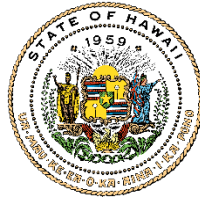
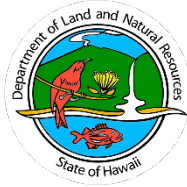


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



**STATE OF HAWAI'I | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA**

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of
DAWN N. S. CHANG
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on
FINANCE**

**Wednesday, March 29, 2023
3:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308**

**In consideration of
SENATE BILL 652, SENATE DRAFT 1, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Senate Bill 652, Senate Draft 1, House Draft 1 proposes to appropriate funds to the Department of Agriculture (HDOA) for control and mitigation of the two-lined spittlebug and for recovery efforts of lands damaged by two-lined spittlebug and establish a five-year pilot program to mitigate and control the significant increase in the population of feral chickens and pigs throughout the State. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) offers comments and proposes an amendment on this measure.**

High densities of two-lined spittlebug (TLSB) can result in almost 100% dieback of key pasture grasses that are essential for livestock foraging. When these grasses die back, invasive plants and low-quality foraging grasses replace them. Two-lined spittlebug's rapid rate of spread and apparent preference for Kikuyu and Pangola grass creates the potential for this pest to spread throughout the islands and cause irreparable harm to large areas of valuable grazing land and natural areas, threatening the economic sustainability of Hawai'i's livestock industry, reducing the ecosystem services derived from these landscapes, and ultimately harming our island communities through decreased agricultural revenue and reduced food security.

The Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) is administered through the Department and provides policy level direction, coordination, and planning among state departments for the prevention, control, and eradication of harmful invasive species throughout the state. The HISC has prioritized initial funding to support research and the development of management tools for TLSB through its yearly competitive grant process, but an investment of stable, long-term

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

LAURA H.E. KAAKUA
FIRST DEPUTY

M. KALEO MANUEL
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

funding is needed to manage this pest on Hawai‘i Island. Funds will help prevent the spread of TLSB to other islands, but will not eradicate this invasive species.

The Department recommends removal of language that establishes a five-year pilot program to mitigate and control the significant increase in the population of feral chickens and pigs throughout the State. Two-lined spittlebug is a major pest and needs a dedicated appropriation to support research, management, and restoration of lands impacted by TLSB. Inclusion of the pilot project dilutes the measure’s original intent.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure, and propose an amendment.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance
Wednesday, March 29, 2023 at 3:00 p.m.

By

Anna Wieczorek, Interim Dean
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources

And

Michael Bruno, Provost
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 652 SD1 HD1 – RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on SB 652 SD1 HD1 relating to agriculture.

The bill makes an appropriation to the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA) to mitigate and control infestations of the two-lined spittlebug, the recovery efforts for pasture lands damaged by the two-lined spittlebug, and establishes a five-year pilot program to mitigate and control the significant increase in the population of feral chickens and pigs throughout the State.

For several years, CTAHR faculty and Cooperative Extension personnel have collaborated with HDOA Plant Industry Division administration and Plant Pest Control Branch to detect, mitigate, and control infestation of the two-lined spittlebug on pasture lands on Hawai'i Island.

The cattle industry is one of the top contributors to Hawai'i's agricultural production value. The two-lined spittlebug threatens the livelihood and existence of the local cattle industry that contributes to the food security in the State. Hawai'i's cattle ranchers rallied to provide local beef for our public schools' lunch program and provided food donations during the pandemic.

There exists a critical need to continue and increase recovery efforts for pasture lands damaged by this invasive pest by implementing chemical and mechanical controls, biocontrol and best practices for managing pasture lands.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments SB 652 SD1 HD1 as it relates to the mitigation and control of the two-lined spittlebug, however, we defer to HDOA on the provision to establish a five-year program to mitigate and control the population of feral chickens and pigs throughout the State.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
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

MARCH 29, 2023
3:00 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 308

SENATE BILL NO. 652 SENATE DRAFT 1, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Chairperson Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 652, SD1, HD1 relating to agriculture. This bill appropriates moneys to the Department of Agriculture to mitigate and control infestations of the two-lined spittlebug, undertake recovery efforts for lands damaged by the two-lined spittlebug, and establish a five-year pilot program to mitigate and control the significant increase in the population of feral chickens, roosters, and pigs throughout the State and requires reports to the Legislature. The Department supports this measure with comments.

The two-lined spittlebug is severely damaging the rangelands of Hawaii Island. This damage is not limited to the devastation of kikuyu grass, the dominant grazing forage for our cattle industry. The spittlebugs are creating opportunities for invasive weed species within the kikuyu forage including Christmas berry, lantana, pamakani and other weed species. These weed species in turn creates a very real threat of long-term damage not just to rangelands but the watershed itself. Funding would best be used to support efforts to control TLSB and the funding of a response task force.



The Department has already formed a tentative agreement with Florida Department of Agriculture (FDACS) to launch exploration for natural enemies as TLSB is native to the southeastern United States, including Florida. It is anticipated \$100,000 is needed to launch a joint HDOA/FDACS biocontrol program. A response team is needed to attack not just TLSB but for removal of invasive weeds and subsequent replacement of devastated rangelands with viable TLSB resistant kikuyu replacements.

Further, the Department strongly recommends funding the \$100,000 research program for TLSB as well funding requests from the University of Hawaii and the Hawaii Cattlemen's Council as the research project is not sufficient to address the total need of the impacted rangelands and the threats posed by this insect and its impacts to the watershed.

While the Department recognizes feral chickens and pigs can be a nuisance in suburban and residential communities, it is the department's experience for feral chickens this issue does not extend to agricultural districts. Feral pigs are a nuisance in agricultural districts and can have a negative impact on our agricultural industries, however, the feral pigs are generally coming from public lands. The department respectfully requests language regarding feral chickens and pigs to be removed. The Department does not perform feral animal control and does not have the personnel or financial resources to do so. As such, the Department should not be delegated the responsibility to launch a pilot program to mitigate and control feral chickens, roosters, and pigs as those activities will interfere with the Department's priority responsibilities for mitigation and surveillance and response to diseases, invasive species and pests.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

SB-652-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2023 2:31:03 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/29/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gordon Inouye	Puna Flower Power	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Spittlebugs, ferel chickens and ferel pigs are a continued threat to our crops. Please help us?

Gordon Inouye, President, Puna Flower Power

Ranchers in Kona are working hard to try to find cost-effective ways to fight the two lined spittle bug and to keep this pest from spreading, but the task is too big for us to take on alone. HDOA has provided funds for research efforts in the past, and we respectfully urge the legislature to pass SB652 in order to continue to provide us with funding to continue supporting this effort.

Furthermore, we respectfully ask that the committee return the version to its original SB652 form, as the addition of a pilot program for feral chickens, roosters, and pigs is a completely different subject matter from the two-lined spittlebug issues.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Keith Unger
McCandless Ranch



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

March 29, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON SB 652, SD1, HD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Conference Room 308 & Videoconference
3:00 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 SB 652, SD1, HD1, which appropriates moneys to the Department of Agriculture for the control and mitigation of the two-lined spittlebug and for recovery efforts for lands damaged by the two-lined spittlebug.

The Two-lined spittlebug was first detected in Kailua-Kona, on the Big Island of Hawai'i in September 2016 where it had caused damage to nearly 2,000 acres of pasture land. Monthly pasture surveys that began in November 2017 have revealed that the pest has rapidly expanded its range and as of October 2019 infests over 222 sq. miles or about 142,468 acres. We must stop the spread of the Two-lined Spittlebug and assist ranchers affected in recovery efforts.

Two-lined Spittlebug infestations in Hawai'i have been shown to dramatically reduce the forage quantity and quality of pastures by killing key forage species outright, or by decreasing the nutritional value, palatability, and productivity of key forages. This promotes the establishment and proliferation of invasive weeds with no economic or other value, while significantly reducing the quality of foraging grasses. Reseeding areas denuded by the Two-lined Spittlebug will protect from runoff and provide forage for cattle.

Recovery efforts for ranches affected by Two-lined Spittlebug include brush management, herbaceous weed treatment, range planting, forage, biomass planting, fencing, and prescribed grazing.

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

SB-652-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2023 6:38:42 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/29/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alan Gottlieb	Ponoholo Ranch	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

***We support this measure because it is extremely important to continue efforts to assist ranchers in addressing this invasive species. We respectfully ask that the committee consider returning the version to its original SB652 form, as the addition of a pilot program for feral chickens and pigs is a completely different subject matter from the two-lined spittlebug issues.**

SB-652-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2023 8:27:24 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/29/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara Moore	Kealia Ranch	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill but only in it's original form. I respectfully ask that the committee consider returning the version to its original SB652 form, as the addition of a pilot program for feral chickens and pigs is a completely different subject matter from the two-lined spittlebug issues.

Thank you very much for your sincere consideration to this bill.

LARRY JEFTS FARMS, LLC
PO BOX 27
KUNIA, HAWAII 96759
(808) 688-2892

SB652sd1,hd1 Relating to Agriculture
House FIN Hearing – 3:00pm
Room 308
Wednesday, March 29, 2023

Testimony By: Larry Jeffs
Position: Support

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the House FIN Committee:

I am Larry Jeffs, owner and operator of Larry Jeffs Farms, LLC. We have more than 42 years of Hawaii farm experience on Molokai and Oahu. Our family farms grow about 1 million pounds weekly of import replacement produce. I am a volunteer director and chair of the West Oahu Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). I have been an officer of the Hawaii Farm Bureau for many years.

Appreciation is expressed for the Legislature's support and acknowledgment that expanding the livestock industry contributes to Hawaii's economy and is a significant employer for local communities, especially on Hawaii Island.

About 70% of all beef cattle in Hawaii are grass-fed. Two-lined spittlebug damage results in entire pastures being reduced to dust and replaced with weeds that cattle cannot eat. This damage causes runoff and affects the surrounding land and water. More importantly, it directly impacts food production and the replacement of imported beef.

I understand that ranchers are working hard to find cost-effective ways to manage this invasive species and to keep pastures healthy and productive. It is a daunting task that requires collaboration with state agencies such as the Department of Agriculture and funding.

We are concerned with the SD1 and HD1 request for funding for a five-year pilot project to mitigate and control feral chickens, roosters, and pigs in suburban and urban residential areas. These animals are a persistent nuisance but are not livestock, nor do they contribute significantly to food production like Hawaii's beef cattle industry.

Please restore the focus of this bill to SB652, which wholly supported the management of the invasive two-lined spittlebug, which is devastating the cattle industry.

Your favorable consideration to revert to SB652 is appreciated. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

SB652 SD1 HD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Wednesday, March 29, 2023, 3:00 PM
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

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

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB652 SD1 HD1** which appropriates moneys to the Department of Agriculture for the control and mitigation of the two-lined spittlebug and for recovery efforts for lands damaged by the two-lined spittlebug.

We support this measure because it is extremely important to continue efforts to assist ranchers in addressing this invasive species. We respectfully ask that the committee return the version to its original SB652 form, as the addition of a pilot program for feral chickens and pigs is a completely different subject matter from the two-lined spittlebug issues. Additionally, the Department of Agriculture does not manage feral animals. While feral animal control is important, we ask that it be removed from this bill so that we can ensure funding is established for this important endeavor to reduce the spread and negative impacts of the spittlebug.

We are aware that there are many pressing issues that need funding, but this invasive species directly affects food production and natural resource conservation. Hawaii Island is responsible for 80% of the state's cattle production, so an outbreak of this invasive species will be devastating not only to cattle ranchers, but to our endeavor for food security. This invasive species issue affects all of Hawaii, not just the cattle ranchers. Two-lined Spittlebug was first detected in Kailua-Kona, on the Big Island of Hawaii in September 2016 where it had caused damage to nearly 2,000 acres of pastureland. Monthly pasture surveys that began in November 2017 have revealed that the pest has rapidly expanded its range and as of September 2022 infests 178,369 acres. It is imperative that we stop the spread of the Two-lined Spittlebug and assist ranchers affected in recovery efforts.

Two-lined Spittlebug infestations in Hawaii have been shown to dramatically reduce the forage quantity and quality of pastures by killing key forage species outright, or by decreasing the nutritional value, palatability, and productivity of key forages. This enables the establishment and proliferation of invasive weeds with no economic or other value, while significantly reducing the quality and availability of foraging grasses. Reseeding areas denuded by the Two-lined Spittlebug will protect from runoff and provide forage for cattle. Recovery efforts for ranches affected by Two-lined Spittlebug include brush management, herbaceous weed treatment, range planting, forage and biomass planting, and fencing and prescribed grazing.

Healthy grazing lands are integral to watershed health and function in Hawaii. The Two-lined Spittlebug severely disturbs the Hawaiian grazing land plant community by killing the grass. This loss of living ground cover leaves the land vulnerable to soil loss which contributes to sediment-



laden runoff into our near shore coastal waters, affecting coral reef health. Healthy coral reefs provide important services such as shoreline protection, and marine ecosystem habitats that support important food chains and thus our communities. Invasive weeds move in on these degraded lands, degrading the aesthetic of the landscape, hindering not only agriculture but also other land management efforts, and recreational uses such as forest and wildlife conservation projects, hiking and hunting.

Ranchers in Hawaii are working hard to try to find cost-effective ways to adapt to this new challenge and to keep their lands healthy and productive, but the task is too big for them to take on alone. HDOA has provided funds for research efforts, and we respectfully urge the legislature to provide them with funding to continue supporting this effort.

We **support SB652 SD1 HD1** and appreciate the opportunity to testify on this critical matter. You can learn more about the Two-lined Spittlebug at www.TLSBhawaii.com and the Hawaii Rangelands Website at <https://rangelandsgateway.org/twolined-spittlebug>

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director



29 March 2023

Attn: House Committee on Finance
RE: SB652 relating to Two-lined Spittlebug

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

We would like to express our support for this measure, recognizing the serious threat posed by the introduced two-lined spittlebug and allocating funds to support HDOA in addressing this pest.

The two-lined spittlebug was only identified as a pest in Hawaii in 2016, when it had damaged 2,000 acres of ranch on the Big Island. By 2019, the number had grown to 150,000 acres. Unlike other pasture pests that we've had in Hawaii, the impacts do not recede with time. Affected ranchers have found 100% death of the grass after infestation, with no recovery. Instead, pastures are quickly invaded by aggressive brush species such as pamakani, fireweed, and blackberry, none of which are suitable for cattle forage.

Conservation partners with restoration work in pastures are also struggling with this threat. As pastures are restored to native forest, kikuyu and pangola act as "placeholders" until native species can be outplanted. These grasses are easy to control in those instances. The replacement weeds are a much more challenging and expensive problem, requiring significantly more time and effort to control.

TLNB is a threat to our food security, economy, environment, and culture, on the Big Island, and throughout the state. We urge you to respond decisively and provide the support needed for our researchers and ranchers to test and develop methods of controlling and recovering from TLNB.

While BIISC agrees that feral animals such as pigs and chickens are a significant pest in Hawai'i and that relief should be provided to our residents on this issue, this is a far-ranging and expensive problem that would be better dealt with through separate legislation. We suggest that the language regarding these animals be removed from this bill so that there is no hindrance to the original intent of providing support to mitigate the harm caused to ranchers by TLNB.

The language here is unspecific and likely to make implementation of such a program very challenging, especially in light of the fact that HDOA has no staffing or expertise devoted to control of these feral animals. The single method of relief suggested - trap-lending - has been tried many times before and abandoned due to theft and loss. We suggest that a better



approach would be to create island-based working groups that include community members, experts, and local authorities, with the intent to develop community-based approaches to management of feral animals that can be flexibly applied depending on local circumstances. While we fully and without reservation support the increased participation of state agencies in managing nuisance feral animals, we would like to see that this is done with careful planning, community involvement, and a commitment to providing the appropriate levels of funding to ensure success.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this matter. Please contact me with any questions.

Frances Brewer
Communications Director
(808)933-3340
Fbrewer@hawaii.edu



March 28, 2023

Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Representative Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

Comments in Support of SB 652, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, Relating to Invasive Species; Control and Mitigation (Appropriates funds to the department of agriculture [DOA] to mitigate and control infestations of the two-lined spittlebug, undertake recovery efforts for lands damaged by the two-lined spittlebug, and establish a five-year pilot program to mitigate and control the significant increase in the population of feral chickens and pigs throughout the State. Requires a report to the Legislature. Effective 6/30/3000.)

**Wednesday, March 29, 2023, 3:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308, Via Videoconference**

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF) is a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers, and utility companies. LURF's mission is to advocate for reasonable, rational, and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural and cultural resources, and public health and safety.

LURF appreciates the opportunity to express its **support of SB 652, S.D. 1, H.D. 1** and of the various agricultural stakeholder groups who defend the goals of viable agricultural operations and the conservation and protection of agriculture in Hawaii.

SB 652, S.D. 1, H.D. 1. This bill proposes to appropriate funds for the DOA to mitigate and control infestations of the two-lined spittlebug, to undertake recovery efforts for lands damaged by the insect, as well as to establish a five-year pilot program to mitigate and control the significant increase in the population of feral chickens and pigs throughout the State. The DOA shall take measures including the use of insecticides, weed management, and reseeded pastures, as necessary to reduce the population of the two-lined spittlebug and to assist in recovery efforts; and establish the pilot program to mitigate and control the significant increase in the population of feral chickens and pigs throughout the State, which shall include the provision of traps free-of-charge to members of the public to capture the feral animals.

LURF's Position. Invasive species such as animals, insects, disease-bearing organisms, snakes, weeds, and other pests pose the greatest threat to Hawaii's economy, agriculture, tourism, the natural environment, native species and to the health and lifestyle of Hawaii's people. Invasive species already cause millions of dollars in crop losses, the extinction of native species, the destruction of native wet, moist and dry land forests, and the spread of disease, but many more harmful pests, such as the two-lined spittlebug now threaten to infest and damage pasture lands, severely affecting and reducing the quality and quantity of forage pastures, thereby impairing livestock ranching, which is a highly productive, expanding, and extremely valuable industry on all major islands with an estimated current annual value of more than \$68 million. LURF understands that the pest has rapidly expanded its range, and as of September 2021 has infested over 278 square miles of land.

LURF members include property owners, farmers and ranchers who own, maintain, and engage in agricultural enterprises, and who consider efforts to protect and support agriculture significant to the continued conduct of their operations and to help sustain and preserve farming and ranching businesses into the future. The two-lined spittlebug threatens job and food security not only in the agricultural and ranching industries, but throughout the State, making it vital to address infestations and restrict further uncontrolled spread.

Feral chickens and pigs have also become a persistent nuisance, damaging food crops, and jeopardizing native plants, resources, and species; and exacerbating health and safety concerns and issues.

As potentially devastating threats to food safety and security continue to be a significant concern, LURF and its members appreciate measures being taken, including use of insecticides, weed management, reseeding pastures, and any research efforts to reduce the population of two-lined spittlebugs, as well as efforts to trap and reduce the number of feral animals to assist agricultural stakeholders to manage and protect against these invasive pests.

For the above reasons, LURF **supports SB 652, S.D. 1, H.D. 1** and respectfully urges your favorable consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding this matter.

SB-652-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2023 11:43:18 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/29/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Morgan	Kualoa Ranch and Hawaii Cattlemen's Council	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is John Morgan. I am the president and general manager of Kualoa Ranch, and the current president of Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC). HCC represents the ranchers who are the stewards of about 20% of all the land in Hawaii and they help protect our watersheds and keep our natural ecosystems safe and producing food.

I strongly urge you to vote in favor of SB 652 SD1 HD1 relating to the Two Lined Spittlebug. The Two Lined Spittlebug is devastating to pastures and if left unchecked, will kill thousands of acres of pastures which will lead to invasive species taking over large portions of productive agriculture land.

Please support the local agriculture and ranching industry here in Hawaii by passing this bill and helping Hawaii fight this invasive pest.

Mahalo

John Morgan



Email: communications@ulupono.com

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Wednesday, March 29, 2023 — 3:00 p.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports SB 652 SD1 HD1, Relating to Agriculture.

Dear Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food, renewable energy and clean transportation choices, and better management of freshwater resources.

Ulupono supports SB 652 SD1 HD1, which appropriates moneys to the Department of Agriculture to mitigate and control infestations of the two-lined spittlebug, undertake recovery efforts for lands damaged by the two-lined spittlebug, and establish a five-year pilot program to mitigate and control the significant increase in the population of feral chickens, roosters, and pigs throughout the State.

Ulupono supports the State's goal to increase local food production, which includes strengthening the local livestock industry. The two-lined spittlebug was first detected in Kailua-Kona on Hawai'i Island in September 2016. It damaged roughly 2,000 acres of pastureland. As of September 2022, damage from infestation has skyrocketed to about 178,369 acres of rangelands on Hawai'i Island. In highly infested areas, there is 100% die-off of key pasture grasses such as Kikuyu and Pangola. Rapid spread and die-off due to this pest are affecting the local livestock industry and pose a massive threat to production on Hawai'i Island. Increasing State resources to support the local livestock industry will be crucial in maintaining the growth of local livestock production and meeting State food production goals.

We also support efforts to mitigate and control feral animals and ungulates as they relate to agricultural damage across the state. While the pilot provided in this measure may be worthy of funding, we ask this committee to consider a separate measure for this effort as the two-lined spittlebug efforts identified in the original bill pose a different agricultural invasive species risk.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i

SB-652-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 7:09:03 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/29/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer V Perry	Volcano Isle Fruit Co, Inc.	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to speak in favor of SB652 relating to continue funding for mitigating and controlling feral pigs. We have had feral pigs invading our farm for many years. When they started to eat our young papaya trees, we tried a quick fix and enclosed each tree with rebar, chicken wire and barbed wire. The pigs just knocked them down and continued to eat. The taller trees they would push over. In our longan orchard, they ate the fruit wherever they could reach, up to my chest height. Then they leave a rotting mess under each tree causing more insects to damage the rest of the orchard. We have done a lot of fencing (about one mile), but they dig under or wait for an invasive tree to fall onto the fence and provide a temporary path. These pigs are aggressive and dangerous. One huge boar charged our fence to get to my dog and dented his facemark into it. Luckily the fence held. They rut everywhere eating the earthworms and digging up the roots to our crops. We have had traps and hunted, but they multiply faster than feral cats. I see babies having babies. Last week I ran over a dead smaller pig on the highway, did not see it, and fortunately did not damage my vehicle. I know 3 cars that were flipped over. Pigs are a health and safety issue. Please support this bill.

SB-652-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2023 1:51:17 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/29/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Springer Kaye	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this measure to provide funding and ensure the Department of Agriculture is held accountable in implementing an effective program to support the ranching industry in combatting the two-lined spittle bug. In addition to the threat to our cattle industry, the two-lined spittlebug has been documented in montane forest reserves and wildlife refuges. Its host-plant, kikuyu grass, became established in many of our montane forest reserves, watersheds, and wildlife refuges during the ranching era. While kikuyu grass prevents the regeneration of native species, it also holds the thin topsoil in place and prevents a suite of other aggressive invasive species from moving into these forests. Forest planting schedules often include the removal of small areas of kikuyu to allow trees to establish, followed by more complete removal after a the forest canopy has established. The loss of kikuyu will require more intensive invasive species management to prevent soil erosion and allow habitat restoration efforts to proceed. By limiting the spread of TLSB, we can slow the impacts to the watershed, slow the rate of increased soil runoff to our reefs, and give land managers time to increase outplanting efforts in areas already blighted by TLSB.

The five-year pilot project is another admirable proposal. Unmanaged populations of feral pigs and chickens have continued to impact crops and degrade the quality of life both within and outside the agricultural district. My lychee farm is regularly affected by pigs rooting up the soil, making deep trenches and piles of sod that let in weeds and are difficult to mow. The trees are kept pruned to a manageable height for people, and the pigs are able to rear on their hind legs and devour up to 4 feet of low-hanging fruit, around each of our 120 trees in a few nights! Large feral pigs are being struck by cars at night, causing enough damage to disable vehicles, which which can be seen on the side of the road, radiators smashed in, awaiting a tow truck the next morning (three on my rural road in the past year!). Roosters are being released along agricultural roads, keeping neighbors awake at night, and creating an unsafe situation as members of the public contemplate shooting the noisy pests in a public street. Most residents are not equipped with the firearms or training needed to properly control these pests, and have no legal ability to do so when they are loose in the public road.

Your support for these two measures is greatly appreciated.

Springer Kaye, owner/operator Kaye Family Farms.

SB-652-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2023 2:16:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/29/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aileen K . F. Yeh	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support more research on two lined spittlebug

SB-652-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2023 3:08:52 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/29/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alex Franco	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB652.

SB-652-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2023 3:55:49 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/29/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jimmy Greenwell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB652 bjt only if in its original form. The addition of feral chickens and pigs introduces a totally separate set of issues and we need to remain focused on the two lined spiddle bug, its control and recovery strategies. Thank you

SB-652-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2023 6:02:07 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/29/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Taylor Kellerman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support this bill, and it sets a good precedence for government support of invasive species control in the future.

Mahalo

Taylor Kellerman

SB-652-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2023 8:24:40 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/29/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gregory FRIEL	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because it is extremely important to continue efforts to assist ranchers in addressing this invasive species. I respectfully ask that the committee consider returning the version to its original SB652 form, as the addition of a pilot program for feral chickens and pigs is a completely different subject matter from the two-lined spittlebug issues.

Mahalo

Gregory Friel

SB-652-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2023 2:17:21 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/29/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Randy Cabral	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support

SB-652-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2023 2:53:50 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/29/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janet Ashman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this measure to help ranchers address this devastating invasive species that is destroying hundreds of thousands of acres on Hawaii Island and may just be a matter of time before it does the same on other islands. We respectfully ask that the committee restore the original SB 652, because the addition of a pilot program for feral chickens and pigs confounds the bill, could make it less effective, and possibly less likely to pass this session. Thank you.

SB-652-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 5:14:01 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/29/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Woody Child	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB652.

SB-652-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 9:08:29 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/29/2023 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Will Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support SB652 SD1 HD1.