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CRAIG K. HIRAI  
DIRECTOR

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HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND  
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE**  
P.O. BOX 150  
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ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE  
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND  
MANAGEMENT DIVISION  
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION  
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

**WRITTEN ONLY**  
TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI  
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS  
ON  
HOUSE BILL NO. 1179

**February 8, 2022**  
**2:00 p.m.**  
**Room 325 and Videoconference**

**RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

House Bill No. 1179: establishes a pilot program within the Aina Mauna Legacy Program of the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) to remove and harvest gorse from Mauna Kea and develop it as a marketable product to expand economic opportunities for native Hawaiians; requires DHHL to submit reports to the Legislature; appropriates an unspecified amount of general funds for FY 22 for the pilot program; and takes effect on July 1, 2021 and will be repealed on June 30, 2025.

B&F notes that, with respect to the general fund appropriation in this bill, the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act requires that states receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II funds and Governor's Emergency Education Relief II funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and

- Higher education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

Further, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires that states receiving ARP ESSER funds must maintain state support for:

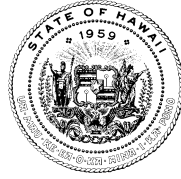
- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

The U.S. Department of Education has issued rules governing how these maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements are to be administered. B&F will be working with the money committees of the Legislature to ensure that the State of Hawai'i complies with these ESSER MOE requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR  
STATE OF HAWAII

JOSH GREEN  
LT. GOVERNOR  
STATE OF HAWAII



WILLIAM J. AILA, JR.  
CHAIRMAN  
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION

TYLER I. GOMES  
DEPUTY TO THE CHAIRMAN

**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS**

P. O. BOX 1879  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96805

TESTIMONY OF WILLIAM J. AILA, JR, CHAIRMAN  
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION  
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS  
HEARING ON FEBRUARY 8, 2022 AT 2:00PM VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

**HB 1179 RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

February 8, 2022

Aloha Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Matayoshi, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 1179. This bill establishes a pilot program within the Aina Mauna legacy program of the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) to remove and harvest gorse from Mauna Kea and develop it as a marketable product to expand economic opportunities for native Hawaiians. The Department supports the intent of this measure as long as it doesn't affect the priorities identified in the Governor's Supplemental Budget request.

Gorse is a highly invasive thorny shrub that creates impenetrable thickets which can be over 12 feet tall. DHHL Aina Mauna lands contain Hawaii's largest infestation of gorse, covering over 10,000 acres which prohibits homesteading and other land uses. The ecology and characteristics of this invasive species, which include abundant and early seed production, is easily spread and an over 30-year seedbank life, make containment, removal and long-term control of gorse very difficult and costly. The importance of eliminating this plant cannot be overstated. DHHL spends a great amount of time, effort and resources to control gorse annually and continues to look for the most feasible, efficient and effective long term solution to the gorse infestation on the Aina Mauna lands of Humuula and Piihonua. Any assistance in this effort is greatly appreciated.

The Hawaii Gorse Task Force Report prepared for the 31<sup>st</sup> Legislature 2021 Regular Session by DHHL in response to Senate Resolution 69, Senate Draft 1 identifies Short Term and Long Term Gorse Solutions, Proposed Legislation, and Additional Recommendations that can be viewed here: <https://dttl.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Hawaii-Gorse-Task-Force-Report-to-the-2021-Leg.pdf>.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

**HB-1179**

Submitted on: 2/4/2022 8:43:54 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/8/2022 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
jaerick medeiros-garcia	makahanaloa fishing association (nonprofit 501c3)	Support	No

Comments:

IN SUPPORT OF HB1179

As President of Makahanaloa fishing association we are community driven out doors men and women. As an organization we are made of 140 members that's been Malama Aina shoreline and shoreline access and hunting trails at the lease 4 times a year. We are aware that this invasive gorse is a problem and has gotten worse in the last few years and we are happy to see a bill like HB1179 that will help with funding to eradicate this invasive plant and then used to make feed for livestock. It's brilliant. Māhala to all policy makers that's in support of this bill. Thank you.

MAKAHANALOA FISHING ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT/CHAIRMAN

JAERICK MEDEIROS-GARCIA

**HB-1179**

Submitted on: 2/5/2022 10:23:01 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/8/2022 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Micah Hiramoto	Akamai Working Group, Inc	Support	No

Comments:

Hello my name is Micah Hiramoto and I am the President of the Akamai Working Group. We are located on the east side of the Big Island. The Akamai Working Group is involved in food security for the state of Hawaii by focusing on re-establishing the pork industry. As the President of the Akamai Working Group I am in support of bill 1179 regarding invasive species. By harvesting and processing gorse, I foresee a great opportunity for supplying feed not only for the pork industry but for the poultry, sheep, goat and cattle industry.

**HB-1179**

Submitted on: 2/6/2022 8:07:34 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/8/2022 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Alexia Akbay	Symbrosia Inc	Support	Yes

Comments:

Aloha e Representative Nakashima and the committee,

My name is Alexia Akbay, I am an environmental chemist, aloha 'āina advocate, and business owner in Kailua-Kona, Hawa'i. I support HB1179 as a collaborator of Hui Ho'olako for Hawaiian Initiatives (HUI), which seeks to pilot the use of gorse to generate an animal feed to support local hog, cattle, and fish farmers in increasing self-sufficiency from mainland feed providers while supporting the state and local sustainability goals.

HUI's purpose is to identify, evaluate, recommend, implement, and guide, manage, coordinate, or oversee activities that promote relief to the poor, distressed or underprivileged, lessen neighborhood tensions, combat community deterioration, and perpetuate Native Hawaiian quality of life and values that dignify life for local Hawai'i residents. As a collaborator within the feed industry, producing algae as a feed ingredient for local markets, Symbrosia is committed to assisting in whatever ways helpful to HUI. This includes seeking additional funding sources (state and federal) to ensure pilot success and contributing to the innovation/feasibility of gorse-based projects.

HUI's president, Pomai Freitas, has done an amazing job at amassing experts, community, and partner organizations around this pilot project. I firmly believe in the success of HUI and other organizations to create pathways for Native Hawaiian entrepreneurship through the use of gorse. HB1179 would solidify this opportunity and create new models for invasive species management.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration.

With gratitude,

Alexia Akbay

CEO, Symbrosia Inc

**HB-1179**

Submitted on: 2/7/2022 3:00:54 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/8/2022 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Leomi L Bergknut	Bergknut Consulting Svc	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha to the Chair and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on House Bill 1179 which supports the removal and harvesting of the invasive species, Gorse, on Mauna Kea. Currently, gorse can be seen driving on the Daniel K Inouye Highway where in the future it will cross it onto the Mauna Loa side of the highway. HB1179 would allow the Aina Mauna Legacy Program of the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands to provide further stewardship in protecting our native lands. It would also allow a Pilot Project to continue in making gorse a part of a marketable product and providing Native Hawaiians further opportunities toward self sufficiency with this project, having an opportunity to protect native lands and habitats, and to increase possible leasehold lands for beneficiaries.

Furthermore, a project within the Hawaii Island community has shown that gorse can be combined with other natural products (macadamia nuts, algae) to make animal feed which is needed by our livestock farmers and ranchers. Gorse can also be an asset for our communities with food sustainability, food security and economic development on Hawaii Island and the State of Hawaii. This Bill, HB1179, would greatly support all of us as we look at the beauty of Mauna Kea.that needs to be protected.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my support of this House Bill, HB1179 and I look forward to hearing that it has been approved for funding.

Malama Pono,

Leomi L Bergknut

**HB-1179**

Submitted on: 2/7/2022 10:32:32 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/8/2022 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Pomai Freitas	Hui Ho'olako for Hawaiian initiatives	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Pomai Freitas I am the President of Hui Ho'olako for Hawaiian Initiatives. We stand fully in support of of HB1179 gorse is something that needs to be addressed ASAP.

MAHALO FOOT AKING THIS BILL INTO CONSIDERATION



**HB-1179**

Submitted on: 2/7/2022 12:58:38 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/8/2022 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Byron YOGI	Earth Balancing, Inc. / Akamai Working Group, LLC	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Everyone...

Thank You-All for receiving our Testimony...

I am testifying for the many Farm Producers, Consumers and beneficiaries of Locally Produced Products...

On behalf of **Earth Balancing, Inc**, and the **Akamai Working Group**,

We would like to voice our strong support of this **Gorse Initiative**...

Both groups are dedicated to strenghtening our Pork and Livestock Industries...

*Feed Issues* are a Major impediment to the successful development of

any, I emphasize, any Livestock Industry, here in Hawaii...Price, Supply, and non-Tropical based Feed Products, among them...

This Gorse Initiative is your major opportunity *to shorten* the Food Supply Chain, which is growing longer by the day...

Success in intiatives such as these, will serve as a path to self-sufficiency as Hawaii once experienced, a long time ago...

Again, we offer our urgent, Full Support of **HB1179, the Gorse Initiative**...

as the first step in removing the many Feed Impediments...

Maaa-halo for giving us your valuable time and attention...

Byron Yogi

Executive Director

Earth Balancing, Inc (NP) and

Akamai Working Group, (LLC)

[A Farm Producers Cooperative]

**HB-1179**

Submitted on: 2/6/2022 9:31:33 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/8/2022 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Jane Horike	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

February 6, 2022

Representative Mark Nakashima, Chair

Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

Hawaii State Capital, Room 325

Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Nakashima and Members of the Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs Committee,

Re: HB 1179 Realting to Invasive Species

Thank you for this opportunity to support HB 1179 that will provide funding for the removal of gorse a difficult to eradicate invasive species that has become detrimental and wide spread on Mauna Kea because of its aggressive seed dispersal system.

An economic opportunity will be created by the utilization of harvested gorse in a research project to make feed for animals from local agricultural products. Initially feed will be made for pigs by combining gorse with waste algae from Cyanotech and macadamia nut hulls. Then feed for cattle will be worked on utilizing a special algae grown by Symbrosia at NELHA. Requests have been received for chicken, fish and feed for other aquatic animals to be developed.

A group of Korean natural pig farms are working to increase production for a market on Oahu. These farmers have been faced with a huge increase in the price of feed for their animals when it is available because of Covid and the 47% increase of shipping cost by Young Brothers.

This funding will assist with the removal of gorse on Mauna Kea so Department of Hawaiian Homes will be able to assigned the cleared land to native homesteaders waiting for assignments, production of animal feed from local agricultural products, and local produced feed for animals.

We appreciate your support and funding to create a sustainable economy

Jane Horike

**HB-1179**

Submitted on: 2/7/2022 11:08:57 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/8/2022 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Michael DuPonte	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support the measure of helping control invasive species on the Mauna. Anything that improves our environment will be beneficial. Turning a problem into an asset such as possible animal feed or a soil amendment that will benefit local agriculture is a no brainer. HB 1170 does that. Mahalo

**LATE**

**HB-1179**

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 11:32:02 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/8/2022 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Patrick L. Kahawaiolaa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair & members of the Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs, I am Patrick L. Kahawaiolaa a native Hawaiian pursuant to the HHCA, 1920 as amended (42 stat. 108) and I am here to SUPPORT this Bill 1179 which creates a pilot program to first find a way to eradicate an invasive species like the Gorse from our trust lands in Humuula and being innovative as a native Hawaiian business person to also turn this scourge on our lands to possibly a by-product crop to feed animals here... it is akin to turning "weeds to feed". Thank you for allowing me to share my mana'o and again ask your favorable decision on this pilot project Bill 1179... 'Owau Patrick L. Kahawaiolaa