

JAN 21 2022

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO RAPID OHIA DEATH.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that rapid ohia death has
2 killed over a million ohia trees on Hawaii island and threatens
3 forests on all of the main Hawaiian islands. Ohia is the
4 State's most common tree, comprising eighty per cent of
5 remaining native forests. Ohia trees provide important habitats
6 for other plants and animals and gather precipitation to
7 recharge island aquifers. Ohia forests have been treasured by
8 native Hawaiians for centuries for many practical uses and for
9 art, including hula, where the tree is the kinolau of important
10 Hawaiian gods. The widespread loss of ohia would be
11 catastrophic for Hawaii's culture and native ecosystems. It
12 would reduce the municipal and agricultural water supplies and
13 eliminate important cultural ties to the forest.

14 The legislature further finds that rapid ohia death is
15 caused by two recently arrived fungi, *Ceratocystis lukuohia* and
16 *Ceratocystis huliohia*. *C. lukuohia*, the more aggressive
17 species, has caused more than ninety per cent of the rapid ohia



1 death on Hawaii island. Both species have been found on Kauai
2 and are now found throughout the island. Only *C. huliohia* has
3 been detected on Oahu, while a single detection of *C. huliohia*
4 on Maui was destroyed and no further detections have been made
5 on the islands making up Maui Nui.

6 The legislature finds that these two fungi are released
7 from dead trees into the environment by boring beetles. The
8 non-native beetles bore into the wood, releasing frass and dust
9 into the environment where the frass and dust can be transported
10 by wind or by humans and animals. Rapid ohia death attacks
11 trees where they have wounds, which may be caused by hooved
12 animals. Researchers found ohia mortality from rapid ohia death
13 up to sixty-nine times higher in areas with hooved animals than
14 in neighboring fenced areas without animals. Additional
15 research is needed to better understand the role of beetles,
16 wind events, and hooved animals in spreading the disease to
17 manage this disease effectively.

18 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to the
19 department of land and natural resources to study and combat
20 rapid ohia death in the State.



1 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$1,700,000 or so much
3 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 to be
4 allocated as follows:

- 5 (1) \$350,000 for survey of and response to rapid ohia
6 death;
- 7 (2) \$350,000 for applied research on management tools;
- 8 (3) \$900,000 for animal removal from fenced areas on
9 Hawaii island; and
- 10 (4) \$100,000 for public outreach on how to prevent disease
11 spread.

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

14 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2022.

15

INTRODUCED BY: 



S.B. NO. 2765

Report Title:

Rapid Ohia Death; DLNR; Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates funds to the department of land and natural resources to study and combat rapid ohia death in the State.

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