

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
Governor

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
Lt. Governor



**SHARON HURD**  
Chairperson  
Board of Agriculture & Biosecurity

**DEAN M. MATSUKAWA**  
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & BIOSECURITY**  
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI A KIA'I MEAOLA  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9560 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND BIOSECURITY**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS**

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 30, 2026  
9:30 AM  
CONFERENCE ROOM 325 & VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1601  
RELATING TO BIOSECURITY**

Chair Chun, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill No. 1601, relating to biosecurity. This measure amends the expending agency for a fiscal year 2026-2027 appropriation for the Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC) from the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (Department) to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). The Department supports this bill.

As HISC remains administratively housed within DLNR until 2030, changing the expending agency from the Department to DLNR maintains the existing administrative clarity on HISC's expenditures. As with the current appropriation to DLNR that was authorized under Act 236, Session Laws of Hawaii 2025, the Department wants to emphasize the importance of these funds to increase biosecurity capacity, particularly when utilized for research into the detection, control, and/or management of high priority pests and invasive species; and to also meet the statutory requirements in HRS 141-3.5 for reporting of information to the Department's pest dashboard.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

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

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



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

P.O. BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

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

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE  
FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE  
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  
KAHOOLOWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of  
RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE  
Acting Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on  
AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS**

**Friday, January 30, 2026  
9:30 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 325**

**In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 1601  
RELATING TO BIOSECURITY**

House Bill 1601 amends Act 236 of the 2025 Session Laws of Hawaii by updating section 42 to change the overseeing agency for Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC) funds from the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to the Department of Land and Natural Resources. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources supports this measure, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities outlined in the Executive Supplemental Budget request.**

The HISC is currently managed by the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) in accordance with Hawaii Revised Statutes Chapter 194. It will stay under DLNR until 2030, when it will transfer to the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB), as outlined by Act 236. When Act 236 was enacted, FY 2026 HISC funding was allocated to DLNR, and for FY 2027, it was allocated to DAB. However, in FY 2027, HISC will still be managed by DLNR, and it would be more streamlined and efficient if HISC funding were allocated to the agency responsible for managing it.

DLNR supports this amendment to Act 236, which shifts the appropriation of Act 236 HISC funds for FY 2027 from DAB to DLNR. If there are future HISC appropriations, DLNR recommends allocating the funding to the agency that manages HISC.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



## HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

January 30, 2026

9:30 AM

Conference Room 325

### In SUPPORT of HB1601: RELATING TO BIOSECURITY

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Aloha Chair Chun, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the House Agriculture Committee,

On behalf of our over 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **SUPPORTS HB1601**, which will ensure that the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) can continue their vital and foundational role in our biosecurity strategy, without undue delay or disruption.

HISC and its programs and partners have proven to be incredibly effective at holding the line against invasive species in our islands, despite historically limited funding and a lack of support from other agencies assigned their own unique biosecurity roles (such as the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB)). For example, the HISC and the island invasive species committees (ISCs) that it supports are able to combine specialized expertise, field knowledge, cross-agency coordination, and community relationships to support the all-hands-on-deck fight to monitor, manage, and eradicate myriad invasive species throughout Hawai'i, in areas ranging from forests to open spaces to even businesses and homes. **Notably, these entities have been able to successfully prevent or eradicate dozens of outbreaks of invasive species on every island, from fireweed to pampas grass to little fire ants, saving us from untold millions of dollars in damages while protecting our environment, food security, cultural integrity, local businesses, and residents from the significant and potentially irreparable impacts of invasive pests.**

While HISC received \$4.5M for FY26-27 in last year's Act 236, the same Act placed the responsibility of administering these funds with DAB, instead of with the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). This change in administration of funds may have been an oversight, as HISC remains administratively attached to the DLNR. In any case, the transfer of funds to DAB threatens to disrupt critical biosecurity efforts carried out by HISC and its partners throughout the islands, potentially indefinitely, as DAB struggles to administer this HISC funding on top of the myriad other, well-documented challenges it is facing.

This measure would accordingly return HISC funds back to the DLNR where they are normally housed, and where they have been successfully administered for years. Notably, unlike DAB, DLNR has the experience and expertise to understand HISC's activities and our biosecurity needs, and has staff specifically assigned to manage and distribute HISC funding.



As we have painfully learned time and again, undue delays in biosecurity response efforts exponentially increase the costs of detecting and managing or eradicating invasive species, and can lead to irreversible harms to our islands and our ways of life. The disruptions to biosecurity programs that would be left in limbo if this common-sense measure is NOT passed may therefore result in consequences that we simply cannot afford.

Accordingly, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i respectfully urges the Committee to **PASS** HB1601. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.



House of Representatives  
Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems  
Friday, January 30, 2026  
9:30 AM Conference Room 325 & Videoconference  
State Capitol

### Testimony in Support of HB1601

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) is **in support of HB1601, Relating to Biosecurity**. This bill provides the fiscal year 2026-2027 funding for the Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC) to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) rather than the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB).

Part VII of Act 236 (2025) transfers all functions and duties of HISC from DLNR to DAB, effective January 1, 2030. (Part VII & §47(6) Act 236 (2025)) HISC will remain attached to DLNR for administrative purposes until that time. However, section 42 of Act 236 transferred the fiscal year 2026-27 funding for HISC to DAB. HB1601 proposes to remedy this situation.

HISC has no statutory staff or positions. For years, DLNR has assigned its own civil service staff and has contracted additional project support to successfully carry out HISC duties and functions under chapter 194, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS). HISC's small staff carries out key invasive species prevention and response programs, including [643PEST.org](http://643PEST.org) (an online reporting system developed and moderated by HISC), the Hawaii-Pacific Weed Risk Assessment screening and Plant Pono program (programs to promote the use of non-invasive plants by consumers and land managers), and the Port of Entry Monitoring Program (a program that conducts monitoring surveys for high impact invasive species at air and sea port properties). Through its annual competitive grant program, HISC funding has also provided critical support for the island-based Invasive Species Committees and many other control and research projects, supporting work in areas not covered by existing state programs. Sending HISC funds to DAB on July 1, 2026, to carry out the HISC duties in chapter 194, HRS, while HISC authorities are still attached to DLNR, does not seem efficient or practical.

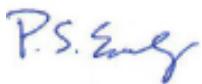
Other titles of Act 236 established new biosecurity authorities, funding, and responsibilities for DAB that the Legislature has prioritized and that should take precedence over managing HISC programs and the disbursement of HISC funds.

We hope you will support HB1601 to provide HISC's funding to its administrative agency for the fiscal year 2026-27. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and our support for this bill.

Aloha,



Christy Martin  
CGAPS Program Manager



Stephanie Easley  
CGAPS Legal Fellow



House of Representatives  
Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems  
Friday, January 30, 2026  
9:30 AM Conference Room 325  
State Capitol

**SUBJECT: Testimony – In Support of HB1601 “Relating to Biosecurity”**

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee:

The O'ahu Invasive Species Committee (OISC) **strongly supports HB1601, Relating to Biosecurity**. This measure would appropriate \$4,250,000 for fiscal year 2026–2027 for the operations of the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) and would return the administration of HISC funds to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), where the Council is attached for administrative purposes only.

HISC funding supports critical statewide biosecurity tools and programs, including 643PEST.org, an online pest reporting system developed and moderated by HISC; the Hawai'i-Pacific Weed Risk Assessment and Plant Pono program; and grant funding for organizations addressing priority invasive species issues, including the invasive species committees on each island.

OISC is one of the island-based invasive species committees operating in partnership with HISC. We work in partnership with state, county, federal, academic, and community organizations to prevent, detect, and respond rapidly to invasive species that threaten Hawai'i's environment, agriculture, economy, and public health. This includes on-going responses to the little fire ant (LFA) and coqui frog infestations, among many other priority pests, across O'ahu.

Any interruption in function or funding to HISC administratively would severely weaken current containment and eradication efforts occurring across the State. We are at a tipping point for several high-priority invasive species, so disrupting response efforts now would lead to irreparable damage to our ecosystems and communities.

Returning fund-administration to DLNR will prevent disruptions to the HISC. DLNR has successfully administered HISC funds for many years, assigning dedicated civil service staff and contracting with the University of Hawai'i to manage and distribute funds through a transparent, competitive proposal and evaluation process. This approach has provided consistent, timely support to on-the-ground invasive species prevention and response efforts statewide.

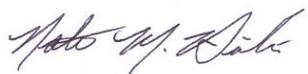
At the same time, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) continues to play a vital and expanding role in Hawai'i's biosecurity system. DAB has recently been granted new authorities, funding, and responsibilities that the Legislature has prioritized. As the department continues to carry out increased statutory responsibilities, requiring DAB administration of HISC funds under chapter 194 is an unnecessary addition that would interrupt the continuity of HISC operations and statewide biosecurity efforts. DAB does not currently employ a comparable open proposal and evaluation process and has not historically provided grant support to most HISC funding applicants.

Invasive species pose an ongoing and costly threat to Hawai'i. Effective biosecurity depends on early detection, rapid response, and strong statewide coordination. Stable funding and appropriate administration of HISC resources are essential to protecting Hawai'i's natural resources and communities.

For these reasons, the O'ahu Invasive Species Committee respectfully urges your support of HB1601.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo nui loa,



Nate Dube  
Manager  
O'ahu Invasive Species Committee (OISC)



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e-mail [info@hfbf.org](mailto:info@hfbf.org); [www.hfbf.org](http://www.hfbf.org)

January 30, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

**TESTIMONY ON HB 1601**  
RELATING TO BIOSECURITY

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference  
9:30 AM

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice-Chair Kusch, 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 HB 1601**, which clarifies the expending authority for the \$4.25 million appropriated for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) for fiscal year 2026–2027 under Act 236, SLH 2025.

Act 236 appropriated \$4.25 million for HISC and established the transfer of HISC from the Department of Land and Natural Resources to the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity, effective January 1, 2030. Until that transition occurs, HISC remains housed, staffed, and administered within DLNR.

HFB believes it is both practical and fiscally responsible to have the FY 2026–2027 HISC appropriation administered by the department currently responsible for implementing the program. Aligning the expending authority with DLNR during this interim period will help ensure continuity, reduce administrative inefficiencies, and allow HISC to deploy resources quickly and effectively to address invasive species threats.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau continues to support the long-term integration of invasive species efforts with agricultural biosecurity when HISC transitions to the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity in 2030. In the meantime, we encourage continued coordination between DLNR, DAB, and agricultural stakeholders to ensure that invasive species priorities affecting agriculture remain well represented.

HFB appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony and supports HB 1601 as a necessary measure to ensure that the \$4.25 million appropriation for HISC is administered efficiently and in alignment with the current organizational structure during this transition period.

**Testimony of The Nature Conservancy  
Supporting HB1601, Relating to Biosecurity  
Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems  
January 30, 2026 at 9:30am  
Conference Room 325 and via Videoconference**

Dear Chair Chun, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee:

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify today. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Hawai'i and Palmyra supports HB1601, which amends the expending agency for a Fiscal Year 2026-2027 appropriation for the Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC) from the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR).

As managers of over 80,000 acres of lands hosting some of Hawai'i's most critical ecosystems, we understand the importance of biosecurity to the health of our 'āina. We commend the legislature's commitment to biosecurity marked by the passage of Act 236 in 2025. A critical part of that Act delays the transfer of all rights, powers, functions and duties of HISC from DLNR to DAB until January 1, 2030. Until that date, HISC continues to be administered under DLNR, allowing for the orderly transition of authorities while maintaining the critical biosecurity mission and functions of the council.

However, Act 236 inadvertently bestowed immediate fiscal responsibility of HISC to DAB. This redirection of fiscal responsibility before the transfer of HISC could slow or halt ongoing HISC-funded projects statewide, including rapid response actions and community partnerships. Invasive species threats move quickly, and even brief funding or administrative delays can have drastic ecological consequences.

HB1601 will properly address this looming threat for Fiscal Year 2026-2027 by amending the expending agency for HISC from DAB to DLNR. This simple fix will help prevent delays that could accelerate the spread of invasive species across Hawai'i's most vulnerable ecosystems.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of HB1601.

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*Guided by science, TNC is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of the lands and waters upon which all life depends. The Conservancy has helped protect more than 200,000 acres of natural lands in Hawai'i and Palmyra Atoll. We manage 84,000 acres in 13 nature preserves and 18 managed areas and have supported over 50 coastal communities to help protect and restore the nearshore reefs and fisheries of the main Hawaiian Islands.*

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BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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*Founders:* Samuel A. Cooke Herbert C. Cornuelle



January 29, 2026

To: Chair Cory M. Chun, Vice Chair Matthias Kusch, and the House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

Subject: **HB1601**, Relating to Biosecurity

Aloha,

I am writing in **support** of **HB1601**. This measure amends the expending agency for the fiscal year 2026-2027 appropriation for the Hawaii Invasive Species Council by transferring that responsibility from the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR).

Invasive species pose significant threats not only to agriculture, but also to Hawai'i's native ecosystems, watersheds, forests, and cultural landscapes. Many of the most damaging invasive species impacts in Hawai'i include habitat degradation, loss of native biodiversity, increased wildfire risk, and reduced water security which are directly tied to land and natural resource management. As the state agency responsible for managing public lands, natural area reserves, forests, and wildlife, DLNR is well positioned to oversee invasive species funding that can align with these ecological challenges.

By placing expending authority under DLNR, it supports a more ecosystem-based approach to invasive species management. DLNR works closely with conservation partners and community-based land stewards across the state who are directly involved in invasive species prevention and control. This management approach complements agricultural biosecurity efforts by helping prevent the spread of invasive species before they reach farms and food production systems. Aligning fiscal oversight with these efforts can lead to improved coordination, efficiency, and strategic use of resources.

For these reasons, I **urge the committee to pass HB1601** in its commitment to protecting Hawai'i's lands, ecosystems, and communities.

Mahalo,  
Brandon Kinard & the Food+ Policy Team  
#fixourfoodsystem

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**The Food+ Policy Internship** develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2026, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students and young professionals working in the food system. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 9:47:24 AM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

**LATE**

| Submitted By         | Organization          | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| John & Rita Shockley | Free Access Coalition | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha!

The Free Access Coalition strongly supports HB1601. The invasive Coconut Rhino Beetle is ravaging Hawaiis palm trees. We need concerted effort to stem this continuing condition.

HB1601 would restore funding for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), where the Council is housed, and where such funding has been successfully administered for years.

DLNR and its dedicated staff have the experience and expertise to ensure Hawai'i Invasive Species Committee (HISC) funds get to the programs that we depend on, to protect our homes, farms, lands, and waters from invasive pests. These include the highly effective island invasive species committees, [643PEST.org](http://643PEST.org), the Hawai'i Weed Risk Assessment, and the Plant Pono Program, among others.

In contrast, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) has limited expertise in the breadth of HISC's work, continues to struggle with implementing the new authorities and staff positions it was given last year, and has a track record of inadequately administering biosecurity funding and ignoring invasive species threats generally. Having DAB administer FY26-27 HISC funds on top of DAB's current challenges, a change that was enacted last year, would only hinder HISC's partners and programs with potential funding disruptions and bureaucracy - at a time when Hawai'i's biosecurity crises need faster responses, not undue delays.

HB1601 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. We urge you to please **PASS** this measure.

Mahalo for your time and hopefully your kokua!

John & Rita Shockley. Coordinators. Free Access Coalition. [www.freeaccesscoalition.weebly.com](http://www.freeaccesscoalition.weebly.com)

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 11:50:05 AM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

**LATE**

| Submitted By  | Organization                          | Testifier Position | Testify           |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Franny Brewer | Big Island Invasive Species Committee | Support            | Remotely Via Zoom |

Comments:

We support this measure. It is an important fix to the mismatch between the movement of the HISC, which is not scheduled until 2030, and the funding, which otherwise will happen this coming year.

The HISC as administratively attached to DLNR has a very smooth and functional process for receiving and reviewing grant applications, and DAB has not yet had the time to stand up a similar process on their side. More time needs to be allocated to ensure that a smooth transition can take place, and important work is not stalled or stopped because of a bureaucratic snafu holding up monies intended by the Legislature to fight invasive species.

Mahalo!



Bold action for birds  
across the Americas

1/29/2026

**The Honorable Cory Chun, Chair  
The Honorable Matthias Kusch, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems  
Hawai'i State Legislature**

**RE: HB 1601**

On behalf of American Bird Conservancy and our members throughout Hawai'i, I am writing to express our **support for HB 1601**.

This bill appropriately changes the receiving agency of appropriated funds for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) to the Department of Land and Natural Resources, a move that is consistent with the administration of HISC.

Invasive species are among the leading causes of biodiversity decline worldwide and are a major threat to Hawai'i's native wildlife. In recognition of the significant role that HISC plays in the protection of Hawai'i's natural resources, as well as the economic and cultural importance of these resources, the legislature may also wish to consider increased funding for HISC initiatives.

Mahalo for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Grant Sizemore".

Grant Sizemore, M.S., CWB®  
Director of Invasive Species Programs

**Contact**

[abcbirds.org](http://abcbirds.org)  
[info@abcbirds.org](mailto:info@abcbirds.org)  
tel. **540.253.5780**  
fax **540.253.5782**

**Address**

regular, registered, or certified mail:  
**P.O. Box 249, The Plains, VA 20198**  
physical address for deliveries:  
**8255 E. Main Street, Suites D & E, Marshall, VA 20115**

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/27/2026 7:37:26 PM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By   | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Kevin Faccenda | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

**Comments:**

As an invasive species biologist, I support this measure as the Invasive Species Committees Finances are in much more competent hands with the dlnr as opposed to dab. The dab leadership does not have the skills or capacity to competently manage invasive species. This is especially the case as little fire ant and crb may be contained on several islands if decisive action is made. Increasing the appropriation to the isc would also have a positive impact.

Aloha,

Kevin Faccenda

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 8:36:57 AM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Bo Breda     | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

**Comments:**

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice-Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Bo Breda, and I am writing in **strong support of HB1601**.

This bill would restore funding for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), where the Council is housed, and where such funding has been successfully administered for years.

DLNR and its dedicated staff have the experience and expertise to ensure Hawai'i Invasive Species Committee (HISC) funds get to the programs that we depend on, to protect our homes, farms, lands, and waters from invasive pests. These include the highly effective island invasive species committees, 643PEST.org, the Hawai'i Weed Risk Assessment, and the Plant Pono Program, among others.

In contrast, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) has limited expertise in the breadth of HISC's work, continues to struggle with implementing the new authorities and staff positions it was given last year, and has a track record of inadequately administering biosecurity funding and ignoring invasive species threats generally. Having DAB administer FY26-27 HISC funds on top of DAB's current challenges, a change that was enacted last year, would only hinder HISC's partners and programs with potential funding disruptions and bureaucracy - at a time when Hawai'i's biosecurity crises need faster responses, not undue delays.

HB1601 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
Bo Breda

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 8:37:15 AM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Megan Blazak | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Support

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 8:38:06 AM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Peter Wilson | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

**Comments:**

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice-Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Peter Wilson, and I am writing in **strong support of HB1601**.

This bill would restore funding for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), where the Council is housed, and where such funding has been successfully administered for years.

DLNR and its dedicated staff have the experience and expertise to ensure Hawai'i Invasive Species Committee (HISC) funds get to the programs that we depend on, to protect our homes, farms, lands, and waters from invasive pests. These include the highly effective island invasive species committees, 643PEST.org, the Hawai'i Weed Risk Assessment, and the Plant Pono Program, among others.

In contrast, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) has limited expertise in the breadth of HISC's work, continues to struggle with implementing the new authorities and staff positions it was given last year, and has a track record of inadequately administering biosecurity funding and ignoring invasive species threats generally. Having DAB administer FY26-27 HISC funds on top of DAB's current challenges, a change that was enacted last year, would only hinder HISC's partners and programs with potential funding disruptions and bureaucracy - at a time when Hawai'i's biosecurity crises need faster responses, not undue delays.

HB1601 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
Peter Wilson

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 8:39:28 AM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By   | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Sherry Pollack | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

**Comments:**

I am writing in strong support of HB1601.

This bill would restore funding for the Hawaii Invasive Species Council to DLNR, where the Council is housed, and where such funding has been successfully administered for years. HB1601 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner.

Invasive species have created a critical crisis in Hawaii. We need to ensure that invasive species funding flows directly to frontline biosecurity efforts, without bureaucratic delays.

I urge you to please **PASS** this crucial measure.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 8:46:48 AM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| John Wassell | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

**Comments:**

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice-Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is John Wassell, and I am writing in **strong support of HB1601**.

This bill would restore funding for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), where the Council is housed, and where such funding has been successfully administered for years.

DLNR and its dedicated staff have the experience and expertise to ensure Hawai'i Invasive Species Committee (HISC) funds get to the programs that we depend on, to protect our homes, farms, lands, and waters from invasive pests. These include the highly effective island invasive species committees, 643PEST.org, the Hawai'i Weed Risk Assessment, and the Plant Pono Program, among others.

In contrast, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) has limited expertise in the breadth of HISC's work, continues to struggle with implementing the new authorities and staff positions it was given last year, and has a track record of inadequately administering biosecurity funding and ignoring invasive species threats generally. Having DAB administer FY26-27 HISC funds on top of DAB's current challenges, a change that was enacted last year, would only hinder HISC's partners and programs with potential funding disruptions and bureaucracy - at a time when Hawai'i's biosecurity crises need faster responses, not undue delays.

HB1601 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 8:49:49 AM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By   | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Patricia Blair | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

**Comments:**

It would be stupid to not pass.

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 9:06:35 AM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Teri Corpuz  | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

**Comments:**

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice-chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems,  
My name is Teri Corpuz, and I am writing in **strong support of HB1601**.

This bill would restore funding for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), where the Council is housed, and where such funding has been successfully administered for years.

DLNR and its dedicated staff have the experience and expertise to ensure Hawai'i Invasive Species Committee (HISC) funds get to the programs that we depend on, to protect our homes, farms, lands, and waters from invasive pests. These include the highly effective island invasive species committees, [643PEST.org](http://643PEST.org), the Hawai'i Weed Risk Assessment, and the Plant Pono Program, among others.

In contrast, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) has limited expertise in the breadth of HISC's work, continues to struggle with implementing the new authorities and staff positions it was given last year, and has a track record of inadequately administering biosecurity funding and ignoring invasive species threats generally. Having DAB administer FY26-27 HISC funds on top of DAB's current challenges, a change that was enacted last year, would only hinder HISC's partners and programs with potential funding disruptions and bureaucracy - at a time when Hawai'i's biosecurity crises need faster responses, not undue delays.

HB1601 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Teri Corpuz

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 9:15:08 AM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By   | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Stephen Canham | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

**Comments:**

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice-Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Stephen Canham, I reside in Kaneohe Oahu, and I am writing in strong support of HB1601.

I have seen firsthand the decimation of coconut trees here on the windward side due to CRB—and I understand the onslaught of various other invasive species on native flora and fauna. HB 1601 would restore funding for the Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), where the Council is housed, and where such funding has been successfully administered for years.

DLNR and its dedicated staff have the experience and expertise to ensure Hawai‘i Invasive Species Committee (HISC) funds get to the programs that we depend on, to protect our homes, farms, lands, and waters from invasive pests. These include the highly effective island invasive species committees, 643PEST.org, the Hawai‘i Weed Risk Assessment, and the Plant Pono Program, among others.

In contrast, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) has limited expertise in the breadth of HISC’s work, continues to struggle with implementing the new authorities and staff positions it was given last year, and has a track record of inadequately administering biosecurity funding and ignoring invasive species threats generally. Having DAB administer FY26-27 HISC funds on top of DAB’s current challenges, a change that was enacted last year, would only hinder HISC’s partners and programs with potential funding disruptions and bureaucracy - at a time when Hawai‘i’s biosecurity crises need faster responses, not undue delays.

HB1601 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Stephen Canham, PhD



**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 9:41:29 AM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

**LATE**

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Linda Lyerly | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice-Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Linda Lyerly, and I am writing in **strong support of HB1601**.

This bill would restore funding for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), where the Council is housed, and where such funding has been successfully administered for years.

DLNR and its dedicated staff have the experience and expertise to ensure Hawai'i Invasive Species Committee (HISC) funds get to the programs that we depend on, to protect our homes, farms, lands, and waters from invasive pests. These include the highly effective island invasive species committees, [643PEST.org](http://643PEST.org), the Hawai'i Weed Risk Assessment, and the Plant Pono Program, among others.

HB1601 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
Linda Lyerly

Lahaina, 96761

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 9:42:01 AM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

**LATE**

| Submitted By    | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| William Liggett | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

My name is William Reese Liggett, and I am writing in **strong support of HB1601**.

This bill would restore funding for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), where the Council is housed, and where such funding has been successfully administered for years.

DLNR and its dedicated staff have the experience and expertise to ensure Hawai'i Invasive Species Committee (HISC) funds get to the programs that we depend on, to protect our homes, farms, lands, and waters from invasive pests. These include the highly effective island invasive species committees, 643PEST.org, the Hawai'i Weed Risk Assessment, and the Plant Pono Program, among others.

In contrast, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) has limited expertise in the breadth of HISC's work, continues to struggle with implementing the new authorities and staff positions it was given last year, and has a track record of inadequately administering biosecurity funding and ignoring invasive species threats generally. Having DAB administer FY26-27 HISC funds on top of DAB's current challenges, a change that was enacted last year, would only hinder HISC's partners and programs with potential funding disruptions and bureaucracy - at a time when Hawai'i's biosecurity crises need faster responses, not undue delays.

HB1601 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
William Reese Liggett

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 10:18:21 AM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

**LATE**

| Submitted By    | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Perle Besserman | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice-Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Perle Besserman and I am writing in **strong support of HB1601**.

This bill would restore funding for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), where the Council is housed, and where such funding has been successfully administered for years.

DLNR and its dedicated staff have the experience and expertise to ensure Hawai'i Invasive Species Committee (HISC) funds get to the programs that we depend on, to protect our homes, farms, lands, and waters from invasive pests. These include the highly effective island invasive species committees, 643PEST.org, the Hawai'i Weed Risk Assessment, and the Plant Pono Program, among others.

In contrast, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) has limited expertise in the breadth of HISC's work, continues to struggle with implementing the new authorities and staff positions it was given last year, and has a track record of inadequately administering biosecurity funding and ignoring invasive species threats generally. Having DAB administer FY26-27 HISC funds on top of DAB's current challenges, a change that was enacted last year, would only hinder HISC's partners and programs with potential funding disruptions and bureaucracy - at a time when Hawai'i's biosecurity crises need faster responses, not undue delays.

HB1601 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
Perle Besserman

LATE \*Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 11:20:50 AM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

**LATE**

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Glenn Choy   | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly support this bill.

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 11:22:46 AM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

**LATE**

| Submitted By      | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Danielle Frohlich | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

My name is Danielle Frohlich, and I am writing in strong support of HB1601.

I work professionally in invasive species management in Hawai‘i, and I see firsthand how critical timely, well-administered funding is to protecting our ecosystems, agriculture, and communities. The Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council (HISC) has long been an essential part of that work, and its success has depended on stable administration within the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), where the Council is housed.

DLNR and its staff have demonstrated the experience and institutional knowledge needed to effectively administer HISC funds and get them where they are most needed. Programs such as the island invasive species committees, 643PEST.org, the Hawai‘i Weed Risk Assessment, and the Plant Pono Program are not abstract line items to me- they are tools and people I rely on and collaborate with in my day-to-day work.

In contrast, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) is still struggling to implement the authorities and staffing it was granted last year and does not have deep experience across the full scope of HISC’s work. Shifting administration of FY26–27 HISC funds to DAB, as enacted last year, risks funding delays and added bureaucracy at exactly the moment when Hawai‘i’s biosecurity challenges demand faster, more coordinated action. From my professional perspective, this change would hinder the programs on the ground doing the work.

HB1601 would restore a funding structure that has proven effective and would help ensure invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and impactful manner. I respectfully urge you to PASS this measure.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
Danielle

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 11:25:39 AM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

**LATE**

| Submitted By   | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Donelle Sawyer | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice-Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Donelle Sawyer, and I write to you today in **strong support of HB1601**. As you are aware, the bill will restore funding for the Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council to the DLNR, where the Council has been housed and funding as been successfully administered for years. Why it was inexplicably redirected to the Dept. of Agriculture and Biosecurity is a mystery, as are seemingly a lot of governmental moves these days. The DLNR has gained the experience and expertise, over the years, to manage the HISC funding and program dispersal for the protection of our homes, farms, lands and waters from invasive pests. Programs such as the highly effective island invasive species committees, 643PEST.org, the Hawai‘i Weed Risk Assessment, and the Plant Pono Program, among others. The DAB’s experience and knowledge of HISC’s efforts is limited at best. It is still struggling to implement new authorities and staff positions it was directed to do last year, and has shown how inadequately it administers biosecurity funding and ignores invasive species threats in general. DAB administering 2026-27 HISC funds on top of their current challenges, could only hinder HISC’s partnerships and programs with funding disruptions and bureaucratic red tape at a time when biosecurity crises in this state need faster responses, not avoidable delays.

HB1601 will help ensure that under the DLNR, the invasive species response funds will be deployed timely, transparently and effectively. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to voice my viewpoint.  
Sincerely,  
Donelle Sawyer

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 1:44:05 PM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

**LATE**

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Nanea Lo     | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Hello Chair Chun, Vice-Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Nanea Lo, and I am writing in **strong support of HB1601**.

This bill would restore funding for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), where the Council is housed, and where such funding has been successfully administered for years.

DLNR and its dedicated staff have the experience and expertise to ensure Hawai'i Invasive Species Committee (HISC) funds get to the programs that we depend on, to protect our homes, farms, lands, and waters from invasive pests. These include the highly effective island invasive species committees, 643PEST.org, the Hawai'i Weed Risk Assessment, and the Plant Pono Program, among others.

In contrast, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) has limited expertise in the breadth of HISC's work, continues to struggle with implementing the new authorities and staff positions it was given last year, and has a track record of inadequately administering biosecurity funding and ignoring invasive species threats generally. Having DAB administer FY26-27 HISC funds on top of DAB's current challenges, a change that was enacted last year, would only hinder HISC's partners and programs with potential funding disruptions and bureaucracy - at a time when Hawai'i's biosecurity crises need faster responses, not undue delays.

HB1601 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure

me ke aloha 'āina,

Nanea Lo

LATE \*Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 2:41:59 PM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Strong support

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 4:00:21 PM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By   | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Keili McEvilly | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice-Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Ke‘ili McEvilly from Waimanalo O‘ahu, and I am writing in strong support of HB1601.

This bill would restore funding for the Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), where the Council is housed, and where such funding has been successfully administered for years.

DLNR and its dedicated staff have the experience and expertise to ensure Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council (HISC) funds get to the programs that we depend on, to protect our homes, farms, watersheds, and ocean waters from invasive pests. These include the highly effective island invasive species committees, [643PEST.org](http://643PEST.org), the Hawai‘i Weed Risk Assessment, and the Plant Pono Program, among others.

In contrast, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) has limited expertise in the breadth of HISC’s work, continues to struggle with implementing the new authorities and staff positions it was given last year, and has a track record of inadequately administering biosecurity funding and ignoring invasive species threats generally. Having DAB administer FY26-27 HISC funds on top of the Department’s current challenges, as the law currently requires, would only hinder HISC’s partners and programs with potential funding disruptions and bureaucracy - at a time when Hawai‘i’s biosecurity crises need faster responses, not undue delays.

HB1601 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
Ke‘ili McEvilly

**LATE**

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 4:47:26 PM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By  | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Meredith Buck | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice-Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Meredith Buck, and I am writing in **strong support of HB1601**.

This bill would restore funding for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), where the Council is housed, and where such funding has been successfully administered for years.

DLNR and its dedicated staff have the experience and expertise to ensure Hawai'i Invasive Species Committee (HISC) funds get to the programs that we depend on, to protect our homes, farms, lands, and waters from invasive pests. These include the highly effective island invasive species committees, [643PEST.org](http://643PEST.org), the Hawai'i Weed Risk Assessment, and the Plant Pono Program, among others.

In contrast, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) has limited expertise in the breadth of HISC's work, continues to struggle with implementing the new authorities and staff positions it was given last year, and has a track record of inadequately administering biosecurity funding and ignoring invasive species threats generally. Having DAB administer FY26-27 HISC funds on top of DAB's current challenges, a change that was enacted last year, would only hinder HISC's partners and programs with potential funding disruptions and bureaucracy - at a time when Hawai'i's biosecurity crises need faster responses, not undue delays.

HB1601 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 6:39:03 PM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

**LATE**

| Submitted By   | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify           |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Krystal Chavez | Individual   | Support            | Remotely Via Zoom |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice-Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Krysta Chavez and I am writing in strong support of HB1601.

This bill would restore funding for the Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), where the Council is housed, and where such funding has been successfully administered for years.

DLNR and its dedicated staff have the experience and expertise to ensure Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council (HISC) funds get to the programs that we depend on, to protect our homes, farms, watersheds, and ocean waters from invasive pests. These include the highly effective island invasive species committees, [643PEST.org](http://643PEST.org), the Hawai‘i Weed Risk Assessment, and the Plant Pono Program, among others.

In contrast, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) has limited expertise in the breadth of HISC’s work, continues to struggle with implementing the new authorities and staff positions it was given last year, and has a track record of inadequately administering biosecurity funding and ignoring invasive species threats generally. Having DAB administer FY26-27 HISC funds on top of the Department’s current challenges, as the law currently requires, would only hinder HISC’s partners and programs with potential funding disruptions and bureaucracy - at a time when Hawai‘i’s biosecurity crises need faster responses, not undue delays.

HB1601 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
Krystal Chavez

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 8:35:01 PM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

**LATE**

| Submitted By      | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Brittany Penaroza | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice-Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Brittany, and I am writing in strong support of HB1601.

HB1601 would restore funding for the Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council (HISC) to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), where the Council is housed and where these funds have been effectively and responsibly administered for many years. DLNR and its professional staff possess the institutional knowledge, operational experience, and inter-agency relationships necessary to ensure HISC funding is distributed efficiently and reaches the programs that Hawai‘i relies on to protect its homes, farms, watersheds, and nearshore waters from invasive species.

These critical programs include the Island Invasive Species Committees, 643PEST.org, the Hawai‘i Weed Risk Assessment, the Plant Pono Program, and others that provide proven, on-the-ground prevention and rapid-response capacity statewide.

By contrast, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) does not have demonstrated expertise across the full scope of HISC’s work and is currently still working to implement the new authorities and staffing positions assigned to it last year. The Department has also struggled historically with the timely and effective administration of biosecurity funding. Requiring DAB to administer FY 2026–2027 HISC funds under current law risks avoidable delays, funding disruptions, and increased bureaucracy—at a moment when Hawai‘i’s escalating invasive species and biosecurity threats demand swift, coordinated action.

HB1601 provides a practical and responsible solution by returning HISC funding administration to the department best equipped to manage it. Doing so will help ensure invasive species response funds are deployed promptly, transparently, and effectively, supporting the programs that protect Hawai‘i’s environment, economy, and public health.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to PASS HB1601.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

Brittany

LATE \*Testimony submitted late may not be considered by the Committee for decision making purposes.

**LATE**

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/29/2026 11:02:57 PM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By   | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Carmela Resuma | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I support HB1601 and funding for the Hawai‘i Invasive Species council.

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/30/2026 6:07:16 AM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

**LATE**

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Noel Shaw    | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice-Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Noel Shaw, and I am writing in **strong support of HB1601**.

This bill would restore funding for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), where the Council is housed, and where such funding has been successfully administered for years.

Our family and the homestead community we live in has benefited directly from funding allocated to address invasive species. We had a red fire ant infestation and the Hawai'i Ant Lab in collaboration with DHHL was able to address it for us. It has allowed us to regain a love for being outside.

Additionaly, as someone who advocates for restored traditional ecological food systems in Hawai'i, it's important that resources to combat invasions my disruptive foreign pests are available. Hawai'i's ability to feed ourselves is essential to being able to make surviving and thriving here possible.

HB1601 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Noel Shaw

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/30/2026 6:57:06 AM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

**LATE**

| Submitted By  | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Mina H Elison | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice-Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Mina Elison and I am writing in **strong support of HB1601**.

This bill would restore funding for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), where the Council is housed, and where such funding has been successfully administered for years.

DLNR and its dedicated staff have the experience and expertise to ensure Hawai'i Invasive Species Committee (HISC) funds get to the programs that we depend on, to protect our homes, farms, lands, and waters from invasive pests. These include the highly effective island invasive species committees, 643PEST.org, the Hawai'i Weed Risk Assessment, and the Plant Pono Program, among others.

In contrast, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) has limited expertise in the breadth of HISC's work, continues to struggle with implementing the new authorities and staff positions it was given last year, and has a track record of inadequately administering biosecurity funding and ignoring invasive species threats generally. Having DAB administer FY26-27 HISC funds on top of DAB's current challenges, a change that was enacted last year, would only hinder HISC's partners and programs with potential funding disruptions and bureaucracy - at a time when Hawai'i's biosecurity crises need faster responses, not undue delays.

HB1601 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify,

Mina Elison

**HB-1601**

Submitted on: 1/30/2026 7:08:38 AM  
Testimony for AGR on 1/30/2026 9:30:00 AM

**LATE**

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Keri Zacher  | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice-Chair Kusch, and members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

My name is Keri Zacher, and I am writing in **strong support of HB1601**.

This bill would restore funding for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), where the Council is housed, and where such funding has been successfully administered for years.

DLNR and its dedicated staff have the experience and expertise to ensure Hawai'i Invasive Species Committee (HISC) funds get to the programs that we depend on, to protect our homes, farms, lands, and waters from invasive pests. These include the highly effective island invasive species committees, 643PEST.org, the Hawai'i Weed Risk Assessment, and the Plant Pono Program, among others.

In contrast, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) has limited expertise in the breadth of HISC's work, continues to struggle with implementing the new authorities and staff positions it was given last year, and has a track record of inadequately administering biosecurity funding and ignoring invasive species threats generally. Having DAB administer FY26-27 HISC funds on top of DAB's current challenges, a change that was enacted last year, would only hinder HISC's partners and programs with potential funding disruptions and bureaucracy - at a time when Hawai'i's biosecurity crises need faster responses, not undue delays.

HB1601 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely, Keri Zacher