

MAR 18 2009

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING A MORATORIUM ON THE RELEASE OF BIOLOGICAL CONTROL
AGENTS FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT OF PLANT SPECIES
THAT ALSO SERVE AS FOOD RESOURCES.

1 WHEREAS, according to the 2008 Department of Agriculture's
2 white paper, *Food Self-Sufficiency in Hawaii*, "[b]etween 85-90%
3 of Hawaii's food is imported, which makes it particularly
4 vulnerable to natural disasters and global events that might
5 disrupt shipping and the food supply"; and

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7 WHEREAS, according to the State environmental policy
8 guidelines, section 344-4(2)(A), Hawaii Revised Statutes, "[I]n
9 pursuance of the state policy to conserve the natural resources
10 and enhance the quality of life, all agencies, in the
11 development of programs, shall, insofar as practicable . . .
12 [e]ncourage management practices which conserve and fully
13 utilize all natural resources"; and

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15 WHEREAS, the current economic crisis has created financial
16 hardship for many Hawaii residents, who are now finding it
17 increasingly difficult to afford to buy food; and

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19 WHEREAS, state projections indicate that the current
20 financial crisis will probably continue over the next several
21 years; and

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23 WHEREAS, in addition to commercial agriculture in Hawaii,
24 there is an abundance of plant food resources growing wild in
25 the forests and parks, such as guava, strawberry guava, mango,
26 avocado, thimble berry, banana poka, passion fruit, and other
27 plants; many of these natural resources also grow in
28 neighborhoods and in backyards for both commercial and private
29 use; and these food resources are an important part of food
30 self-sufficiency; and

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32 WHEREAS, some of these food plants are currently considered
33 to be weeds in certain environmental locations and are
34 frequently managed by the Department of Agriculture and the
35 Department of Land and Natural Resources using biological



1 control methods, which involves releasing insects, fungi,
2 bacteria, viruses, or other pathogens to attack specific
3 species; and
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5 WHEREAS, the use of biological control for weed management
6 of a food plant species threatens the beneficial uses of that
7 species, since the insect, fungus, bacteria, virus, or other
8 pathogen may spread to other areas where the targeted species is
9 considered desirable; as a result, attacking a food plant with
10 biological control agents can eliminate the ability to use the
11 food plant anywhere the biological control agent can be spread,
12 including in neighborhoods, backyards, and on other private and
13 public property, denying residents the ability to grow that food
14 plant on private property, or to gather that food plant in the
15 wild, thus, severely curtailing the ability of residents to
16 utilize these food resources and achieve food self-sufficiency;
17 and
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19 WHEREAS, the release of biological control agents could be
20 irreversible and irrevocable; now, therefore,
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22 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fifth
23 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2009,
24 that the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Land
25 and Natural Resources are requested to institute a five-year
26 moratorium throughout the State on the use and release of
27 biological control agents that could have a detrimental impact
28 on food resources, affording the public the opportunity to use
29 our State's natural resources to feed themselves and their
30 families, and to improve the food self-sufficiency and
31 sustainability of our State; and
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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Agriculture
34 and the Department of Land and Natural Resources are requested
35 instead to employ other methods of weed control for wild food
36 plants that do not interfere with the ability of residents to
37 grow, gather, and enjoy these natural food resources; and
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
2 Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of
3 Agriculture and the Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural
4 Resources.
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OFFERED BY: _____

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