
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO BIOSECURITY.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Molokai remains free
2 from many invasive species that are present elsewhere in the
3 State, including but not limited to the coconut rhinoceros
4 beetle, little fire ant, coqui frog, fungi causing rapid 'ōhi'a
5 death, and miconia. Preventing the establishment of these
6 invasive species on Molokai is critical to protecting the
7 island's natural environment, agricultural economy, cultural
8 resources, and community well-being.

9 The legislature further finds that in 2025, members of the
10 Molokai community petitioned the department of agriculture and
11 biosecurity to adopt a temporary rule prohibiting the movement
12 of coconut rhinoceros beetle host materials and other high-risk
13 imported goods to Molokai in order to maximize prevention.

14 The legislature also finds that in 2025, the coconut
15 rhinoceros beetle was introduced to Lāna'i in plants that were
16 previously inspected by the department of agriculture and
17 biosecurity. Fortunately, because Lāna'i has a private



1 quarantine facility, facility staff were able to detect and
2 prevent the beetle from being released into the environment,
3 demonstrating that secondary inspection of an interisland
4 transport of plants or plant material upon arrival is a critical
5 component of an effective biosecurity system.

6 The legislature finds that Molokai does not have a plant
7 and plant material quarantine or inspection facility and does
8 not have any dedicated inspection staff located on island,
9 leaving Molokai extremely vulnerable to the introduction of
10 invasive species, despite the fact that Molokai is one of the
11 most subsistence-committed islands in the Hawaiian archipelago.

12 The legislature further finds that, as an island state,
13 Hawaii has the opportunity to protect non-invaded islands from
14 invasive species present in other areas of the State and allow
15 them to serve as living repositories for native species and
16 ecosystems being decimated elsewhere.

17 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to strengthen
18 biosecurity protections for Molokai by:

19 (1) Requiring and appropriating funds for the department
20 of agriculture and biosecurity to develop a Molokai
21 biosecurity plan to prevent the spread of invasive



1 species found elsewhere in the State to the island of
2 Molokai;

3 (2) Authorizing the issuance of general obligation bonds
4 and appropriating funds for a new plant and plant
5 materials quarantine facility on the island of
6 Molokai; and

7 (3) Appropriating funds for staffing of the Molokai plant
8 and plant materials quarantine facility.

9 SECTION 2. (a) The department of agriculture and
10 biosecurity shall develop a Molokai biosecurity plan to prevent
11 the spread of invasive species not currently present on Molokai
12 but present elsewhere in the State to the island of Molokai,
13 including but not limited to the coconut rhinoceros beetle,
14 little fire ant, coqui frog, fungi causing rapid 'ōhi'a death,
15 and miconia. The plan shall, at a minimum:

16 (1) Address the movement of goods to the island of
17 Molokai, including high-risk commodities and pathways;
18 (2) Establish inspection, quarantine, and secondary
19 screening processes upon the arrival of plants and
20 plant materials to the island of Molokai;



(3) Establish reporting, detection, and response protocols for suspected invasive species.

(4) Provide policy recommendations to strengthen biosecurity protections for the island of Molokai; and

(5) Prioritize community and interagency engagement.

(b) The department of agriculture and biosecurity shall

nt the plan to the board of agriculture and biosecurity for review and adoption no later than July 1, 2027.

SECTION 3. The director of finance is authorized to issue

10 general obligation bonds in the sum of \$5,000,000 or so much

11 thereof as may be necessary and the same sum or so much thereof

12 as may be necessary is appropriated for fiscal year 2026-2027

13 for plans, design, construction, and equipment and appurtenances

14 for a plant and plant materials quarantine and inspection

15 facility on the island of Molokai.

16 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
17 agriculture and biosecurity for the purposes of this Act.

18 SECTION 4. The appropriation made for the capital

19 improvement project authorized by this Act shall not lapse at
20 the end of the fiscal biennium for which the appropriation is



1 made; provided that all moneys from the appropriation
2 unencumbered as of June 30, 2028, shall lapse as of that date.

3 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general
4 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$500,000 or so much
5 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the
6 establishment of full-time equivalent (FTE)
7 positions to staff the plant and plant materials quarantine and
8 inspection facility and provide other biosecurity support
9 services on the island of Molokai.

10 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
11 agriculture and biosecurity for the purposes of this Act.

12 SECTION 6. There is appropriated out of the general
13 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$150,000 or so much
14 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the
15 development of a Molokai biosecurity plan pursuant to section 2
16 of this Act.

17 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
18 agriculture and biosecurity for the purposes of this Act.

19 SECTION 7. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.



H.B. NO. 1929

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INTRODUCED BY:


JAN 23 2026



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Report Title:

Molokai; Biosecurity; Quarantine Facility; Molokai Biosecurity Plan; DOAB; GO Bonds; Appropriation

Description:

Requires and appropriates funds for the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to develop a Molokai Biosecurity Plan to prevent the spread of invasive species found elsewhere in the State to the island of Molokai. Authorizes the issuance of GO bonds and appropriates funds for a plants and plant materials inspection and quarantine facility on the island of Molokai and facility staffing.

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