

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKUAĀINA 'Ō HAWAII'
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

DIVISION OF FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
1151 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 325
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
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HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

Testimony of
DAWN N. S. CHANG
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on
AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

Friday, March 14, 2025
10:00 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325 and Via Videoconference

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 140, SENATE DRAFT 2
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Senate Bill 140, Senate Draft 2 prohibits the importation, transportation, or sale of firewood within the State, except for firewood that is certified and labeled as heat-treated. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) strongly supports this measure and offers the following comments.**

The Department works to protect Hawai'i's forest resources, native biodiversity, and cultural heritage from invasive pests that enter the state through imported goods. Preventing the introduction of forest pests such as the Erythrina gall wasp and fungal diseases like Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death and myrtle rust is much more cost-effective than managing them once they have become established.

Untreated firewood remains an unregulated, high-risk pathway for invasive forest pests, including boring beetles and the diseases they can vector. Most states have adopted legal requirements for standardized heat treatments to prevent the movement of forest pests spread by infested firewood, but Hawai'i remains unprotected. Most imported wood is not inspected by the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture's (HDOA) Plant Quarantine Branch despite incidences of infested firewood being detected and confiscated. Requiring heat treatment of all firewood entering the state from other states will help prevent pests from going undetected and becoming established in Hawai'i.

The Department has been working with HDOA to establish administrative rules to implement a requirement that imported firewood be heat treated. However, the HDOA has been unable to initiate the rulemaking process, and the draft firewood rule has been stalled for years. The proposal to require heat treatment of all firewood entering the state has included outreach to vendors and local firewood producers and found no opposition. Establishing these regulations by statute would eliminate this invasive pathway immediately and help protect Hawai'i's forest resources.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in 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 AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

**FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 2025
10:00 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 325 & VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**SENATE BILL NO. 140, SD2
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 140 SD2, relating to invasive species. The bill prohibits the importation of firewood into the State, except for firewood that meets certain standards; requires firewood that is imported into the State from another state to be certified and labeled as heat-treated; and establishes certain exemptions.

The Department agrees with the intent of this measure and offers comments. While this measure does restrict the importation of firewood into the State, the Department believes that the language contained in this bill should be effectuated via the Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR), rather than through Statute. HAR 4-70 already lists the requirements for importation of other plants, including non-propagative plant parts, and believes that this is the appropriate place for firewood-related provisions.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



JOSH GREEN
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

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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 AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

Friday, March 14, 2025
10:00AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325 and Via Videoconference

In consideration of SENATE BILL 140 SENATE DRAFT 2 RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Senate Bill 140 Senate Draft 2 prohibits the importation of firewood into the State, except for firewood that meets certain standards, requires firewood that is imported into the State from another state to be certified and labeled as heat-treated and establishes certain exemptions. **The Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (Council) supports this measure.**

Hawai'i is home to a vast array of endemic species—plants and animals found nowhere else in the world. Many of these species are already under threat from invasive pests and diseases, and untreated firewood poses a direct risk to the delicate balance of our ecosystems. When firewood is transported into Hawai'i from other regions without proper treatment, it often carries with it invasive insects, fungi, and pathogens that can devastate our native forests, wildlife, and agriculture.

In addition to the environmental threats, the importation of untreated firewood also puts a strain on the resources of the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture, which already faces challenges in managing and monitoring the vast number of agricultural commodities that are imported into the State. By managing the importation of untreated firewood, we can significantly reduce the burden on our state's resources and allow our agricultural and environmental agencies to focus on other critical priorities.

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

RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

JOSIAH K. NISHITA
Managing Director



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COUNTY OF MAUI
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WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
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TO: Representative Kirstin Kahaloa, Chair
Representative Matthias Kusch, Vice Chair
Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

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

DATE: March 13, 2025

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT OF SB140 SD2, RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of this important measure. The act prohibits the importation of firewood into the State, except for firewood that meets certain standards. Requires firewood that is imported into the State from another state to be certified and labeled as heat-treated. Establishes certain exemptions.

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 and thrive here in Hawai'i.
2. Furthermore, due to an incredible lack of overall biosecurity at all levels, we are losing the fight in protecting our native environment. Nearly every native species in Hawai'i is either endangered, critically endangered, or extinct. Simply put, without these native species and a healthy environment, our ability to inhabit these islands become less likely for our future generations.
3. Our Hawaiian environment is incredibly vulnerable and fragile. Across Hawai'i, generally, there is less than 10% of our fully intact native forests that are alive today. This marginal amount of fully intact native forests are under constant pressure from new and established invasive species. There are many issues in our overall biosecurity systems, but this bill aims to address one of the many gaps.

Mahalo for your consideration.



House of Representatives
Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems
Friday, March 14, 2025
10:00 a.m. Conference Room 325
State Capitol

Testimony in Support of SB 140 SD2

Aloha Chair Kahaloe, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) is **in support of SB 140 SD2** *Relating to Invasive Species*. This bill protects Hawaii’s forests by requiring firewood to be heat-treated or otherwise approved by the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA) prior to importation from other states.

The movement of firewood is a “high-risk pathway for spreading non-native and native forest pests in the United States.”¹ Firewood can be low-quality wood that includes bark, making it easy for forest pests and diseases to remain alive in the harvested wood. The Nature Conservancy’s Don’t Move Firewood Program has identified dozens of harmful pests that can move on or in firewood, such as the Asian Longhorned Beetle, Emerald Ash Borer, and diseases of trees.²

The importation of firewood from the continental U.S. into Hawaii is currently under-regulated as a pathway. As noted in SB 140 SD2, prior to 2021, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) required much of the firewood moving between states to be heat treated to slow the spread of the Emerald Ash Borer. However, that requirement was removed in 2021 as the pest became widespread in the continental United States.³ Many states have already enacted heat treatment requirements similar to those proposed in SB 140 SD2. Not requiring these same treatments leaves Hawaii in the vulnerable position as one of the remaining states that will take untreated firewood. Unsuspecting consumers can purchase pest-infested firewood, inadvertently bringing pests to their homes and communities. Requiring heat treatment prior to importation into Hawaii is a sensible, low-cost, and high-reward solution. The proposed requirements in this bill do not apply to firewood harvested in Hawaii.

¹ https://www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/firewood_pathway_assessment.pdf, p.1

² <https://www.dontmovefirewood.org/invasive-species/>

³ 85 FedReg 81085 (2020); <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/12/15/2020-26734/removal-of-emerald-ash-borer-domestic-quarantine-regulations>

SB 140 SD2 contains language prohibiting the sale or transportation of untreated imported firewood. Much of the firewood imported into Hawaii from other states is not presented to the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA) for inspection, as required under current law. Instead, the firewood is imported in containers with various items headed for hardware or big box stores. Once this firewood is on store shelves, HDOA can no longer enforce an importation requirement, leaving them without enforcement options. Prohibiting the sale or transportation of untreated imported firewood allows HDOA to remove untreated firewood from store shelves after importation - the last regulatory opportunity that HDOA would have to protect consumers and prevent potential infestations.

Thank you for the opportunity to support SB 140 SD2.

Aloha,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "C. Martin".

Christy Martin
CGAPS Program Manager

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "P.S. Easley".

Stephanie Easley
CGAPS Legal Fellow



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: 03/12/25

TO: AGR Chair Kahaloe, Vice Chair Kusch and AGR Committee Members

FROM: Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA)

SUBJECT: Testimony in Support of SB140 SD2 Relating to Invasive Species

Dear Chair Kahaloe, Vice Chair Kusch and AGR Committee Members,

On behalf of the Directors of the Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA), this testimony is in support of SB140 SD2 Relating to Invasive Species.

The Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA) supports establishing heat-treatment requirements for imported firewood and prohibiting the importation of firewood that has not met these requirements and been properly labeled and certified.

Monitoring for and proactively protecting against invasive pests and pathogens protects our agricultural land, forested land and forest resources, our ranch and pasture lands, as well as the economies tied to all three. Additionally, being proactive in protecting our islands and resources against introduction of more invasive pests and pathogens is a responsibility we have to the future generations of Hawaii who will rely on the aforementioned resources.

The HFIA hopes that you will support SB140 SD2 Relating to Invasive Species.

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

SB-140-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 1:14:13 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/14/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chuck Chimera	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair Matthias Kusch, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to express my strong support for SB140 SD2, which seeks to protect Hawaii’s native forests, agricultural industries, and natural resources by regulating the importation, transportation, and sale of firewood within the state.

Hawaii’s unique ecosystems are particularly vulnerable to invasive species, which can cause irreversible damage to our environment, economy, and way of life. Firewood, often harvested from low-quality or dead trees, can harbor destructive pests and pathogens, such as the emerald ash borer, Asian longhorned beetle, laurel wilt pathogen, and oak wilt. These invasive species pose a significant threat to our native forests, agricultural crops, and horticultural industries.

SB140 SD2 addresses this critical biosecurity gap by requiring that all firewood imported into Hawaii or sold within the state be heat-treated and properly labeled, with certain exemptions. This measure aligns with the National Plant Board’s model language and follows the lead of other states, such as Florida, New York, Tennessee, and Utah, which have already implemented similar regulations to protect their ecosystems.

By adopting these standards, Hawaii can prevent the introduction and spread of invasive pests and diseases, safeguarding our environment and agricultural industries for future generations. The bill’s provisions for exemptions and permits also ensure flexibility for specific circumstances while maintaining strong protections against biosecurity risks.

I urge the Committee to pass SB140 SD2 and support its swift enactment. Protecting Hawaii’s natural resources from invasive species is not only an environmental imperative but also a critical step in preserving our state’s economic and cultural well-being.

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

Sincerely,
Chuck Chimera

Honokaa

SB-140-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 6:17:12 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/14/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

In strong support of this measure.