

---

# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO BIOSECURITY.

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

1       SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the absence of a  
2 state agricultural inspector and quarantine facility on Molokai  
3 leaves the island vulnerable to the introduction and spread of  
4 invasive species. The legislature further finds that invasive  
5 pests have and will continue to arrive via imported goods,  
6 posing a significant risk to Molokai's unique ecosystems and  
7 economy. High-risk pathways, such as the importation of plants,  
8 planting materials, mulch, used vehicles, and farm equipment,  
9 further exacerbate this threat. Notably, invasive species such  
10 as the little fire ant and coconut rhinoceros beetle have not  
11 yet been detected on Molokai.

12       The legislature also finds that there is no state  
13 agricultural inspector or island invasive species committee on  
14 Lanai. However, community agricultural production on the island  
15 is vibrant and growing. To date, Lanai has remained free of  
16 many invasive species that are causing devastation across the  
17 State, including little fire ants, coconut rhinoceros beetles,



1 and coqui frogs. The legislature additionally finds that like  
2 Molokai, Lanai and the State as a whole would benefit immensely  
3 from an increased presence by the department of agriculture to  
4 provide inspections and other support for agricultural producers  
5 and the creation of an island invasive species committee.

6 Furthermore, the legislature finds that on Maui, urgent  
7 action and resources are required to combat the increasing  
8 threats of little fire ants, coconut rhinoceros beetles, and  
9 coqui frogs. To effectively educate the public, implement rapid  
10 responses, and carry out timely interventions and control  
11 measures, sustained funding is essential. With consistent  
12 financial support, it remains possible to reduce the economic,  
13 environmental, and social effects of invasive species by  
14 appropriating funds to public agencies and private organizations  
15 to aggressively treat and monitor little fire ant and coqui frog  
16 infestations and conduct rigorous monitoring for coconut  
17 rhinoceros beetle sightings.

18 Moreover, the legislature finds that investing in  
19 prevention and early detection of invasive species is essential  
20 because it can potentially save tens of millions of dollars in  
21 long-term damage and irrecoverable losses. For instance,



1 invasive species like the coconut rhinoceros beetle threaten  
2 native and indigenous plants critical to food security and  
3 cultural continuity, such as kalo, lo'ulu, mai'a (banana), hala,  
4 and ko (sugarcane).

5 In addition, the legislature finds that as an island state,  
6 Hawaii has the unique advantage of being able to prevent the  
7 spread of invasive species through isolation, allowing  
8 non-infected islands to serve as critical repositories for  
9 native plants and species threatened by infestations elsewhere.  
10 This proactive approach to biosecurity will help safeguard  
11 Hawaii's environment, economy, and culture.

12 Therefore, the purpose of this Act is to address critical  
13 gaps in Maui county's agricultural biosecurity and support the  
14 prevention, detection, and control of invasive species in Maui  
15 county by appropriating funds for these purposes.

16 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
17 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
18 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and  
19 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal  
20 year 2026-2027 for the department of agriculture to prevent and  
21 control little fire ant and coconut rhinoceros beetle



1 infestations in Maui county, including through the hiring of  
2 general professionals for biosecurity efforts.

3 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department  
4 of agriculture for the purposes of this Act.

5 SECTION 3. (a) There is appropriated out of the general  
6 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
7 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and  
8 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal  
9 year 2026-2027 to combat the spread of coqui frogs in Maui  
10 county; provided that the funding shall be allocated in the  
11 following manner:

12 (1) \$ to the university of Hawaii Pacific  
13 cooperative studies unit for the Maui invasive species  
14 committee or its Molokai subcommittees to support  
15 education, early detection, response, and control  
16 efforts regarding coqui frogs; provided further that  
17 this funding may include providing equipment and  
18 supplies to residents to treat coqui frog infestations  
19 on their properties; and



1           (2)   \$                   to establish a Lanai invasive species  
2                   committee as a sub-branch of the Maui invasive species  
3                   committee.

4           (b)   The department of agriculture may make grants to, or  
5   enter into contracts with, the university of Hawaii Pacific  
6   cooperative studies unit for the Maui invasive species committee  
7   or its Molokai subcommittees to accomplish the purposes of this  
8   section.

9           (c)   The sums appropriated shall be expended by the  
10   department of agriculture for the purposes of this Act.

11          SECTION 4.   This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



**Report Title:**

DOA; Maui County; Biosecurity; Invasive Species; Appropriations

**Description:**

Appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture for agricultural biosecurity and the prevention, detection, and control of invasive species in Maui County. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD1)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

