

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

438

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 12 , 2025

RE: H.B. No. 643
H.D. 2

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Higher Education, to which was referred
H.B. No. 643, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE COCONUT RHINOCEROS BEETLE
PROGRAM,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish short-term management initiatives for the
Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle Response Program; and
- (2) Appropriate funds to support the Program's activities
and positions.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure
from the Department of Land and Natural Resources; University of
Hawai'i at Manoa College of Tropical Agriculture and Human
Resilience; Hawaii Invasive Species Council; one member of the
Kaua'i County Council; Office of Economic Development of the County
of Kaua'i; Hawai'i Farmers Union United; Big Island Invasive
Species Committee; Hawai'i Farm Bureau; and two individuals. Your
Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of
the Attorney General.

2025-1680 HB643 HD2 HSCR HMSO



Your Committee finds that the coconut rhinoceros beetle is a significant pest that poses a significant threat to Hawaii's agricultural landscape, particularly its coconut and palm populations. In response, the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle Response Program was established to combat the growing population of coconut rhinoceros beetles. Your Committee believes that establishing short-term management initiatives for the Program is essential in protecting farms and natural resources in the State from this invasive species. Additionally, further funding for the Program will enable the implementation of immediate actions to manage and mitigate coconut rhinoceros beetles.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting language establishing standards for the distribution of the funds appropriated to subsidize canopy treatment for residential palm owners;
- (2) Amending the preamble to declare that the management of coconut rhinoceros beetles is a matter of statewide concern; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Higher Education that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 643, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it be referred to your Committee on Finance in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 643, H.D. 2.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Higher Education,

ANDREW T. KUY, Chair



