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GOVERNOR OF
HAWAII



SUZANNE D. CASE
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LAND
STATE PARKS

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson

Before the Senate Committees on
HIGHER EDUCATION
and
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Tuesday, February 11, 2020
3:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 2737
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Senate Bill 2737 proposes to establish 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 HAL is a project of the University of Hawaii Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit (UH PCSU). 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.

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 SENATE COMMITTEES ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND ON
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

**FEBRUARY 11, 2020
3:00 P.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 229**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2737
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

Chairperson Kim, Chairperson Gabbard, and Members of the Committees:

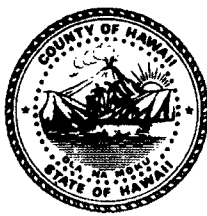
Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 2737, relating to invasive species. The bill appropriates funds from the general fund for fiscal year 2020-2021 to be expended by the University of Hawai'i for one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) extension agent position for the Hawai'i Ant Lab (HAL) 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.

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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February 4, 2020

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair
Committee on Higher Education

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Russell E. Ruderman, Vice Chair
Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Hawai'i State Legislature

Dear Chairs Kim and Gabbard, Vice-Chairs Kidani and Ruderman, and Committee members:

RE: SB 2737 Relating to Invasive Species

The little fire ant (LFA), 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 SB 2737.

The Hawaii Ant Lab 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 Hawaii, can be maximized. The threat is great and warrants your much-appreciated attention.

Respectfully Submitted,


Harry Kim
MAYOR



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February 11, 2020

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

TESTIMONY ON SB 2737
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Room 229
3:00 PM

Aloha Chairs Kim and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Kidani and Ruderman, and Members of the Committees:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 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 SB 2737, 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.

SB-2737

Submitted on: 2/3/2020 8:48:33 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/11/2020 3:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

As a native Hawaiian conservationist, I support SB2737. This will increase the number of staff at Hawai'i's Ant Lab. The work of HAL is extremely important for Early Detection and Rapid Response of Little Fire Ant infestations throughout the islands. Please pass SB2737.

Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.

SB-2737

Submitted on: 2/8/2020 12:56:50 PM

Testimony for HRE on 2/11/2020 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Andrea Quinn	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Honorable Committee Members:

Please support SB2737.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my testimony.

Andrea Quinn

Kihe