

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

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



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

P.O. BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
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FIRST DEPUTY

DEAN D. UYENO  
ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

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ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

Testimony of  
DAWN N. S. CHANG  
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on  
FINANCE

Thursday, February 22, 2024  
1:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 308 & Via Videoconference

In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 2133 HOUSE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

House Bill 2133 House Draft 1 establishes an invasive species grant pilot program to provide grants through DOA to individuals, businesses, and organizations for the eradication of invasive species on property located in Hawai'i that is owned by the individual, business, or organization. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure.**

The Department administratively houses the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC), and DLNR's Division of Forestry and Wildlife provides program support to HISC. Since 2005, the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council has disbursed funds annually for innovative projects addressing invasive species prevention, control, outreach, and research. Only government agencies are eligible for these funds, leaving private landowners and businesses to take on the cost of controlling pests on their property themselves. Little fire ant (LFA) has been especially problematic for many landowners and businesses, especially on Hawai'i Island where this pest is widespread and creates a major challenge for workers to harvest their products and carry out daily activities.

Last November, the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council hosted the Senate Ways and Means (WAM) Committee site visit at a local banana farm on Hawai'i Island. This farm provides much of the local bananas found in Hawaii's grocery stores and spends tens of thousands of dollars per year on controlling little fire ants on their property. This is a huge cost on this farm but it's necessary so that farm workers can harvest bananas without getting covered in painful stings, the

crop remains productive, and consumers receive products free of LFA. The owner of this farm spoke to the WAM Committee and expressed the need for help. The farm is vigilant about controlling little fire ant on the property and taking on the cost, but the surrounding neighbors are not, so the farm continues to get reinfested and needs to do treatment regularly.

This measure would help support farmers and landowners who want to do the right thing but struggle to have the means to do it. The Department recommends that the Department of Agriculture develop a list of pests that this grant program would support control measures for including little fire ant, coconut rhinoceros beetle, and two-lined spittlebug.

The Department recognizes the Legislature's concern for the issue and greatly appreciates the introduction of this measure. Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.

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

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
Lt. Governor



**SHARON HURD**  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

**DEXTER KISHIDA**  
Deputy to the Chairperson

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

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2024**  
**1:00 PM**  
**CONFERENCE ROOM 308**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 2133, HD1**  
**RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2133, HD1. This bill establishes an invasive species grant pilot program to provide grants through the Department of Agriculture (Department) to individuals, businesses, and organizations for the eradication of invasive species on property located in Hawaii that is owned by the individual, business, or organization. The Department supports assisting individuals, businesses and organizations as noted in this measure and offers comments.

The Department understands that this bill addresses detections on private property and that responding to detections requires consent from the property owner. A condition for a grant pilot program would include, but not be limited to a program manager, staff conducting positive identification, recommending treatment that can be done by the individual, business or organization and advising of proper use and necessary PPE, as applicable. To do this work the department requests at minimum \$1,500,000 in staffing to execute so long it does not impact the budget priorities set forth in the Executive Budget Submittal.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.





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February 22, 2024

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**TESTIMONY ON HB 2133, HD1**  
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Conference Room 308 & Videoconference  
1:00 PM

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Kitagawa, 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 HB 2133, HD1**, which establishes an invasive species grant pilot program to provide grants through DOA to individuals, businesses, and organizations for the eradication of invasive species on property located in Hawaii that is owned by the individual, business, or organization.

Invasive species have become one of the most devastating problems impacting Hawai'i. Many invasive species are damaging Hawai'i's environment and economy. Agriculture has a vested interest in this matter. Agriculture suffers when invasive species are introduced. Every year, numerous new pests are introduced into the State, such as the coqui frog, coffee berry borer, macadamia felted coccid, little fire ant, coconut rhinoceros beetle, small hive beetle, and varroa mite, to name a few. Control measures take time to develop, leaving farmers and ranchers at risk. This is not consistent with the State's goal of increasing self-sufficiency and sustainability.

Proper funding is critical for the protection of Hawai'i's environment and economy and the health and lifestyle of its people through the support of invasive species prevention, control, research, outreach, and planning. This measure will provide necessary resources to farmers and ranchers to help control and hopefully eradicate invasive species in Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.



# Food+ Policy Internship 2024

[food@purplemaia.org](mailto:food@purplemaia.org)

February 20, 2024

To: Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and the House Committee on Finance

Subject: **Support of HB2133 HD1: Invasive Species Grant Program**

Aloha,

Food+Policy is in **support of bill HB2133 HD1**, to establish a grant program for invasive species removal. Removal of invasive species allows for space and resources for endemic species to take their place. According to the National Ocean Service at NOAA, invasive species can threaten biodiversity, alter habitats, and cause extinctions. These alterations can have economic impacts and cause fundamental disruptions to ecosystems, two risks Hawai'i should not bear the brunt of. This grant will allow for small businesses to save money by conducting eradication themselves with the financial aid, and is one less thing they have to worry about budgeting for. HB2133 HD1 has immense educational potential, providing an opportunity for individuals, businesses, or organizations to obtain, practice, and share long-term knowledge around invasive species, how to take care of their land, and further nurturing the 'āina. Restoring endemic species and removing invasive species can be leveraged to educate on regeneration methods of the natural landscape while also promoting the local ecosystem species regeneration processes. Lastly, passing this bill to launch a pilot program will be critical in streamlining to help the evolution of a stronger invasive species eradication program.

Food+Policy kindly asks that you **pass bill HB2133 HD1**.

Mahalo for your time,

<https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/invasive.html#:~:text=Invasive%20species%20are%20capable%20of,coastal%20and%20Great%20Lakes%20ecosystems>.

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**The Food+ Policy internship** develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2024, the cohort of interns are undergrads and graduate students from throughout the UH System. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.



# Food+ Policy Internship 2024

[food@purplemaia.org](mailto:food@purplemaia.org)

Kawika Kahiapo + Hawaii Food+ Policy Team

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# SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

## HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

February 22, 2024 1:00 PM Conference Room 308

### In SUPPORT of:

**HB2104 HD1: RELATING TO THE HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL**

**HB2131 HD1: RELATING TO THE TWO-LINED SPITTLEBUG**

**HB2133 HD1: RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

**HB2139 HD1: RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

**HB2644 HD1: RELATING TO LITTLE FIRE ANTS**

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Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members,

On behalf of our over 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **SUPPORTS HB2104 HD1, HB2131 HD1, HB2133 HD1, HB2139 HD1, and HB2644 HD1**, which will help to mitigate the ongoing and future impacts of invasive pests on our native ecosystems, cultural practices, food security, public health, economy, and the overall quality of life of present and future generations.

Hawai'i's history provides us with a host of lessons regarding the wide-ranging and potentially irreversible damage that invasive species can inflict on our islands and ways of life. Invasive plants and wildlife have overtaken entire watersheds, impacting not just native habitat but also reducing aquifer recharge, increasing our vulnerability to floods and wildfires, and smothering our nearshore reefs and waters with runoff. Parasites and other pests have impacted local food production and increased the use of toxic pesticides on farms and in home gardens, risking both public health as well as threatening stream and nearshore species critical to our aquatic ecosystems. Invasive animals have also extirpated native species, continue to threaten others with outright extinction, and continue to undermine public health by acting as vectors for zoonotic diseases. Most recently, the spread of invasive pests such as the little fire ant, coconut rhinoceros beetle, hala scale, two-lined spittlebug and others will require substantial and long-needed policies and investments over the long-term, to prevent additional and even greater impacts to our islands and our future generations.

Accordingly, the Sierra Club strongly supports the much needed policies and investments contemplated in these measures. More financial support is critical for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to fulfill its biosecurity mission; funding for targeted campaigns to address the little fire ant and two-lined spittlebug are critical to preventing the ecological, cultural, agricultural, public health, and economic impacts of these pests; financial support for businesses and organizations to engage in invasive species control and eradication will engage more of the community in the all-hands-on-deck fight to combat their spread; and



agricultural invasive species placards will encourage agricultural producers to proactively employ best management practices and other measures to prevent and address invasive species on agricultural lands.

The Sierra Club emphasizes that quarantine requirements will also be critical to filling a gap in our regulatory toolbox that has allowed the sale of infested plants and other communities – a gap that has likely contributed to the establishment of coconut rhinoceros beetle on O‘ahu, and the ongoing spread of little fire ants across the islands. **The provisions of HB2758 HD2 would help to fill this regulatory gap and many others, and the Sierra Club accordingly strongly supports that measure as well.**

Much remains uncertain as we continue to reckon with the consequences of Hawai‘i’s longstanding failure to enact critical biosecurity protections. However, it is certain that much stronger action, including but not limited to the proposals in the aforementioned bills, will be necessary to mitigate or prevent the worst of these and other future impacts to our lives and that of our children and future generations.

Accordingly, the Sierra Club of Hawai‘i respectfully urges the Committee to **PASS** these measures. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

**HB-2133-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2024 1:32:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Joseph Wat	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As we know, invasive species are an incredible threat to Hawai'i. As much as we would like the state to move at lightning speed, we know it will take time for funding to be given to HDOA, positions to be created and filled, and staff to be trained.

With this in mind, this state grant program would be an awesome way to support community groups in the often long-term management required to eradicate populations of significant pests. CRB management will likely involve life-long alternations to how we manage green waste, LFA infestations will require at least a year of organized treatments.

Please pass this bill to help empower communities to take action on invasive species. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**HB-2133-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2024 1:36:42 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sherry Pollack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this measure to establish an invasive species grant pilot program to provide grants through DOA to individuals, businesses, and organizations for the eradication of invasive species on property located in Hawai'i that is owned by the individual, business, or organization.

Efforts towards stronger action to mitigate or prevent the worst impacts of invasive pests on our native ecosystems, cultural practices, food security, public health, economy, and the overall quality of life of present and future generations are critical.

I am particularly concerned to learn of the alarming proliferation of little fire ants (LFA) infestation sites on Oahu, including areas not far from my own community. Hawaii Island has already been suffering because of these extremely harmful invasive pests and the lack of action to effectively address them. LFA have had devastating impacts there, and not only to agriculture and the economy, but to the environment as a whole and to the quality of life of families in these communities. We need to eradicate LFA throughout the state, and not allow them to continue to spread. Failure to take timely action on LFA will only make it harder and more expensive to address this serious problem. Appropriating funds toward this effort is a must.

Please pass this important measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**HB-2133-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2024 2:31:35 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Clemens Mayer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am Clemens Mayer, and I strongly support HB2133 HD1

As someone involved in several aspects of conservation, as well as a practitioner of hana no'eau threatened by invasive species. Invasive species, such as the Little Fire Ant, are or can be major threats to public health, as well as being majorly detrimental to commercial sectors such as agriculture and tourism. Therefore, I strongly support this motion to protect the environment of Hawai'i nei from invasive pests.

With warmest regards, Clemens Mayer

**HB-2133-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2024 10:35:59 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Beverly Heiser	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members,

I am in strong support of HB 2133 HD1 that establishes the invasive species pilot program.

**HB-2133-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2024 8:04:42 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Patrick Chee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support funding for the invasive species grant pilot program.

Mahalo,  
Patrick Chee