
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the *Wasmannia*
2 *auropunctata*, known as the little fire ant, threatens native
3 biodiversity, alters tropical ecosystems, impairs human health,
4 impedes tourism, diminishes agricultural productivity, mars
5 horticulture sales, and accordingly ranks among the world's
6 worst invasive species. Human behaviors and habitats allow the
7 little fire ant to move quickly, disperse widely, grow to high
8 densities, and inhabit locations not otherwise possible.

9 Hawaii's tropical climate is ideally suited for little fire
10 ant establishment and growth. The little fire ant, by far one
11 of Hawaii's worst invasive pests, is not only bothersome to
12 residents, visitors, and farmers because of its nasty sting, it
13 also harms agriculture and natural areas by nurturing other
14 invasive pests such as aphids, mealybugs, soft scale insects,
15 and whiteflies.

16 The legislature further finds that when compared to the
17 other counties, the county of Hawaii has been affected the most



1 by the little fire ant. The University of Hawaii, the county of
2 Hawaii, and the department of agriculture must collaborate to
3 develop and implement effective measures to address the impacts
4 of the little fire ant in the county of Hawaii.

5 The department of agriculture's little fire ant program was
6 created to survey, detect, and develop the most efficient little
7 fire ant management strategy with minimal impact to the State's
8 tropical ecosystem and non-target organisms, while serving as
9 the role model to eradicate the little fire ant in all
10 communities. The legislature finds that the department of
11 agriculture needs to be more proactive and aggressive in
12 implementing its current fire ant program.

13 The purpose of this Act is to establish a pilot pesticide
14 treatment coupon project within the department of agriculture's
15 existing little fire ant program, create a little fire ant site
16 map, and appropriate funds for these purposes.

17 SECTION 2. The department of agriculture shall establish
18 and implement a pilot pesticide treatment coupon project within
19 its current little fire ant program. The pilot project shall
20 distribute coupons redeemable for appropriate pesticides at
21 suppliers or vendors within the county of Hawaii at no cost to



1 individuals who have reported and verified to the department the
2 presence of little fire ants on their property within the county
3 of Hawaii. Each coupon shall be valid for a one-year supply of
4 the department's recommended treatment plan, including supplies
5 and equipment purchased from private companies; provided that
6 the value of the coupon shall not exceed the cost of a one-year
7 supply of the department's recommended treatment plan. The
8 department shall provide each individual with information on the
9 proper usage and health and safety precautions regarding the
10 department's recommended treatment plan.

11 SECTION 3. The department of agriculture shall create a
12 map that indicates all little fire ant sites in the county of
13 Hawaii by using all its available data, including verified
14 reports of little fire ant sites. The map shall be updated
15 monthly and made available on the department's website.

16 SECTION 4. The department of agriculture shall submit a
17 report on its progress in implementing the mandates of this Act
18 to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the
19 convening of the regular session of 2018. The report shall
20 include findings and recommendations, including findings and
21 recommendations on whether the pilot project and little fire ant



1 site map should be continued, terminated, or modified. The
2 report shall also include any necessary proposed legislation.

3 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general
4 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$300,000 or so much
5 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2017-2018 and the
6 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
7 2018-2019 for the little fire ant pilot pesticide treatment
8 coupon project established pursuant to section 2 and the little
9 fire ant site map established pursuant to section 3 of this Act.

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

12 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2017.

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George P. Tison

INTRODUCED BY:

20110101

Blakeshorne

Nicole E. Lowe

Richard Lopez

[Signature]

[Signature]

Sen. Oshiro

Nadene K. Necker

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

Cindy Evans

Lynne Delo



H.B. NO. 481

Report Title:

Little Fire Ant; Appropriations

Description:

Requires the Department of Agriculture to establish a pilot pesticide treatment coupon project and a little fire ant site map for the county of Hawaii. Requires report to the Legislature on project implementation. Appropriates funds.

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