
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO RAPID OHIA DEATH.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. Ohia is Hawaii's most common and widespread
2 native tree. Ohia trees can be found at sea level and up to
3 elevations of twenty-five hundred meters. The trees provide
4 critical habitats for rare and endangered native birds and
5 insects.

6 In recent years, the disease known as rapid ohia death,
7 caused by the non-native fungal pathogen *Ceratocystis fimbriata*,
8 has been killing ohia trees in the forests and residential areas
9 in Puna, South Hilo, Kau, and South Kona on the island of
10 Hawaii. When infected, the crown of an ohia tree first turns
11 yellow and then brown within a few days or weeks. The fungal
12 pathogen progresses up the stem of the tree and manifests as a
13 dark staining in the sapwood along the outer margin of the
14 trunk. Landowners have noticed that when healthy-looking trees
15 begin exhibiting symptoms, the trees die in a matter of weeks.

16 Based on recent surveys, approximately fifty thousand acres
17 of ohia forest on the island of Hawaii show signs of rapid ohia



1 death disease. Human movement of infected trees and wood, and
2 contaminated tools, gear, and vehicles are thought to be the
3 main impetus for transmission of the fungus. There is no known
4 treatment that can protect ohia trees from rapid ohia death and
5 there is no cure for infected trees.

6 Rapid ohia death has the potential to destroy ohia trees
7 statewide. The loss of ohia trees would be catastrophic to the
8 diversity, structure, and function of the State's remaining
9 native forests. Currently, the disease has only been found on
10 the island of Hawaii, and active monitoring and attempts to
11 contain the disease are necessary to prevent the disease from
12 reaching other islands.

13 Researchers from the United States Department of
14 Agriculture, the University of Hawaii, and other organizations
15 have made progress in combating rapid ohia death, including
16 isolating the fungal pathogen, researching alternative hosts for
17 the pathogen, eliminating other causes for the ohia tree deaths,
18 and making recommendations on preventing the spread of the
19 disease. However, the researchers require additional funding to
20 continue their work.



1 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to combat
 2 rapid ohia death as detailed in the rapid ohia death strategic
 3 response plan. The funding will help to continue pathology
 4 research by the Daniel K. Inouye United States Pacific Basin
 5 Agricultural Research Center and other organizations.

6 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
 7 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
 8 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2017-2018 and the
 9 sum of \$ or so much thereof as may be necessary for
 10 fiscal year 2018-2019 for rapid ohia death research to be
 11 conducted by the Daniel K. Inouye United States Pacific Basin
 12 Agricultural Research Center, including the employment of forest
 13 pathologist post-doctoral fellows, molecular biology post-
 14 doctoral fellows, pathology post-doctoral fellows, technical
 15 support for pathology research, materials and supplies for
 16 pathogen and molecular detection, and other necessary materials
 17 or items.

18 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
 19 of agriculture for the purposes of this Act.

20 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
 21 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much



1 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2017-2018 and the
 2 sum of \$ or so much thereof as may be necessary for
 3 fiscal year 2018-2019 to support the efforts in mapping the
 4 spread of rapid ohia death, especially in very remote areas.
 5 These funds will allow for early detection of rapid ohia death
 6 through remote-sensing flights; aerial and ground survey work;
 7 statewide survey crews; Digital Mobile Sketch Mapping from
 8 helicopters; and other personnel, supplies, equipment, and
 9 resources as needed. This work is to be conducted by the United
 10 States Forest Service in Hilo.

11 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
 12 of land and natural resources for the purposes of this Act.

13 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
 14 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
 15 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2017-2018 and the
 16 sum of \$ or so much thereof as may be necessary for
 17 fiscal year 2018-2019 for rapid ohia death research to be
 18 conducted by the college of tropical agriculture and human
 19 resources at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, including the
 20 employment of an entomology post-doctoral fellow; technical



1 laboratory support; and field and laboratory supplies,
2 equipment, and other necessary materials or items.

3 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the University
4 of Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

5 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 31, 2150.



Report Title:

Rapid Ohia Death; Ceratocystis; Trees; Research; Study; DOA;
USDA; Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates moneys for research to combat rapid ohia death.
(HB1472 HD1)

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