

**DAVID Y. IGE**  
Governor

**JOSH GREEN**  
Lt. Governor



**PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER**  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

**MORRIS M. ATTA**  
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
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**TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE**

**JANUARY 31, 2020  
9:00 A.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 312**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1849  
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

Chairperson Creagan and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 1849, relating to invasive species. The bill appropriates funds from the general fund for fiscal year 2020-2021 to be expended by the University of Hawai'i for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) extension agent position for the Hawai'i Ant Lab (HAL) West Hawai'i office. The Department supports this measure.

Invasive species are a primary threat to Hawai'i's agriculture and economy. Funding for control of invasive species, such as little fire ants, is critical to ensure that appropriate responses can be implemented and maintained which mitigate negative impacts on the environment and economy. The Department concurs with the need for additional HAL staff in West Hawai'i because the lone Hal staff person is becoming overwhelmed with a rapidly increasing number of requests for assistance as little fire ant expands its range on that side of the island. An additional agent in West Hawai'i will greatly bolster HAL's ability to respond in a timely manner to resident's concerns about little fire ants and to conduct outreach to the general population.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF  
HAWAII



SUZANNE D. CASE  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

ROBERT K. MASUDA  
FIRST DEPUTY

M. KALEO MANUEL  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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Testimony of  
SUZANNE D. CASE  
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on  
AGRICULTURE

Friday, January 31, 2020  
9:00 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 312

In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 1849  
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

House Bill 1849 proposes to establish add a full-time position for the Hawaii Ant Lab (HAL) in the lab's West Hawaii Office. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Supplemental Budget request.**

The Department is the administrative host of the Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC), which is a funder and partner of the HAL. The HAL's work with little fire ant is critical to the protection of Hawaii's natural resources, agriculture, and to the health and lifestyle of Hawaii's residents and visitors. On Hawaii Island alone the little fire ant is estimated to cause roughly \$200M in damages annually.

The Department notes that the HAL is a project of the University of Hawaii Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit (UH PCSU), which is part of the College of Natural Sciences and not the College of Tropical Agriculture and Humane Resources as described in the measure. With the exception of one permanent position provided by the legislature in 2018, all HAL positions are temporary, soft-funded positions managed by the Research Corporation of the University of Hawaii (RCUH). Providing long-term stability to critical projects managed by UH PCSU is part of the Hawaii Interagency Biosecurity Plan. Postborder Process action 1.5 describes the need to institutionalize these projects with permanent positions and Postborder Technology, Infrastructure, and Staffing action 1.11 describes the need to provide funding for these positions

as part of the UH budget. This measure would address both of these Biosecurity Plan action items.

The Department notes that, in addition to the demand for additional HAL personnel on Hawaii Island, there are currently nine active treatment areas on the island of Oahu. There are currently two HAL positions based on Oahu. The Department suggests this measure could be amended to include an additional position for the island of Oahu as well as the position for Hawaii Island.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

Harry Kim  
Mayor



Roy Takemoto  
Managing Director

Barbara J. Kossow  
Deputy Managing Director

## County of Hawai'i Office of the Mayor

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January 29, 2020

Representative Richard P. Creagan, Chair  
Representative Lynn DeCoite, Vice Chair  
Committee on Agriculture

Dear Chair Creagan, Vice Chair De Coite, and Committee Members:

**RE: HB 1849, Relating to Invasive Species**

The little fire ant, for those who have experienced it, is a horrific species. It causes great pain in humans and has been reported to cause blindness in pets and horses. It has proliferated so widely that some have given up on eradication, and may even be ready to throw in the towel on control efforts. That is not acceptable. We must fight back, and that is why I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of HB 1849.

The Hawai'i Ant Lab of West Hawai'i is just one tool at our disposal, but it is my understanding that it has done very good work in spite of limited staff. Adding an extension agent is warranted and would be tremendously valuable.

More broadly, I ask that you please provide as much funding for the State's anti-LFA initiatives as you can justify in your budget recommendations for the coming fiscal year. In that way, government efforts to control LFA, and even eliminate them from Hawai'i, can be maximized. The threat is great and warrants your much-appreciated attention.

Respectfully Submitted,

Harry Kim  
MAYOR



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January 31, 2020

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

**TESTIMONY ON HB 1849**  
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Room 312  
9:00 AM

Aloha Chair Creagan, Vice-Chair DeCoite, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,900 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

**The Hawaii Farm Bureau supports HB 1922**, which appropriates funds for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) extension agent position for the Hawaii Ant Lab West Hawaii Office

Invasive species have become one of the most challenging problems impacting Hawaii. Many invasive species are damaging Hawaii's environment and the state's economy. Agriculture has a vested interest in this matter. Agriculture is one of the major casualties when invasive species are introduced. Every year, numerous new pests are introduced into the State, such as the coqui frog, coffee berry borer, axis deer, macadamia felted coccid, little fire ant, coconut rhinoceros beetle, small hive beetle, and varroa mite, to name a few.

HFB recognizes the harm that the little fire ant has caused to farms, businesses, and the quality of life of those affected by this pest. We agree that continued measures must be undertaken to stop its spread to other areas.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this important subject.

**HB-1849**

Submitted on: 1/29/2020 10:11:23 AM

Testimony for AGR on 1/31/2020 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Nancy Redfeather	Ka Ohana O Na Pua	Support	No

Comments:

It is curious that we need to come to the Legislature for every needed position for Invastive Species work.

LFA is indeed our biggest economic threat on Hawai'i Island. LFA also forever changes our quality of life, food security opportunities, agricultural economy, and tourism. Our communities need as much help as you can give us and this would be a start. Most people I talk to don't know what to do when they find LFA on their property.

We have GREATLY underestimated the threat of this species, whose mission is to dominate all other species including us. Mahalo for your support.

**HB-1849**

Submitted on: 1/29/2020 2:05:28 PM

Testimony for AGR on 1/31/2020 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Nicole K Galase	Hawaii Cattlemen's Council	Support	No

Comments:

**HB-1849**

Submitted on: 1/30/2020 11:10:21 AM

Testimony for AGR on 1/31/2020 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Springer Kaye	Big Island Invasive Species Committee	Support	No

Comments:



**HB-1849**

Submitted on: 1/29/2020 9:30:01 AM

Testimony for AGR on 1/31/2020 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

More staff is needed to combat the spread of Little Fire Ant on O'ahu. Please pass HB1849.

Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.

**HB-1849**

Submitted on: 1/29/2020 4:14:01 PM

Testimony for AGR on 1/31/2020 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Andrea Quinn	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Honorable Committee Members:

Please support HB1849. Invasive species are a major cause in the decline of native species.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my testimony.

Andrea Quinn

Kihei

**HB-1849**

Submitted on: 1/30/2020 3:36:51 PM

Testimony for AGR on 1/31/2020 9:00:00 AM

**LATE**

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Megan Blazak	Individual	Support	No

Comments: