



The Senate

STATE CAPITOL
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

MEDIA RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT: Cassandra Harris 956-7148

Date: June 17, 2013

Governor Signs Measure to Benefit Hawaii's Honeybee Industry

Honolulu- Today Governor Neil Abercrombie enacted [Senate Bill \(SB\) 482](#), relating to agriculture, into law. This measure helps to ensure the continued viability of honeybee stocks by encouraging beekeeping operations of all sizes throughout the State. Following the signing of SB 482 the Governor also proclaimed June 17 through 23 as "Hawaii Pollinator Week."

"Hawaii's beekeeper operations play a critical role in the vitality of our honeybees," said Senator Clarence Nishihara, chair of the Senate Committee on Agriculture. "The enactment of this measure seeks to promote the honeybee industry by leveling the hurdles currently required for beekeepers to operate in the State."

Honeybees, as a primary pollinator of food crops, have a significant impact on agriculture in Hawaii. Hawaii's annual Farm Gate Sales from bee-pollinated crops is valued at \$212,800,000. Unfortunately, vital honeybee populations are declining at a rapid rate due to the arrival of the varroa mites, nosema, and small hive beetles.

Small and large beekeeper operations are responsible for millions of healthy, pollinating bees throughout the State. Small beekeepers, however, have experienced significant barriers to beekeeping due to administrative and bureaucratic requirements.

"It's important that we continue to take the appropriate steps to curb the decline of Hawaii's honeybee population," said Senator Roz Baker, chair of the Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection. "This law improves Hawaii's current beekeeping requirements, helping to sustain small beekeeping operations and ensuring an adequate supply of honeybees throughout the State."

SB 482 clarifies the maximum number of gallons of honey that can be sold by a certified honey house or food processing establishment without obtaining a permit from the Department of Health (DOH). The measure also exempts from the permit requirement sales of honey directly to retail stores that, in turn, sell the honey directly to consumers. Further, the bill requires honey producers to include certain wording on labels of each container of honey, take a food safety class and make records available to DOH.

(Photo Caption: Senators Clarence Nishihara and Roz Baker join Governor Neil Abercrombie for the signing of Senate Bill 482 into law.) (Photo Courtesy: Senate Communications)

###