

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

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621  
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DAWN N.S. CHANG  
CHAIRPERSON  
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FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

Testimony of  
DAWN N. S. CHANG  
Chairperson

House Committee on  
WATER & LAND

Thursday, March 20, 2025  
9:30 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 411 and Via Videoconference

In consideration of  
SENATE BILL 746, SENATE DRAFT 2, HOUSE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Senate Bill 746, Senate Draft 2, House Draft 1 establishes and appropriates money for a two-year pilot program under the Department of Land and Natural Resources that incentivizes community members to collect and submit the coconut rhinoceros beetle and its larvae for compensation. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports the intent of this bill and offers the following comments.**

Coconut rhinoceros beetles (CRB) feed on the crowns of coconut palms and other palm species, including Hawai'i's native loulou palms. CRB creates large holes in the tree trunk, where adults feed and burrow. This weakens the tree and can eventually kill it. This is a significant pest across the Pacific Region, and in 2023, it expanded from O'ahu to Kaua'i, Maui, and Hawai'i islands. While community engagement is valuable in addressing invasive species, past bounty programs in other regions (e.g., cane toads in Australia, stoats and opossums in New Zealand) have shown limited success in reducing pest populations. While bounties can be a helpful educational tool, they require oversight beyond the Department's current capacity.

The Department emphasizes the need for integrated pest management (IPM) strategies, such as biological control, which uses natural predators or parasitoids. Biological control is the one tool that can manage widespread infestations of CRB and help to prevent the spread to un-infested islands, and it is urgently needed. One of the significant obstacles to biological control work in Hawai'i is the lack of proper containment facilities. HISC is working with federal partners to secure funding to purchase modular containment units to support CRB biocontrol research at the University of Hawai'i (UH).

Additional funding is needed to leverage the federal request. The estimated total for two modular containment units is \$3 million. It would house the UH CRB biocontrol research already begun with the *Oryctes rhinoceros nudivirus* (*Oryctes rhinoceros nudivirus* has been used to control CRB in parts of Asia and the Pacific) and support research into other potential biocontrol agents. The Department continues to support the CRB Response Team based at UH and island-based working groups to protect threatened resources.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
Governor

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
Lt. Governor



State of Hawai'i  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
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**SHARON HURD**  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

**DEAN M. MATSUKAWA**  
Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD**  
**CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND**

**THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 2025**  
**9:30 AM**  
**CONFERENCE ROOM 411 & VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**SENATE BILL NO. 746, SD2, HD 1**  
**RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 746, SD2, HD1 relating to invasive species, which establishes and appropriates moneys for a two-year pilot program under the Department of Land and Natural Resources that incentivizes community members to collect and submit the coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB) and its larvae for compensation.

The Department of Agriculture (Department) supports the intent of this measure but has concerns regarding how the compensation aspect would be implemented. The Department agrees that a program such as this one should only be used in areas where the target pest is established but not completely widespread and finding additional ways to incorporate communities into ongoing control efforts are extremely important, particularly in long-term management and educational standpoints. Depending on how this program is structured and implemented, it could be part of a comprehensive strategy towards achieving the highest goal regarding any pest, eradication. The Department believes that "compensation", depending on the form and amount, could invigorate community action. However, the Department is concerned that this measure



does not preclude or define possible monetization for submitting CRB and should a monetary-based structure such as a bounty be used, it could result in the opposite effect on CRB infestations that this measure seeks to remedy.

The biggest challenge for a program such as this one is to find a form of compensation that will greatly incentivize participation but also ensures the compensation structure is not abused. When dealing with a pest, when any form of compensation is tied to it, particularly a monetary one, there is an increased likelihood that individuals seeking to exploit the system would breed and also possibly spread the pest for financial gain, thereby exacerbating the problem the program was designed to deal with. This issue is further exacerbated when dealing with arthropod pests as they are generally not difficult to breed, and often reproduce quickly, and in high numbers. Alternatively, if the compensation is minimized, there is generally a significant decrease in community participation, rendering that part of the program ineffective. On page 3, beginning on line 11, while the measure does include language that seeks to address the issue of intentional breeding of CRB, there is no way for the Department of Land and Natural Resources to make any determination that submitted CRB are “bred by human intervention”. One possible way to address this would be to limit compensation to time-limited events only in a specified area, but this would lessen landscape level impacts, particularly for individual community members.

The Department would be completely supportive of this measure if the compensation structure for community members was clearly defined in such a way as to prevent abuse or was removed from the measure. However, the Department believes that consultation with the Hawaii Invasive Species Council could alleviate some of the aforementioned concerns and is in strong support of the other CRB-related aspects of this measure regarding community engagement, workshops, and training events; digital and social media campaigns; media advertising; and educational materials and outreach.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



JOSH GREEN  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



## HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

1151 PUNCHBOWL ST, #325  
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### VOTING MEMBERS

DAWN CHANG  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND & NATURAL  
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MARY ALICE EVANS  
BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT &  
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 WATER & LAND

Thursday, March 20, 2025  
9:30 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 411 and Via Videoconference

### In consideration of SENATE BILL 746 SENATE DRAFT 2 HOUSE DRAFT 1 RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Senate Bill 746 Senate Draft 2 House Draft 1 establishes and appropriates moneys for a two-year pilot program under the Department of Land and Natural Resources that incentivizes community members to collect and submit the coconut rhinoceros beetle and its larvae for compensation. **The Hawaii Invasive Species Council (Council) supports the intent and provides comments on this measure.**

The coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB) is a highly destructive pest that has caused significant damage to our coconut palms, as well as other trees, throughout Pacific Region and Hawaii. Invasive species like the CRB require coordinated, scientifically informed efforts that consider the broader ecosystem, pest biology, and long-term eradication strategies. Once a pest becomes widespread in an area, it is necessary for the community to become engaged in the management.

This measure is a creative method to engage and educate the community while addressing some of the infestations of CRB especially in areas where there are already community programs and organizations in place. The Council shares the same concerns of the Departments of Land & Natural Resources and Agriculture that the structure and compensation method for community members would need to be clearly defined to prevent abuse or be removed from the measure altogether. Including amendments to geographically restrict where the bounty program applies does help to narrow the scope of the program and alleviate the concern of individuals that would take advantage of the program, but further discernment and specifications on how compensation is provided, duration of the program/bounty, and potentially specifying that the bounty only applies to the City and County of Honolulu still needs to be addressed.

The Council continues to support and prioritize ongoing efforts to prevent and manage CRB and community awareness and engagement are an integral part of those efforts, but there are only two dedicated outreach specialists that focus solely on CRB for the entire State with the

University of Hawaii CRB Response Team. Enhancing outreach efforts and developing a community engagement program would require increased capacity and a dedicated team with clear objectives that Department of Land & Natural Resources does not currently have and there is no appropriation included with this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.

**SB-746-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2025 10:34:14 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/20/2025 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

MARCH 18 2025

RE: House Bill 1220

Dear Chairman,

The Windward Coalition supports funding HB 1220 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.

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.
  - 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.
  - The DNLR with all its other responsibilities and limited personnel does not have the manpower or expertise to effectively and timely complete the project.

The Windward Coalition supports passage of this measure with consideration of the complexity of the situation and the cost of eradication efforts.

Mahalo,  
Eileen Hilton MD



President, Windward Coalition



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March 20, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND

**TESTIMONY ON SB 746, SD2, HD1**  
**RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

Conference Room 411 & Videoconference  
9:30 AM

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

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

**The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports SB 746, SD1, HD1**, which establishes a two-year community-based incentive eradication pilot program in certain areas under the Department of Land and Natural Resources to eradicate the coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB) in Hawai'i. This measure is a critical step in engaging the public in the fight against one of the most destructive invasive species threatening Hawai'i's agriculture, native ecosystems, and cultural landscapes.

The coconut rhinoceros beetle was first detected in Hawai'i in 2013 at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam and has since spread across O'ahu and to other islands, including Kaua'i, Maui, and Hawai'i Island. CRB infestations cause significant damage to coconut, royal, date, and fan palms, weakening and eventually killing these trees. The beetle's impact extends beyond palms, as it also poses a threat to crops such as Pandanus species, banana, pineapple, and sugarcane. The economic consequences include increased costs for pest control, tree replacement, and lost revenue from agriculture, landscaping, and tourism.

SB 746, SD2, HD1 creates a community-driven approach to CRB eradication by providing compensation to residents, farmers, landscape professionals, and other stakeholders who collect and submit beetles and larvae to the Department of Land and Natural Resources. This incentive-based strategy has been successfully used in other invasive species control programs, mobilizing community participation while complementing existing government-led eradication efforts.

Key components of this program include:

- Direct compensation to community members for beetle and larvae collection
- Program administration and oversight by the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council
- Community engagement, workshops, and training events to educate the public on CRB identification and control
- Digital and social media campaigns to raise awareness and encourage participation
- Media advertising and outreach to increase public involvement

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau has long advocated for increased resources to combat the spread of invasive species, including the coconut rhinoceros beetle. Controlling CRB infestations requires a multi-faceted approach that includes biological controls, pest control tools, trapping, green waste management, and public engagement. By integrating a community-based response into existing control efforts, SB 746, SD2, HD1 will enhance early detection, containment, and eradication of this highly destructive pest.

We urge the committee to pass SB 746, SD2, HD1 to expand CRB control efforts and protect Hawai'i's agriculture, environment, and cultural resources from further damage.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



# Environmental Caucus of The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

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March 19, 2025

**To:** Chair Mark J. Hashem, Vice Chair Rachele F. Lamosao, and Members of the Committee on Water & Land

**Date:** Thursday, March 20, 2025 **Time:** 9:30 a.m.

**Place:** Via Videoconference and Conference Room 411

**Subject:** Testimony in Strong Support of SB746 SD2 HD1- Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle Eradication Pilot Program

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

The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii strongly supports SB746 SD2 HD1, which establishes a two-year coconut rhinoceros beetle eradication pilot program under the Department of Land and Natural Resources. This program incentivizes community members to collect and submit coconut rhinoceros beetles and their larvae for compensation, a forward-thinking initiative that engages communities in the fight against invasive species.

**Key Points in Support:**

**1. Addressing the Threat of Coconut Rhinoceros Beetles:**

- The coconut rhinoceros beetle poses a significant threat to Hawaii's coconut trees, palm trees, and other vegetation, which are vital components of the islands' ecosystems, agriculture, and cultural heritage.
- Without effective intervention, the beetle can cause widespread damage, leading to economic losses and long-term ecological impacts.

**2. Community Engagement and Collaboration:**

- This program incentivizes local community members to participate actively in eradication efforts, fostering a sense of ownership and collaboration in tackling invasive species.
- By involving the community, the program enhances public awareness and strengthens local capacities to detect and manage invasive species.

### **3. Supporting Sustainability:**

- Protecting Hawaii's unique ecosystems from invasive species like the coconut rhinoceros beetle aligns with the state's commitment to sustainability and environmental preservation.
- This pilot program can serve as a model for future collaborative invasive species management efforts, promoting innovative approaches to safeguarding Hawaii's biodiversity.

### **4. The Importance of Reporting and Monitoring:**

- Requiring a report to the Legislature ensures transparency, accountability, and the opportunity to assess the pilot program's success.
- This report will also provide valuable insights and data that can inform future eradication strategies.

SB746 SD2 HD1 represents a proactive and practical approach to addressing the threat of invasive species in Hawaii. By incentivizing community participation and allocating resources for eradication efforts, this measure strengthens Hawaii's ability to protect its natural resources and agricultural industries.

We commend the Legislature for its leadership in combating invasive species and urge the passage of SB746 SD2 HD1 to ensure the protection of Hawaii's environment and economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this measure.

Respectfully submitted,

Melodie Aduja and Alan Burdick  
Co-Chairs Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii

**SB-746-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/17/2025 9:04:25 PM

Testimony for WAL on 3/20/2025 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Greetings Committee Chair and Committee Members,

Please support SB 746 SD2! I am extremely worried about coconut rhinoceros beetles getting so established that they will be impossible to eradicate. A truly alarming number have already been found and our coconut and other palm trees are dying!!

Thank you.

Marcia Kemble

Makiki

**SB-746-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2025 10:00:32 AM

Testimony for WAL on 3/20/2025 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Douglas Perrine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The CRB is a grave threat to our state. I support SB746 to fund eradication efforts.