

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 House Committee on
FINANCE

Monday, February 24, 2025
2:00 PM

State Capitol, VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE, Conference Room 308

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 1220, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

House Bill 1220, House Draft 1 proposes to appropriate funds to support the efforts of the Division of Aquatic Resources of the Department of Land and Natural Resources in the removal of the invasive majano anemone from Kāne'ōhe Bay. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) strongly supports this bill.**

Background

Kāne'ōhe Bay is a unique and ecologically important marine environment that hosts a diverse range of marine species, including endemic coral species such as the finger coral (*Porites compressa*). These coral reefs not only support marine biodiversity but also provide essential services, including fish habitats, coastal protection, and recreational opportunities for our residents and visitors.

Unfortunately, the majano anemone (*Anemonia majano*), an invasive species, has recently been detected in Kāne'ōhe Bay, specifically in areas that were previously impacted by non-native coral introductions. First introduced as a hitchhiker on these non-native corals, the majano anemone has spread aggressively, blanketing an area of approximately 950 square yards. This invasive species poses a severe threat to the delicate coral reef ecosystem of Kāne'ōhe Bay.

The majano anemone is known for its rapid growth and ability to outcompete native coral species for space and resources. If left unchecked, the majano anemone could decimate coral

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
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RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
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CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE
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

populations in Kāneʻohe Bay, destabilize the ecosystem, and negatively impact marine life, including the fish populations that depend on healthy reefs.

Proposed Multi-Phase Removal Strategy

The Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) has developed a scientifically informed, multi-phase strategy for the removal of the majano anemone. This plan includes chemical control methods, as well as physical removal and smothering techniques that are tailored to the biology of the species. By using a combination of methods, we aim to effectively remove the majano anemone, reduce its spread, and restore the health of Kāneʻohe Bay's coral reef ecosystem.

In addition to the technical aspects of removal, DAR will prioritize ongoing monitoring and data analysis to track the progress of our efforts and adjust strategies as needed. It is also essential that we engage the community and stakeholders in this process, and we will dedicate resources to outreach and education efforts to raise awareness about the invasive species and the importance of reef conservation.

Funding Support for Continued Efforts

The appropriation of \$200,000 for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 will provide the necessary funding to carry out this important work. These funds will support personnel costs, materials, equipment, data management, analysis, and outreach efforts. Continued support for these activities will help ensure that we can address the majano anemone infestation in a comprehensive and sustained manner, preventing further damage to Kāneʻohe Bay's coral reefs.

Conclusion

The removal of the majano anemone from Kāneʻohe Bay is a crucial step in protecting the health of Hawai'i's coral reefs and the biodiversity they support. The Division of Aquatic Resources is committed to ensuring the success of this initiative and appreciates the legislature's consideration of this bill to fund these efforts. We urge you to support this measure, as it will play an integral role in preserving the marine ecosystems that are essential to Hawai'i's environment, economy, and communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA
Deputy to the Chairperson

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TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2025
2:00 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 308

HOUSE BILL NO. 1220, HD1
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 1220, HD1 that appropriates funds to support the efforts of the Division of Aquatic Resources in the removal of the majano anemone from Kaneohe Bay. The Department of Agriculture (Department) supports this bill.

Biosecurity programs to prevent invasive species from entering the state and programs to control and mitigate the pests that are in-state is an interagency effort. The Department appreciates and supports the work of the Department of Land and Natural Resources to improve the quality of life and for the people of Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



JOSH GREEN
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

1151 PUNCHBOWL ST, #325
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MARY ALICE EVANS
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TOURISM

DEXTER KISHIDA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

**Chelsea Arnott, HISC Coordinator on behalf of
HISC Co-Chair Sharon Hurd and Co-Chair Dawn N.S. Chang**

**House Committee on
FINANCE**

**Monday, February 24, 2025
2:00 PM**

State Capitol, Conference Room 308, and Via Videoconference

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 1220, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

House Bill 1220 House Draft 1 appropriates funds for equipment for the Division of Aquatic Resources in the removal of the majano anemone from Kaneohe Bay. **The Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (Council) supports this measure.**

In early 2023, a biologist performing survey work at Ford Island, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam discovered several sea anemones that were later identified as *Anemonia majano* or majano anemone. It is likely the anemone was an aquarium release and subsequently the same species was confirmed in Kaneohe Bay by biologists with the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR).

This anemone species is not native to Hawai'i and can quickly reproduce and spread, smothering reefs and displacing native species. This anemone can also readily detach and reattach to new reef structures. Right now, the infestation of majano anemone is relatively contained and could be eradicated with increased resources and effort. Currently, DAR has no dedicated resources for this work because it is a newly detected species.

The Council recognizes the importance of protecting Hawai'i's marine ecosystems and the importance biosecurity plays for preventing new marine invasive species incursions. The Council provides funding to support research into detection and management of marine invasive species and supports the planner position under the Ballast Water and Hull Fouling coordinator.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.



House of Representatives
Committee on Finance
Monday, February 24, 2025
2:00 PM Conference Room 308 & Videoconference
State Capitol

Testimony in Support of HB 1220 HD1

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) is **in support of HB 1220 HD1**, which appropriates funds to support the removal of the majano anemone from Kaneohe Bay.

Appropriating funds for fiscal year 2025-2026 and for fiscal year 2026-2027 to support the removal of majano anemone from Kaneohe Bay is an essential investment of State funds. The majano anemone is an invasive species with the potential to significantly impact coral reefs in Kaneohe Bay and beyond if it is not controlled. This species can live in sand, rubble, within coral branches, and it can also overgrow, smother, and kill coral. It easily fragments, with each fragment able to grow into a new anemone. This anemone can also move locations by detaching its “foot”, moving to a new open space, and reattaching. Many marine aquarium hobbyists refer to this as an invasive species and recommend against keeping it due to its invasive habit.

The multi-phase removal strategy proposed by the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Aquatic Resources, could control this invasive species in Kaneohe Bay. Without this targeted control, the anemone will spread to other coral reef areas in the State and control actions will become more expensive and less effective.

Mahalo for the opportunity to support HB1220 HD1.

Aloha,

Christy Martin
CGAPS Program Manager

Stephanie Easley
CGAPS Legal Fellow

HB-1220-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 8:01:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/24/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Bohlen	Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT!



P.O. Box 1662
Honolulu, HI 96806

Mālama Learning Center is a non-profit organization based in West Oahu. Our mission is to inspire communities to care for Hawai'i by perpetuating conservation, culture, and sustainability through education.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1220 HD1

House Committee on Finance

Hearing Date: February 24, 2025 at 2:00 pm
Conference Room 308 & Via Videoconference

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

Aloha Kākou. My name is Pauline Sato and I serve as the Executive Director of the Mālama Learning Center, a private, non-profit environmental education organization serving schools and communities in West O'ahu. I am submitting written testimony in strong support of HB 1220 HD1, which would appropriate moneys to the Department of Land and Natural Resource (DLNR) to support its efforts to remove the Majano anemone from Kāne'ōhe Bay.

The Majano anemone, *Anemonia manjano*, is an invasive species that is considered a major pest to our coral reefs. It releases microscopic spores into the water that allows it to reproduce rapidly and invade the reefs, causing stress and imbalance. It has been found in Kāne'ōhe Bay (suspected from disposal of a private individual's aquarium) and must be controlled with immediacy so that it does not threaten reefs throughout the island chain.

Aside from the source of the invasive Majano anemone, we have no time to waste to eradicate this species from our waters as well as to educate the public about the dangers of releasing aquarium species.

I am born and raised in Hawai'i and have dedicated my career to conservation because I love our lands and waters to no end. Sadly, I see how our government has been consistently underinvesting in our 'āina. Particularly in this time of severe federal government funding reductions, we must do what we can locally to protect the resources that our communities need to live sustainably.

I urge your committee to pass HB 1220 HD1 and thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pauline Sato", written in a cursive style.

HB-1220-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 10:19:30 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/24/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, The Windward Coalition supports funding an attempt to eradicate invasive Majano Anemones in Kaneohe Bay as this could:

- Stop/slow rapidly the spread that overwhelms and smothers native coral.
- Prevent spreading to other reefs and areas outside Kaneohe Bay.
- help maintain the bay's native species.
- Preserve biodiversity.

However, our concerns include:

- The proposed eradication method involving tarps and chlorine could kill native species along with the Majano Anemone.
- The process would require:
 - Significant time, effort, and financial resources due to the rugged and layered nature of the affected area would require large expenditures.
 - Have uncertain long-term effectiveness.
 - Have unintended consequences such as:
 - the proliferation of other invasive species
 - negative effects on native species that may have adapted to the presence of the Majano Anemone.
 - No clear plan for use of natural predators as an ongoing method of population control.
 - The DNLR with all its other responsibilities and limited personnel does not have the manpower or expertise to effectively and timely complete the project.

Given the complexity of the situation, careful consideration of these factors is crucial in deciding how to proceed with the costly eradication efforts.

Mahalo,

Eileen Hilton, President

Windward Coalition

HB-1220-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 12:38:30 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/24/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I support this measure that will fund the removal of invasive species that threaten our cultural and natural marine resources of Kāneʻohe.

HB-1220-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 1:57:52 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/24/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the Committee on Finance,

My name is Kathi Takakuwa and I live in Waikalua, Kāneʻohe. I strongly support HB1220, which would appropriate funds to support the efforts of the Division of Aquatic Resources of the Department of Land and Natural Resources in the removal of the majano anemone from Kāneʻohe Bay.

The majano anemone is an invasive species which most likely was introduced to Kāneʻohe Bay by people illegally planting coral which is in itself a separate issue to contend with. Currently, the anemone inhabits a 950 square yard area of the reef and because it is introduced, has no natural predator. If not eradicated, it could imperil the bay's coral ecosystem by smothering native corals and could spread to other reefs.

A plan for eradication using chlorine has been developed by researchers at UH's Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology. It is critical that funding be appropriated immediately so that the anemone can be eliminated before it becomes too extensive to manage.

I deeply resent the abuse of our ʻāina for short-sighted monetary profit that is at the root of this problem. Please allocate the funding necessary to protect our reefs from this invasive anemone.

Mahalo nui.
Sincerely,

Kathi Takakuwa

HB-1220-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 5:04:50 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/24/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caitlin Kryss	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of HB1220 to provide critical funding to remove and hopefully eradicate the majano anemone in Kāneʻohe Bay, and potentially prevent further invasion of this incredibly destructive invasive pest. Our coral reefs are experiencing a barrage of threats, and mitigating and removing this invasive species before it spreads beyond Kāneʻohe Bay is the best use of funding in this situation given the timeliness. It will allow managers to remove it early, which will save tens of thousands of dollars, if not millions, down the road. Our coral reefs are some of our most precious habitats and provide not only essential functions like carbon sequestration and oxygen production, and habitat for thousands of other species, but they also bring in millions of dollars in ecotourism in Hawaii. DLNR, DAR has a clear, well-researched plan to remove the pest, and they need your support.

Please support HB 1220.

Mahalo nui loa,

Caitlin Kryss, ʻOlaʻa, Mountain View, Hawaiʻi Island

HB-1220-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 7:29:01 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/24/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
K Houston	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB1220, which would allocate funds to assist the Division of Aquatic Resources in removing the invasive majano anemone from Kāne‘ohe Bay. This species, likely introduced through illegal coral planting, currently occupies a 950-square-yard area of the reef and lacks natural predators. If left unchecked, it threatens the bay’s coral ecosystem by smothering native corals and could spread to other reefs. Researchers at UH's Hawai‘i Institute of Marine Biology have developed a chlorine-based eradication plan. Immediate funding is crucial to eliminate the anemone before it becomes unmanageable. Please prioritize protecting our reefs from this harmful invasive species.