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## A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE COCONUT RHINOCEROS BEETLE PROGRAM.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that *Oryctes rhinoceros*,  
2 or the coconut rhinoceros beetle, can have devastating impacts  
3 on palm species that are foundational to the State's  
4 agricultural economy, cultural heritage, and ecosystems. Native  
5 to Southeast Asia, adult coconut rhinoceros beetles feed on  
6 emerging palm fronds, causing damage that can often be severe  
7 enough to kill the plant. The coconut rhinoceros beetle was  
8 first detected in the State in 2013, and is currently confined  
9 to Oahu. However, beetle detections have increased in the last  
10 six months, and have spread across the island.

11           CRB response is a coordinated partnership with the  
12 University of Hawaii, United States Department of Agriculture,  
13 Hawaii department of agriculture, and other key organizations.  
14 CRB response provides tools for community members to minimize  
15 their risk and trains businesses to become compliant with  
16 department of agriculture requirements to minimize the risk of  
17 spreading coconut rhinoceros beetles and other invasive pests.



1 Compliance agreements are signed by businesses that work with  
2 coconut rhinoceros beetle host palms and materials to continue  
3 operating with decreased risk of causing new coconut rhinoceros  
4 beetle infestations.

5 CRB response has a field crew that services more than three  
6 thousand coconut rhinoceros beetle traps across Oahu, and a  
7 canine crew trained to sniff out coconut rhinoceros beetles.  
8 CRB response responds to public reports, assesses trees for  
9 damage, searches for breeding sites, and applies treatments.  
10 The University of Hawaii at Manoa lab investigates new control  
11 methods and best practices. A data team analyzes information  
12 from traps, mulch surveys, and tree damage. An outreach team  
13 provides information to the public and professionals while  
14 supporting community response efforts.

15 The legislature finds that funding for core services  
16 includes staff vital to the research, response, education, and  
17 investigative work needed to maintain a successful and effective  
18 program. Funding for CRB response has primarily been through  
19 federal partners, with the United States Department of  
20 Agriculture and United States Navy being the largest  
21 contributors. However, allocating stable year-to-year funding



1 to the University of Hawaii to support key positions within the  
2 core CRB response program would assist in leveraging additional  
3 federal funds.

4 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to support  
5 existing CRB response positions and activities.

6 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
7 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$720,000 or so much  
8 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and the  
9 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year  
10 2024-2025 as follows:

- 11 (1) \$65,000 for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)  
12 permanent junior researcher to serve as the deputy  
13 incident commander under department of agriculture  
14 leadership;
- 15 (2) \$50,000 for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)  
16 permanent administrative professional/technician for  
17 program administration and maintenance;
- 18 (3) \$55,000 for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)  
19 permanent data collection, management, and GIS  
20 analysis supervisor;



- 1 (4) \$150,000 for three full-time equivalent (3.0 FTE)  
2 permanent data technicians;
- 3 (5) \$110,000 for two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE)  
4 permanent outreach and education specialists;
- 5 (6) \$50,000 for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE)  
6 permanent canine supervisor for the CRB response  
7 canine program;
- 8 (7) \$90,000 for two full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE)  
9 permanent canine handlers for the CRB response canine  
10 program;
- 11 (8) \$50,000 for administration and other related costs for  
12 the CRB response canine program, including kenneling  
13 and veterinary support; and
- 14 (9) \$100,000 for supplies for maintaining research  
15 colonies and potential biological control agents.

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

18 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.

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INTRODUCED BY: *Lisa Merten*  
JAN 24 2023



# H.B. NO. 1149

**Report Title:**

Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle; Prevention; UH; Appropriation

**Description:**

Appropriates funds for positions and activities related to coconut rhinoceros beetle infestation control.

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