Mahalo for your consideration.



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

March 18, 2025

2:15 PM

Conference Room 325

In **SUPPORT** of **SB252 SD2 HD1**: RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of our over 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **STRONGLY SUPPORTS SB252 SD2 HD1**, which establishes critically needed mechanisms to protect our environmental, cultural, agricultural, recreational, and economic interests from the devastating impacts of invasive species.

Hawai'i's history has given us 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.

Unfortunately, the ongoing spread of pests like the little fire ant and coconut rhinoceros beetle is now providing us with yet another lesson on the dire need to enhance our biosecurity strategies, and to ensure that key agencies like the Department of Agriculture are able to fulfill their critical role in the all-hands-on-deck fight against invasive species.

This bill offers a critical opportunity to address major gaps in our biosecurity framework that have left our islands increasingly vulnerable to invasive pests. The common-sense prohibitions on the import or intrastate sale, barter, or donation of items infested with invasive species would make such activities illegal without rulemaking actions or orders by the Department of Agriculture - processes that have taken years if not decades in the past.



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

This bill's clarification of the Department's inspection and quarantine authorities would also physically and legally facilitate its ability to enforce these prohibitions – just as many, many other jurisdictions have done, including the federal government, to safeguard their interests from the wide-ranging impacts of invasive species.

Accordingly, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i respectfully urges the Committee to **PASS** SB252 SD2 HD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.



Hawai'i Forest Industry Association

7192 Kalaniana'ole Hwy
Suite A-143A, #249
Honolulu, HI 96825
Phone: 808/933/9411
Email: hfia@hawaiiiforest.org

Date: 03/10/25

TO: JHA Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe and JHA Committee Members

FROM: Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA)

SUBJECT: Testimony in Support of SB252 SD2 HD1 Relating to Invasive Species

Dear Chair Tarnas, vice Chair Poepoe and JHA Committee Members,

On behalf of the Directors of the Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA), this testimony is in support of SB252 SD2 HD1 Relating to Invasive Species.

The Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA) supports expanding the Department of Agriculture's authority to conduct investigations, inspections and clarify penalties to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species in the state.

Considering that Hawaii is known as the "endangered species capital of the world" due to the damaging effects of invasive species on our unique biodiversity, implementing stronger inspection practices of incoming nursery stock, trees, grafts, cuttings, seeds, roots etc. is logical. As the bill states, federal law allows the United States Department of Agriculture to inspect persons, baggage, cargo and other articles departing from Hawaii to the U.S. mainland in order to protect against the spread of pests from Hawaii. Considering Hawaii's unique susceptibility to invasive species, we should be implementing equally vigilant inspections and practices for incoming persons, baggage, cargo and articles.

Monitoring for and protecting against invasive pests helps to protect our agricultural land, our forested land, our ranch and pasture lands, and the economies tied to all three. Protecting our islands and resources against further outbreaks of invasive species is a responsibility we have to the future generations who will rely on those resources. For these reasons HFIA hopes that you will support SB252 SD2 HD1.

Mahalo,

Guy Cellier, President
Hawai'i Forest Industry Association

HFIA's mission is to promote healthy and productive forests and a sustainable forest industry through management, education, planning, information exchange, and advocacy. HFIA has over 130 members including woodworkers, landowners, sawyers, foundations, foresters, growers, educators, environmentalists, architects, millers, ranchers, and others interested in HFIA's mission and goals.

HFIA Board of Directors

Officers: President Guy Cellier, Vice President Irene Sprecher, Secretary Taylor Coons, Treasurer Wade Lee
Directors: Jeremy Campbell, Doug Gordon, Nicholas Koch, Michael Sowards, Aileen Yeh

BIISC
23 E. Kawili St.
Hilo, HI 96720
(808) 933-3340
www.biisc.org



March 17, 2025

Hearing: House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

RE: SB252 HD2

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of BIISC I would like to express our support for SB252, which would expand the Hawaii Department of Agriculture's regulatory authority to inspect any item imported into Hawaii from the continental United States or moved between the Hawaiian Islands.

The lack of authority by any agency to inspect non-agricultural imports coming from domestic ports is a huge gap in our biosecurity. This was identified as one of the highest priority actions in the 2017-2027 Hawaii Interagency Biosecurity Plan, and it is heartening to see this legislature set out to rectify that problem.



Just recently, a concerned business in Kona contacted us about a disturbing encounter: a shipment of household items from Washington state was opened and found to be infested with a population of a new, large spider species not known to be in Hawaii (likely giant house spider). They fumigated and destroyed the spiders before unloading, but this incident highlights the problem. While there is no guarantee that this container would have been inspected at the port under this proposed authority, currently there is no opportunity at all for any agency to be able to catch a new potential invasive species if the commodity being transported is non-agricultural.

SB252 would increase Hawaii's ability to intercept unwanted new species before they are released onto our landscape. Again, we applaud these efforts and thank you all for your continued focus on invasive species and biosecurity.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Franny Kinslow Brewer
Program Manager
Big Island Invasive Species Committee



House of Representatives
Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Tuesday, March 18, 2025
2:15 p.m. Conference Room 325
State Capitol

Testimony in Support of SB 252 SD2 HD1

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) is **in strong support of SB 252 SD2 HD1 Relating to Invasive Species**. This bill provides the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA) with new authorities and tools that could be used within HDOA's existing capacity to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species in Hawaii. We highlight below the language in SB 252 SD2 HD1 that, if enacted, will help secure Hawaii's biosecurity:

Pests cannot be imported on any material without proper approvals. The amendment on page 3, lines 15 through 19, prohibits pests and any material infested with a pest from being imported into Hawaii without HDOA approval. This amendment codifies and provides a statutory basis for HDOA's current practice of refusing or treating items found to be infested with insects or other pests and clarifies that this prohibition extends to any item, not just plants, animals, and agricultural commodities. **This amendment does not require HDOA to change its current inspection practices, but it is scalable depending on the resources available to HDOA, providing authority for HDOA to address the highest-risk materials and pathways.**

For example, this amendment could help HDOA prevent spotted lanternfly from entering Hawaii. The spotted lanternfly is a serious agricultural and forest pest. In addition to directly feeding on a wide range of host plants, it excretes a sticky, sugary fluid that causes sooty mold, further damaging crops and native plants. Originally from Asia, it has established populations in 18 U.S. states, and federal and state efforts are underway to prevent further spread. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) describes it as a "hitchhiking pest" that can spread by eggs laid on hard surfaces, including toys, outdoor furniture, and vehicles. (<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant-pests-diseases/slf>) The proposed amendment clarifies that the importation of any item found to carry spotted lanternfly eggs is prohibited. This is one example of many pests that move on non-agricultural items.

Authority to administratively inspect all imports. The amendment beginning on page 9, line 9 through page 12, line 7, expands HDOA's inspection authority so that it corresponds to the

language of the USDA program that authorizes inspection of passengers and material leaving Hawaii to protect other parts of the United States¹ but does not provide similar inspections to protect Hawaii from mainland pests. This provision will authorize HDOA to carry out that function for Hawaii. For instance, it clearly provides HDOA the authority to inspect high-risk material such as outdoor furniture imported from a state that is heavily infested with spotted lanternfly. **Again, this amendment does not require HDOA to make any changes to its current inspections but provides HDOA the authority to address high-risk material and pathways, as its resources permit.**²

As part of this enhanced inspection authority, the amendment removes the current “good cause” standard as the inspection standard. “Good cause” is an unusual inspection standard and is usually a burden placed on a litigant.³

Removing the “good cause” standard and clarifying that HDOA’s inspection authority is limited to “administrative” inspections and violators may receive only a civil fine are safeguards to protect the public and avoid constitutional challenges requiring a showing of probable cause. As drafted, HDOA’s inspection would be permissible under the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Hawaii as they are “part of a general regulatory scheme, done in furtherance of administrative goals rather than to security evidence of a crime.”⁴ Here, the administrative goal is to prevent the introduction or spread of pests and violators are not subject to criminal penalties.

Prohibition on sale of pests and pest-infested items and authority to require treatment. The amendments made by section 5, beginning on page 18, line 6, through page 19, line 5, set out a prohibition on selling plants and any other material that is infested with a pest or that is itself a pest. This language will protect consumers who unknowingly purchase merchandise that is infested with a pest and bring it back to their homes and communities. These amendments also include language that clearly states that HDOA is not responsible for the costs of

¹ See section 10811 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 ([7 U.S.C. 8307](#) note).

² Hawaii would not be alone in adopting a State authority to inspect all incoming material. For example, California maintains plant quarantine inspection stations to inspect “all conveyances which might carry plants or other things which are, or are liable to be, infested or infected with any pest” along roads in California and a “program for the inspection of conveyances entering California through airport and maritime facilities to prevent the introduction into, or the spread within, this state of pests. (Cal. Food & Agric. Code §§ 5341 and 5350) See also https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/plant/PE/ExteriorExclusion/borders_faq.html

³ As the Hawaii Supreme Court noted in Eckard Brandes, Inc. v. Dep’t of Lab. & Indus. Rels., 146 Haw. 354, 363 (2020), as corrected (Apr. 27, 2020): “Black’s Law Dictionary now defines ‘good cause’ as ‘[a] legally sufficient reason. Good cause is often the burden placed on a litigant (usu. by court rule or order) to show why a request should be granted or an action excused. Accordingly, we clarify that ‘good cause’ is ‘a sufficient reason, depending upon the circumstances of the individual case, and that a finding of its existence lies largely in the discretion of the court.’” (internal citations omitted)

⁴ See United States v. Bulacan, 156 F.3d 963, 967 (9th Cir. 1998), as amended (Nov. 16, 1998). See also State v. Hanson, 97 Haw. 71, 76-77 (2001), as amended (Nov. 7, 2001).

quarantine or treatment of pest-infested merchandise within the State, mirroring the language used for items imported into the State that are found to be pest-infested in section 150A-5(8), Hawaii Revised Statutes.

HDOA provided testimony that these amendments are not necessary because these authorities and protections are already included in the recently adopted amendments to chapter 4-72, Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR). The amendments were removed in earlier versions of SB 252 but were restored in SB 252 SD2 HD1 by the Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems (AGR). We are grateful for the restored language as the amendments made by SB 252 SD2 HD1 are different and more protective than the authority set out in the chapter 4-72 amendments. Section 4-72-5, HAR, included in the chapter 4-72 amendments, allows the Chief of the Plant Quarantine Branch to stop the sale of and/or quarantine pest-infested merchandise on a **case-by-case basis**. As amended by AGR, **SB 252 SD2 HD1 would prohibit the sale of pest-infested merchandise in general**. It lets nurseries and other retailers know that they are responsible for not selling pest-infested items. At this time, there is no statute or rule that places that responsibility on sellers. Further, clarifying in statute that HDOA is not responsible for the costs of quarantine or treatment will protect HDOA and the State from legal challenges.

Mahalo for the opportunity to support SB252 SD2 HD1 and for your consideration of our testimony.

Aloha,



Christy Martin
CGAPS Program Manager



Stephanie Easley
CGAPS Legal Fellow



MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 325
Tuesday, March 18, 2025 AT 2:15 P.M.

To The Honorable David A. Tarnas, Chair
The Honorable Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

SUPPORT SB252 SD2 HD1 RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

The Maui Chamber of Commerce **SUPPORTS SB252 SD2 HD1** which clarifies that the importation of any item or material infested or infected with an insect or other animal, disease, or other pest is prohibited; authorizes the Department of Agriculture to inspect any item imported or moved into the State from another part of the continental United States or between the Hawaiian Islands; prohibits the sale of merchandise that a seller knows is infested or infected with a pest; and authorizes the Department of Agriculture to compel the quarantine, treatment, or destruction of certain materials.

The Maui Chamber of Commerce recognizes that one of the significant challenges facing our island state is the transfer of invasive species through inter-island plant sales. Moreover, the importation of plants that evade agricultural inspections further amplifies the risk of these invasive species establishing themselves in new areas, where existing mitigation measures may prove ineffective. These species can profoundly impact our environment, economy, and social well-being. Therefore, we support this bill that clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the Department of Agriculture in their important inspection process.

For these reasons, we **SUPPORT SB252 SD2 HD1**.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.

SB-252-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/18/2025 9:39:15 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/18/2025 2:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eileen Hilton	Windward Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

MARCH 18, 2025

BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

RE: SB 252

Chair Kahaloa, Vice Chair Kusch and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 252. The Windward Coalition strongly supports SB 252 for the following reasons:

- **Enhanced Pest Control Measures:** SB 252 strengthens Hawai'i's ability to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species by prohibiting the importation of items infested with pests and authorizing inspections of imported goods.
- **Quarantine and Treatment Authority:** The bill grants the Department of Agriculture authority to enforce quarantine, treatment, or destruction of infested materials, ensuring swift action against invasive threats.
- **Penalties for Non-Compliance:** Clear penalties for violations create accountability among importers and sellers.
- **Protection of Native Ecosystems:** The bill supports efforts to preserve Hawai'i's unique biodiversity and agricultural resources.

The Windward Coalition strongly supports passage of SB 252 as a proactive approach to managing invasive species but recognises some logistical and economic trade-offs including potential trade delays, higher costs to the businesses affected and implementation challenges.

**Mahalo for considering our submission,
Eileen Hilton MD**

President, Windward Coalition

SB-252-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2025 4:58:36 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/18/2025 2:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marcia Kemble	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Greetings Committee Chair and Committee Members,

I strongly support SB252 SD2 HD1. Invasive species like the little fire ant and coconut rhinoceros beetle are already causing serious harm to Hawai‘i’s environment, agriculture, and communities, and we must make major transformative shifts in our biosecurity strategy to mitigate the impacts of these and other invasive pests on our islands and future generations.

Two of my siblings have already had infestations of little fire ants on their property – one in Kailua and one in Makiki Heights, and they have also been found on other properties not far at all from my house, so I am very alarmed about this.

This bill will make clear that the import and intrastate sale or gift of invasive species-infested items is prohibited — without requiring the Department of Agriculture to pass rules or issue orders, processes that could take months, years, or decades. It will also remove the Department’s ability to use the lack of inspection or quarantine authorities as an excuse for inaction, as has been the case with the little fire ant, coconut rhinoceros beetle, and too many other known pests.

SB252 is essential to safeguarding our environment, food security, and way of life. I urge you to PASS SB252.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Marcia Kemble

Makiki

SB-252-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2025 5:22:13 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/18/2025 2:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Denise Boisvert	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this important bill. The red carpet that has been rolled out to invasive pests and diseases for decades needs to be rolled up once and the "welcome committee" disbanded, once and for all!

SB-252-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2025 5:36:36 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/18/2025 2:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kim Jorgensen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The clarification proposed in this bill is obviously and desperately needed!

SB-252-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/16/2025 8:36:03 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/18/2025 2:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathryn Takakuwa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee of Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

My name is Kathi Takakuwa and I live in Waikalua, Kāneʻohe. I strongly support SB252 which would clarify importation prohibitions, authorize DOA to inspect any article imported or moved into the state or island, and prohibit the exchange of infested materials.

As you are aware, invasive species are a threat to our native ecosystems, our agricultural industry, our watersheds and water security, and our quality of life. Preventing invasives from entering our state is a critical, sensible, and manageable control point because there are a limited number of points of entry into our state and between islands.

I also support increased funding for DOA to fulfill these increased inspection kuleana. According to reporting by Hawaiʻi Public Radio, currently “less than 0.5% of the state’s overall operating budget goes to the DOA.” DOA plays an important role in restoring and sustaining the health of our ‘āina. Please provide the funding needed for proper staffing, equipment, training and the creation of additional policies.

Increasing DOA’s capacity and effectiveness is a worthwhile investment. Rigorous inspections will in turn support the efforts of other collaborating agencies, i.e. DLNR’s efforts to eradicate existing invasives and restore native ecosystems. Together, the agencies of our state government will contribute to the health of our ‘āina and subsequently, our ability to continue to live in our Hawaiʻi.

Mahalo nui.
Sincerely,

Kathi Takakuwa

SB-252-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/16/2025 11:49:53 AM

Testimony for JHA on 3/18/2025 2:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kevin Faccenda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this measure to expand the power to HDOA to inspect and restrict importation of material containing invasive species. Research has shown that the best way to manage invasive species is to prevent their establishment in the first place (an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure) and this legislation will do exactly that. Invasive species such as the little fire ant are an existential threat to agriculture and hawaiian native ecosystems and measures such as this which can prevent their spread are essential for protecting our islands.

Thank you,

Kevin Faccenda, PhD.

SB-252-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/16/2025 7:27:59 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/18/2025 2:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Uilani Naipo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I **strongly support SB252.**

Invasive species have caused serious damage to our environment and agriculture. Little fire ants has spread so extensively, cause harm to our animals, children and us home farmers. We are discouraged from growing and caring for our gardens, harvesting of lauhala and picking foliage for lei making because of little fire ant infestations. Our niu and native plants are also in jeopardy due to invasive species.

Please **PASS SB252.**

SB-252-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/17/2025 9:25:05 PM

Testimony for JHA on 3/18/2025 2:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
M. Leilani DeMello	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

KĀKO‘O au i kēia pila! I SUPPORT this bill.

Mahalo,

M. Leilani DeMello

‘Ōla‘a, Puna, Hawai‘i