

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

636

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 14, 2025

RE: H.B. No. 1237
H.D. 1

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, to which was referred H.B. No. 1237 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO BIOSECURITY,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to appropriate funds to the Department of Agriculture for agricultural biosecurity and the prevention, detection, and control of invasive species in Maui County.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Agriculture; Hawaii Invasive Species Council; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species; Carol Kwan Consulting, LLC; and Maui Chamber of Commerce. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the University of Hawai'i System.

Your Committee finds that the absence of state agricultural inspectors and quarantine facilities on Molokai and Lanai leaves these islands highly vulnerable to the introduction and spread of invasive species. With high-risk pathways such as imported plants, mulch, and used farm equipment, invasive pests like little fire ants and coconut rhinoceros beetles pose a serious threat to local agriculture, ecosystems, and cultural resources. This measure addresses these vulnerabilities by appropriating funds to

2025-1843 HB1237 HD1 HSCR HMSO



establish necessary biosecurity infrastructure in Maui County, including inspections, invasive species committees, and control measures.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the appropriations and allocations to unspecified amounts;
- (2) Specifying that the appropriation for the Department of Agriculture to prevent and control little fire ant and coconut rhinoceros beetle infestations in Maui County includes the hiring of general professionals for biosecurity efforts, rather than Plant Quarantine Inspector I positions on Molokai and Lanai;
- (3) Clarifying that the appropriated funds to combat the spread of coqui frogs in Maui County shall be allocated to the University of Hawaii Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit, rather than directly to the Maui Invasive Species Committee;
- (4) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (5) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

Your Committee respectfully requests your Committee on Finance, should it deliberate on this measure, to consider an appropriation amount of \$3,000,000 for the Department of Agriculture to prevent and control little fire ant and coconut rhinoceros beetle infestations in Maui County; and \$2,250,000 to combat the spread of coqui frogs in Maui County, including \$2,000,000 to the University of Hawaii Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit for the Maui Invasive Species Committee or its Molokai subcommittees and \$250,000 to establish a Lanai Invasive Species Committee.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1237, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass



Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1237, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Finance.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Agriculture & Food
Systems,


KIRSTIN KAHALOA, Chair



State of Hawaii
House of Representatives
The Thirty-third Legislature

HSCR 636

Record of Votes of the Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

Bill/Resolution No.: HB 1237	Committee Referral: AGR, FIN	Date: 2/12/25		
<input type="checkbox"/> The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on the measure.				
The recommendation is to: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended (as is) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments (HD) <input type="checkbox"/> Hold <input type="checkbox"/> Pass short form bill with HD to recommit for future public hearing (recommit)				
AGR Members	Ayes	Ayes (WR)	Nays	Excused
1. KAHALOA, Kirstin (C)	X			
2. KUSCH, Matthias (VC)	X			
3. LOWEN, Nicole E.	X			
4. PERRUSO, Amy A.	X			
5. QUINLAN, Sean	X			
6. WARD, Gene				X
TOTAL (6)	5			1
The recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted If joint referral, _____ did not support recommendation.				
Vice Chair's or designee's signature: _____				
Distribution: Original (White) – Committee Duplicate (Yellow) – Chief Clerk's Office Duplicate (Pink) – HMSO				