

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 15, 2024

RE: S.C.R. No. 192
S.D. 1

Honorable Scott K. Saiki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2024
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, to which was referred S.C.R. No. 192, S.D. 1, entitled:

"SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR TO CONDUCT A PERFORMANCE AUDIT OF THE PLANT PEST CONTROL BRANCH AND PLANT QUARANTINE BRANCH WITHIN THE PLANT INDUSTRY DIVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Conduct a performance audit of the Plant Pest Control and Plant Quarantine Branches of the Department of Agriculture's Plant Industry Division; and
- (2) Submit a report of their findings and recommendations to the Legislature before the Regular Session of 2025.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Agriculture.

Your Committee received comments the Office of the Auditor.

Your Committee finds that the establishment and spread of invasive species is harmful to Hawai'i's agriculture, native biota, public health, and economic well-being. The Plant Industry




Division of the Department of Agriculture, which includes the Plant Quarantine Branch, Pesticides Branch, and Plant Pest Control Branch, is responsible for delivering the State's mandated biosecurity program and controlling or eradicating pests that could cause significant damage. Your Committee further finds that the Department of Agriculture has failed to produce the required annual report on the biosecurity program to the Thirty-Second Legislature, and previous audits have found deficiencies in the Plant Quarantine Branch's data gathering, data analysis, and organizational framework, as well as the utilization of its staff and operational capacity by the Plant Pest Control Branch. The performance audit requested in this measure will provide the information necessary for decision-makers to strengthen the State's biosecurity system and mitigate risks associated with invasive species.

Your Committee notes the increasing urgency to address biosecurity needs for the state and the importance of a holistic approach to a recommended audit relating to biosecurity in Hawai'i.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems that is attached to this report, your Committee concurs with the intent and purpose of S.C.R. No. 192, S.D. 1, and recommends that it be referred to your Committee on Finance.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Agriculture & Food
Systems,



CEDRIC ASUEGA GATES, Chair



HSR 1906.24

Record of Votes of the Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

Bill/Resolution No.: SLR 192 SDI	Committee Referral: AGR, FIN	Date: 04/12/2024		
<input type="checkbox"/> The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on the measure.				
The recommendation is to: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended (as is) <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments (HD) <input type="checkbox"/> Hold <input type="checkbox"/> Pass short form bill with HD to recommit for future public hearing (recommit)				
AGR Members	Ayes	Ayes (WR)	Nays	Excused
1. GATES, Cedric Asuega (C)	✓			
2. KAHALOA, Kirstin (VC)	✓			
3. COCHRAN, Elle				✓
4. LOWEN, Nicole E.	✓			
5. PERRUSO, Amy A.	✓			
6. WOODSON, Justin H.				✓
7. WARD, Gene				✓
TOTAL (7)	4			3
The recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
If joint referral, _____ did not support recommendation. <small>committee acronym(s)</small>				
Vice Chair's or designee's signature:				
Distribution: Original (White) – Committee Duplicate (Yellow) – Chief Clerk's Office Duplicate (Pink) – HMSO				