

JAN 17 2025

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the Hawai'i invasive
2 species council was created in response to the need for
3 statewide coordination and direction in addressing invasive
4 species in 2003. Hawaii was one of the first states to create
5 an invasive species council through state law. The council's
6 work is critical to support on-the-ground response efforts to
7 address some of the State's worst pests, such as the little fire
8 ant, coqui frog, and fungi that cause rapid 'ōhi'a death, and to
9 prevent the introduction of new pests, such as the africanized
10 bee and red imported fire ant, through its ability to coordinate
11 with and across multiple agencies and organizations.

12 The legislature further finds that effective biosecurity at
13 all levels requires a collective effort among state, federal,
14 and other partner organizations. The Hawai'i invasive species
15 council's allocation of funding every year is essential to
16 supporting partner organizations whose sole mission is to
17 control existing target pests in Hawai'i, the development of



1 innovative tools and technologies, and continued campaigns to
2 increase community awareness and engagement. Organizations and
3 work funded through the Hawai'i invasive species council are a
4 part of Hawaii's overall biosecurity program.

5 The legislature further finds that the Hawai'i invasive
6 species council receives an annual net funding allocation of
7 approximately \$5,750,000, of which approximately ninety per cent
8 is redirected towards its competitive grant program. The
9 remaining modest amount of funding is for the Hawai'i invasive
10 species council's operating expenses, overhead, and budget and
11 finance restriction. This funding allocation has not increased
12 in four years and covers less than fifty per cent of the total
13 amount of competitive grant proposals received. The need for
14 more funding is exacerbated by inflation, the high cost of doing
15 business in the State, and the need to attract and retain
16 qualified staff with competitive cost-of-living adjustments. As
17 a result, state funds are largely used only as bridge funding to
18 simply keep these strategic programs viable. Partner agencies
19 are largely limited to focusing on "invasive species
20 containment" rather than their "eradication".



1 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds for the
2 native resources and fire protection program and Hawai'i invasive
3 species council to continue to control and eradicate invasive
4 species in the State.

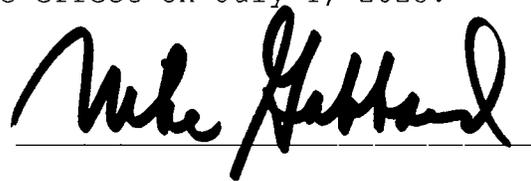
5 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
6 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$4,250,000 or so much
7 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the
8 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
9 2026-2027 for the native resources and fire protection program
10 and Hawai'i invasive species council to address the invasive
11 species crisis.

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

14 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

15

INTRODUCED BY:





S.B. NO. 548

Report Title:

HISC; Native Resources and Fire Protection Program; Viability
Funding; Invasive Species; Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates funds for the Native Resources and Fire Protection
Program and Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to ensure their
long-term viability and continue to control and eradicate
invasive species in the State.

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not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

