

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY

DEAN D. UYENO
ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

Testimony of
DAWN N. S. CHANG
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on
FINANCE

Thursday, February 22, 2024
1:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 308 & Via Videoconference

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 2104 HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO THE HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

House Bill 2104 House Draft 1 proposes to appropriate funds to support the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to ensure its long-term viability and prevent future problems; and declares that the general fund expenditure ceiling is exceeded. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Department's Executive Budget request.**

In 2002 the Legislative Reference Bureau released a report that declared invasive species are the biggest threat to Hawai'i's economy, environment, tourism, and health and way-of-life of its residents. Subsequently, the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) was formed in 2003 by Hawai'i Revised Statute 194 with the special purpose of providing policy level coordination and planning for the control and eradication of harmful invasive species. The Department administratively houses the HISC, and the Department's Division of Forestry and Wildlife provides program support to the HISC.

Since 2005, the HISC has disbursed funds annually for innovative projects addressing invasive species prevention, control, outreach, and research. Existing programs at state agencies address some of the core needs in this area, including inspection and quarantine at ports (HDOA), control of invasive plants and animals on state lands (DLNR), detection and control of vectors of human disease (DOH), control of invasive species along public transportation routes (DOT), planning initiatives (DBEDT), and academic expertise (UH). HISC-funded projects do not replace these core programs. Interagency HISC funds are used to complement these existing programs by:

1. Filling gaps between agency mandates or existing agency programs, and/or
2. Advancing our collective knowledge through research and development of new tools.

Disbursement of project funding via the HISC ensures that, at the cabinet level, multiple state agencies are identifying and prioritizing actions on annual basis that might otherwise go unfunded.

Past HISC awards supported the initial operational equipment and supplies for the Coconut rhinoceros beetle response in 2013, early research and development of *Wolbachia* birth control for mosquitos, and exploratory work to identify natural enemies for *Miconia*, strawberry guava, and *Albizia*, and the development of Herbicide Ballistic Technology (HBT). This funding is critical to supporting the ongoing operations of the Island Invasive Species Committees, Hawai'i Ant Lab, and the Ballast Water and Biofouling Program at the Division of Aquatic Resources and has been critical to leveraging additional funds from other sources to fully support these projects.

Despite the growing threat of invasive species, HISC has not had an increase in funding in over four years. Figure 1 shows the amount of funding available for projects versus the total amount requested. Funding available is only able to provide partial support for the majority proposal requests, which on average is less than 50% of the total requested. And every year a handful of projects receive no funding, which is more the result of limited funding than a lack of merit for the proposed project.

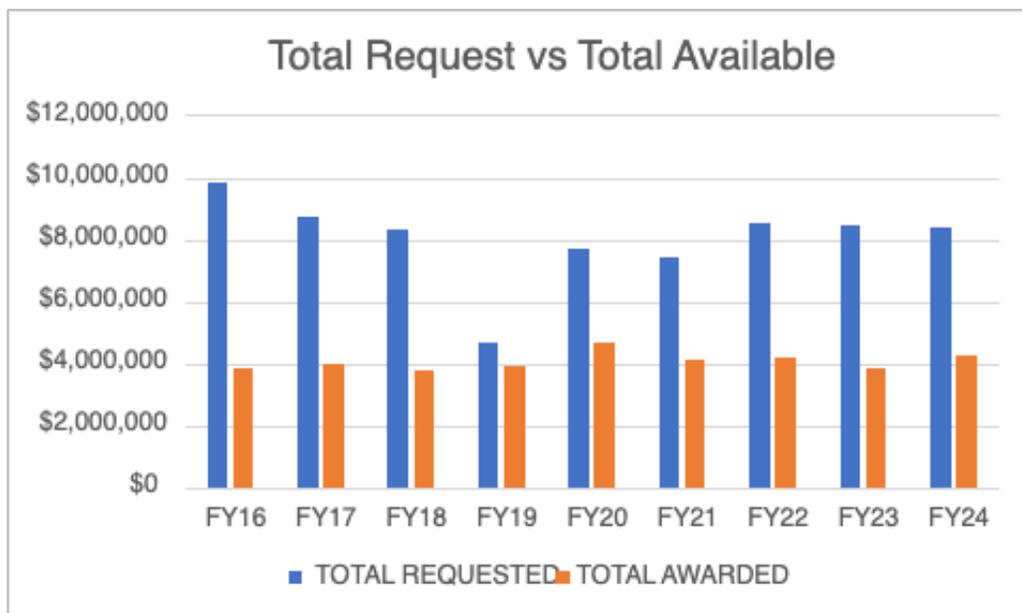


Figure 1 shows that HISC funding available to support interagency projects consistently falls short of the actual need, as shown by the amount requested.

House Bill 2104 would benefit HISC and its partners by getting the amount available closer to the total requested each year which continues to grow with new pests spreading in the State (Coconut rhinoceros beetle, little fire ants), increased costs of equipment (vehicles, facilities), and the need to increase wages to retain staff and counteract inflation and the high cost of doing business in Hawai‘i.

The dispersal of funding is a competitive process with the Council’s review and approval as the final step, but there are key funding priorities this appropriation could address:

- Rapid and emergency response operations for new pest incursions both for individual islands and the State.
- Core operations for the Island Invasive Species Committees and Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species.
- Research and Development of natural enemies for high-priority pests like *Albizia* trees and Coconut rhinoceros beetles.
- Enhanced research and development of new tools and technology to prevent and manage invasive species through the University of Hawai‘i.

The Department recognizes the Legislature’s concern for the issue and greatly appreciates the introduction of this measure. Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEXTER KISHIDA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**FEBRUARY 22, 2024
1:00 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 308**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 2104, HD1
RELATING TO THE HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL**

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2104, HD1 relating to the Hawaii Invasive Species Council. This bill appropriates funding for the Hawaii Invasive Species Council. The Department offers comments.

The Hawaii Invasive Species Council provides excellent coordination of effort between multiple partner agencies, especially through funding it provides through annual request for proposals. However, to be consistent with the goals of the Interagency Biosecurity Plan, data collected through HISC functions, awards, and by partners, should be entered into a database which the Department has full access as it relates to survey and control actions so the department can coordinate regulatory, response and control, and research statewide. This data should be maintained in the State's Standard GIS Data Platform, Esri, ArcGIS.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important measure.





House of Representatives
Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 22, 2024
1:00 PM Conference Room 308
State Capitol

Testimony in Support of HB2104 HD1

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) is **in support of HB2104 HD1**, *Relating to the Hawaii Invasive Species Council*, which will increase the amount appropriated to the Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC) for fiscal year 2024-2025.

As noted in HB2104 HD1, the vast majority of HISC funds are used to provide grants, on a competitive basis, for activities that complement existing programs in the State by:

1. Filling gaps between agency mandates or existing agency programs, and/or
2. Advancing our collective knowledge and capacity through research and development of new tools.

The need for these grants is far greater than HISC's available funds. High-impact invasive species such as coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB), coqui frog, and little fire ant (LFA) are rapidly spreading in Hawaii, and control actions and research on new control methods for these and other invasive species are desperately needed. The additional funding for HISC proposed in HB2104 HD1 will support these control actions and activities to prevent the introduction, spread, and establishment of high-impact invasive pests, including through the work of the Hawaii Ant Lab, each of the island Invasive Species Committees, and the Ballast Water and Biofouling Program at the Division of Aquatic Resources.

Mahalo for the opportunity to support HB2104 HD1 and for consideration of our testimony.

Aloha,

Christy Martin
CGAPS Program Manager

Stephanie Easley
CGAPS Legal Fellow

**Testimony of The Nature Conservancy
Support for HB 2104, HD1, Relating to the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council
Committee on Finance
February 22, 2024, 1:00 p.m.
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference**

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee:

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) **supports** HB 2104, HD1, relating to the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council, which appropriates funds to support the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to ensure its long-term viability and prevent future problems.

The Hawai'i Invasive Species Council is an inter-departmental collaboration comprised of the Departments of Land & Natural Resources, Agriculture, Health, Transportation, Business, Economic Development & Tourism), and the University of Hawai'i. The council was established in 2003 following a report that indicated earlier efforts were piecemeal, lacking in adequate rigor. Its purpose is to provide policy level direction, coordination, and planning among state departments, federal agencies, and international and local initiatives for the control and eradication of harmful invasive species infestations throughout the State and for preventing the introduction of other invasive species that may be potentially harmful.

Hawai'i's unique biodiversity is due in part to its geographic isolation and volcanic origin. Hawai'i's native plant and animal species are those that arrived here without the assistance of humans: seeds for Hawai'i's first plants arrived here by floating on the waves, being blown by the wind, or transported by traveling birds. Likewise, Hawai'i's native animal species are those that flew here on the wind or swam here on the water. Introduction events like these are very rare, and so the species that made it to Hawai'i lived here in relative isolation over the 70 million years of Hawai'i's volcanic history. Species that evolve on islands do so in the absence of some of the world's more competitive species and it is these invasive species that threaten the state's biodiversity, as well as economic drivers including the agriculture and tourism sectors. Supporting the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council and ensuring its long-term viability is essential to ensuring that Hawai'i's biodiversity is protected.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2104, HD1.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Duke E. Ah Moo Kris Billeter Dr. C. Tana Burkert Anne S. Carter (Chair) Ka'iulani de Silva Dave Eadie
Matt Emerson Hon. Judith Epstein Dr. Alan M. Friedlander Benjy Garfinkle Sean A. Hehir Puni Jackson
Brett MacNaughton Janet Montag Alicia Moy Bradley E. Smith Julie Smolinski Vern M. Yamanaka

Ihupani Advisory Council: Paul D. Alston Christopher J. Benjamin Kenton T. Eldridge Eiichiro Kuwana
Duncan MacNaughton Jean E. Rolles Crystal K. Rose Nathan E. Smith

Founders: Samuel A. Cooke Herbert C. Cornuelle



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

February 22, 2024

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON HB 2104, HD1
RELATING TO THE HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

Conference Room 308 & Videoconference
1:00 PM

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports HB 2104, HD1, which appropriates funds to support the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to ensure its long-term viability and prevent future problems.

Invasive species have become one of the most devastating problems impacting Hawai'i. Many invasive species are damaging Hawai'i's environment and economy. Agriculture has a vested interest in this matter. Agriculture suffers when invasive species are introduced. Every year, numerous new pests are introduced into the State, such as the coqui frog, coffee berry borer, macadamia felted coccid, little fire ant, coconut rhinoceros beetle, small hive beetle, and varroa mite, to name a few. Control measures take time to develop, leaving farmers and ranchers at risk. This is not consistent with the State's goal of increasing self-sufficiency and sustainability.

Proper funding for HISC is critical for the protection of Hawai'i's environment and economy and the health and lifestyle of its people through the support of invasive species prevention, control, research, outreach, and planning. This measure will provide necessary resources to HISC to help control and hopefully eradicate invasive species in Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

February 22, 2024 1:00 PM Conference Room 308

In SUPPORT of:

HB2104 HD1: RELATING TO THE HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

HB2131 HD1: RELATING TO THE TWO-LINED SPITTLEBUG

HB2133 HD1: RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

HB2139 HD1: RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

HB2644 HD1: RELATING TO LITTLE FIRE ANTS

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members,

On behalf of our over 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **SUPPORTS HB2104 HD1, HB2131 HD1, HB2133 HD1, HB2139 HD1, and HB2644 HD1**, which will help to mitigate the ongoing and future impacts of invasive pests on our native ecosystems, cultural practices, food security, public health, economy, and the overall quality of life of present and future generations.

Hawai'i's history provides us with a host of lessons regarding the wide-ranging and potentially irreversible damage that invasive species can inflict on our islands and ways of life. Invasive plants and wildlife have overtaken entire watersheds, impacting not just native habitat but also reducing aquifer recharge, increasing our vulnerability to floods and wildfires, and smothering our nearshore reefs and waters with runoff. Parasites and other pests have impacted local food production and increased the use of toxic pesticides on farms and in home gardens, risking both public health as well as threatening stream and nearshore species critical to our aquatic ecosystems. Invasive animals have also extirpated native species, continue to threaten others with outright extinction, and continue to undermine public health by acting as vectors for zoonotic diseases. Most recently, the spread of invasive pests such as the little fire ant, coconut rhinoceros beetle, hala scale, two-lined spittlebug and others will require substantial and long-needed policies and investments over the long-term, to prevent additional and even greater impacts to our islands and our future generations.

Accordingly, the Sierra Club strongly supports the much needed policies and investments contemplated in these measures. More financial support is critical for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to fulfill its biosecurity mission; funding for targeted campaigns to address the little fire ant and two-lined spittlebug are critical to preventing the ecological, cultural, agricultural, public health, and economic impacts of these pests; financial support for businesses and organizations to engage in invasive species control and eradication will engage more of the community in the all-hands-on-deck fight to combat their spread; and



agricultural invasive species placards will encourage agricultural producers to proactively employ best management practices and other measures to prevent and address invasive species on agricultural lands.

The Sierra Club emphasizes that quarantine requirements will also be critical to filling a gap in our regulatory toolbox that has allowed the sale of infested plants and other communities – a gap that has likely contributed to the establishment of coconut rhinoceros beetle on O‘ahu, and the ongoing spread of little fire ants across the islands. **The provisions of HB2758 HD2 would help to fill this regulatory gap and many others, and the Sierra Club accordingly strongly supports that measure as well.**

Much remains uncertain as we continue to reckon with the consequences of Hawai‘i’s longstanding failure to enact critical biosecurity protections. However, it is certain that much stronger action, including but not limited to the proposals in the aforementioned bills, will be necessary to mitigate or prevent the worst of these and other future impacts to our lives and that of our children and future generations.

Accordingly, the Sierra Club of Hawai‘i respectfully urges the Committee to **PASS** these measures. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

HB-2104-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2024 1:35:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Joseph Wat | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

The Hawaii Invasive Species Committee is an essential step in the identification, outreach, and management of invasive species that pose a significant threat to Hawai'i's livelihood.

Sustainable funding to HISC is an essential step in maintaining the Island Invasive Species Committees that do such good work on the ground as well as funding the specialist teams like Hawai'i Ant Lab and the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle Response Team.

Please pass this bill, support invasive species management, and do your part to ensure our grandchildren's grandchildren can grow up in a Hawai'i that we recognize.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

HB-2104-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2024 2:30:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Clemens Mayer | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

I am Clemens Mayer, and I strongly support HB2104 HD1

As someone involved in several aspects of conservation, as well as a practitioner of hana no'eau threatened by invasive species. Invasive species, such as the Little Fire Ant, are or can be major threats to public health, as well as being majorly detrimental to commercial sectors such as agriculture and tourism. Therefore, I strongly support this motion to protect the environment of Hawai'i nei from invasive pests.

With warmest regards, Clemens Mayer

HB-2104-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2024 11:50:53 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Beverly Heiser | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Committee Members,

I am in Strong Support of HB 2104 HD1.

HB-2104-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2024 10:15:13 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2024 1:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Patrick Chee | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I urge you to support increased funding for the Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC). I am a wildlife biologist and have worked for many years in Invasive Species efforts across the state. Although the HISC has been funded with \$5.75 million in years past, this has not increased in the last four years while inflation alone has soared over 8% in the past 2 years. Adjusting for inflation alone, the HISC funding should be at least \$7 million to stay at the same level of funding it was 4 years ago. As the bill mentions, even at this level, this covers less than half the funding requested from the HISC each year. In order to get ahead of the invasive species issues that face Hawaii, increased funding of \$12 million would be reasonable to address and fund HISC projects closer to 100%.

Again, I urge you to support HB2104. It is a wise investment in our future and could prevent significantly more damage to our economy and way of life in the years to come.

Mahalo,
Patrick Chee