

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 11 2025

RE: S.B. No. 1171  
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi  
President of the Senate  
Thirty-Third State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2025  
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture and Environment, to which was referred S.B. No. 1171 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Require the Department of Agriculture to establish rules allowing the sale and distribution of monofilament netting of one-half to three-inch mesh in the State;
- (2) Require the Department of Agriculture to establish a program to provide monofilament netting of one-half to three-inch mesh, free of charge to the public, through local hardware stores to slow the growth and spread of coconut rhinoceros beetles in the State; and
- (3) Appropriate funds.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the University of Hawai'i System, Hawaii Invasive Species Council, Hawai'i Farmers Union United, Hawai'i Farm Bureau, and two individuals.



Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Agriculture and Department of Land and Natural Resources.

Your Committee finds that the coconut rhinoceros beetle is a major pest of coconut palms and other valuable crops. Your Committee recognizes that treatment options are still relatively limited for managing coconut rhinoceros beetle infestations. According to testimony received by your Committee, netting is a simple, yet effective management and detection tool for coconut rhinoceros beetles that can be applied on trees when pesticides cannot be used. This measure therefore promotes access to certain resources to help mitigate further damage and prevent the beetle's spread to other islands.

Your Committee has heard concerns that the specificity of monofilament netting of one-half to three-inch mesh not only would limit the ability of the netting to protect appropriate plants, but also does not comply with federal and state pesticides laws and rules. Further, the Department of Agriculture should be responsible for initial net distribution directly to individuals, rather than hardware stores, to ensure individuals in most critical need are getting the nets and are able to appropriately use them. In addition, the language required in the informational pamphlets to be distributed would not allow the Department to adjust should new netting materials, mesh size, or application procedures be refined or discovered. Amendments to this measure are therefore necessary to address these issues.

Accordingly, your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Replacing references to "one-half to three-inch mesh" with "an appropriate mesh size";
- (2) Clarifying that rules adopted by the Department of Agriculture shall allow the sale and distribution of fine meshed nets in the State to protect plants from invasive species;
- (3) Deleting language that would have:



- (A) Required the Department of Agriculture to provide the free monofilament netting to the public through hardware stores;
  - (B) Required the Department of Agriculture to supply informational pamphlets on the use of the free monofilament netting; and
  - (C) Authorized the Department of Agriculture to adopt administrative rules to establish a program to provide free monofilament netting;
- (4) Inserting language requiring the Department of Agriculture to establish a netting distribution program to provide monofilament netting of an appropriate size, free of charge, to the public and making the Department responsible for the distribution of the netting;
  - (5) Inserting language that requires the free monofilament netting to be visible and applied in a manner that is unlikely to entangle birds, become dislodged and enter water, or entangle or disturb native and beneficial animals;
  - (6) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion; and
  - (7) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture and Environment that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 1171, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 1171, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.



Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Agriculture and  
Environment,



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MIKE GABBARD, Chair



