

JAN 25 2023

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ALBIZIA.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the albizia tree is
2 an invasive species that can grow up to one hundred fifty feet
3 tall. The tree can grow in nutrient-deficient soils, produces
4 large quantities of wind-dispersed seeds, and grows at a very
5 rapid rate, gaining up to fifteen feet in height each year. It
6 can very quickly disrupt and replace native ecosystems and can
7 easily take over a cleared area in just a few years.

8 The legislature further finds that albizia trees have very
9 brittle trunks and limbs that are structurally weak and are
10 prone to "sudden limb shear", a phenomenon in which live
11 branches collapse without warning or apparent cause. These
12 collapses can occur even if the tree appears to be healthy.
13 This phenomenon, combined with the tree's large size and fast
14 growth, gives the tree the potential to cause major damage to
15 property, infrastructure, and human life. As a result, state
16 and county agencies and utility companies must constantly remove



1 albizia trees. There are currently few beneficial uses for the
2 removed albizia trees.

3 However, the legislature finds that there may be a number
4 of beneficial uses for albizia wood. For example, in 2018, a
5 former university of Hawaii student led a team that successfully
6 constructed a full-size prototype single-family home built from
7 albizia wood. The project demonstrated that albizia could be
8 used as a locally sourced building material. The team indicated
9 that there remained questions about whether the use of albizia
10 wood for construction was economically feasible and whether
11 builders could achieve economies of scale using the wood. If
12 questions like these are answered, the State could turn its
13 overabundance of albizia trees into economic opportunities.

14 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require the
15 department of business, economic development, and tourism to:

16 (1) Create a grant program to assist persons who use
17 albizia trees to create usable products or are
18 developing new ways to use albizia trees to create
19 usable products; and



1 (2) Study economically feasible ways in which businesses
2 may use albizia trees to produce usable products,
3 including housing, throughout the State.

4 SECTION 2. Chapter 201, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
5 amended by adding a new section to part I to be appropriately
6 designated and to read as follows:

7 "§201- **Albizia products; grant program.** (a) The
8 department shall establish a grant program to assist persons
9 who:

10 (1) Use albizia trees to create usable commercial
11 products; or

12 (2) Are developing new ways of using albizia trees to
13 create usable commercial products.

14 (b) The department shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter
15 91 that establish criteria for the award of grant funding and
16 implement a process to facilitate the award of grants. The
17 rules shall include the following terms and conditions, at a
18 minimum:

19 (1) The products being created, developed, or studied
20 shall primarily use albizia wood. For purposes of
21 this paragraph, whether a product primarily uses



1 albizia wood shall be determined pursuant to
2 guidelines established by rule;

3 (2) Qualifying applicants shall include corporations,
4 limited liability companies, partnerships, sole
5 proprietorships, non-profit organizations, and
6 cooperatives having a certificate of vendor compliance
7 with Hawaii compliance express; and

8 (3) The manufacture and assembly of the products shall
9 take place within the State.

10 (c) Grants shall be awarded subject to the availability of
11 funds. No person shall receive grants, in aggregate, that
12 exceed \$ in a single calendar year.

13 (d) No later than twenty days prior to the convening of
14 each regular session, the department shall submit to the
15 legislature a report describing the results of the grant
16 program, including the total number of grants awarded and a
17 summary of the products created or developed using grant
18 moneys. "

19 SECTION 3. (a) The department of business, economic
20 development, and tourism shall study economically feasible ways



1 in which businesses may use albizia trees to produce usable
2 commercial products, including housing, throughout the State.

3 (b) In conducting the study, the department shall consult
4 with the university of Hawaii college of tropical agriculture
5 and human resources and the university of Hawaii school of
6 architecture.

7 (c) The department of business, economic development, and
8 tourism shall submit a report of its findings and
9 recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the
10 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
11 the regular session of 2024.

12 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
13 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
14 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 for
15 the grant program established by section 2 of this Act.

16 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
17 business, economic development, and tourism for the purposes of
18 this Act.

19 SECTION 5. New statutory material is underscored.



1 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.

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INTRODUCED BY:

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S.B. NO. 1193

Report Title:

DBEDT; UH; Albizia Wood; Grant Program; Study; Appropriation

Description:

Requires the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism to establish a grant program to assist persons who use albizia trees to create usable commercial products or are developing ways to use albizia trees to create usable products. Requires the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, in consultation with certain academic units of the University of Hawaii, to study economically feasible ways in which businesses may use albizia trees to produce usable commercial products, including housing, throughout the State. Appropriates moneys.

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