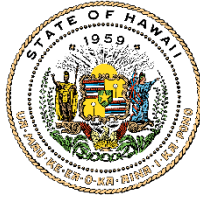


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

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
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

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

**Before the Senate Committee on
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

**Friday, March 20, 2026
4:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 224**

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 1931, HOUSE DRAFT 2
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

House Bill 1931 House Draft 2 establishes a State Noxious Weed Coordinator, updates the process for designating and managing noxious weeds, and allows public proposals to add, amend, or remove noxious weed designations. It requires notice and public reporting, clarifies the authority of the Department and the Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity, and authorizes updates to the noxious weed list to be adopted by order. The bill classifies noxious weeds into three categories, strengthens enforcement and penalties, and updates departmental duties for noxious weed control and eradication. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities outlined in the Executive Supplemental Budget request.**

This bill emphasizes the serious issue of invasive plants in Hawai'i. Hawai'i's economic, ecological, and cultural heritage are constantly threatened by both established and newly introduced plants. There is a strong need to keep the list of banned plant species as up-to-date and comprehensive as possible. Besides plants on the noxious weed lists of the federal government and the State of Hawai'i, plants from anywhere in the world can currently enter the State.

The Hawai'i Noxious Weed List (NWL) has not been updated since 1992. Since then, some species on the NWL have become widespread in Hawai'i, and many new invasive plants have

appeared in the State. This bill could help improve the NWL's effectiveness by ensuring it is updated more regularly.

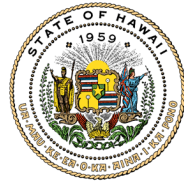
The Department recommends establishing a Noxious Weed Coordinator position. Historically, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) has managed the NWL and its maintenance, but it has not assigned dedicated personnel for this role for some time. The Department supports annual updates to the NWL and the option to make emergency additions to the list.

Maintaining the NWL at DAB is crucial for preventing the entry of some of the most invasive plants that threaten Hawai'i. Invasive plants frequently impact Hawai'i's ecosystems, culture, and economy, and the NWL plays a key role in stopping some new threats from establishing themselves.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

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 SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 2026
4:00 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 224 & VIDEO CONFERENCE**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1931, HD2
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 1931, HD2 relating to agriculture. The bill seeks to institute a formal and transparent framework to update and maintain the State's noxious weed list by establishing a state noxious weed coordinator, updating the process of noxious weed designation and management, allowing public proposals to add or remove noxious weed designations, requiring notice and public reporting, clarifying the authority of the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (Department) and Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity (Board), authorizing the update of the noxious weed list by order, classifying noxious weeds into three categories, strengthening enforcement and penalties, and updating departmental duties for noxious weed control and eradication. The Department supports the intent and offers comments on this bill.

The Department agrees that the noxious weed list should be updated and maintained to be an effective tool in minimizing the introduction and spread of noxious weeds in the State. Updating and maintaining the list will require significant, dedicated effort from the state noxious weed coordinator. Existing staff do not have the capacity to assume these additional responsibilities. Therefore, the Department is requesting an allocation of \$120,000 to fund a full-time state noxious weed coordinator. Regarding the proposed §152-A(c) in Section 2 of the bill, the Department believes that this section is unnecessary because the requirements for this job description would need to be in compliance with collective bargaining and other human resources-related obligations upon establishment of the position. Rulemaking after position establishment would not

negate these requirements and the Department believes that the proposed requirements in §152-A(b) are already sufficient.

In addition, the Department is requesting an allocation of \$120,000 to fund a full-time Biosecurity Inspector position to investigate any potentially unlawful activities as described in Section 7 of the bill. The position will be responsible for collecting pertinent information to develop cases against potential violators so that relevant statutes may be enforced.

The Department is concerned that the bill does not provide a mechanism for the noxious weed coordinator to administratively review and deny proposals before the proposals are forwarded to the Board, particularly given the expanded definition of “noxious weed” to include plants potentially harmful to “natural resources, cultural resources, environment, or public or animal health.” The coordinator should have the authority to reject proposals that do not include all required information as specified in §152-B of Section 2. There may be situations where submitters fail to provide the necessary details or additional information requested by the coordinator. The Board should not be required to review proposals that are incomplete or contain insufficient information, as currently proposed under §152-C(a) of Section 2. Therefore, the Department respectfully recommends granting the noxious weed coordinator authority to deny incomplete proposals for review by the Board.

In §152-C(d) of Section 2 of the bill, it states that the Board shall vote on each proposal within one hundred eighty days after April 1, following consideration of each recommendation from the Advisory Committee on Plants and Animals (Committee) and all oral and written comments submitted. The Department respectfully recommends that the Board vote on each proposal within one hundred eighty days after the scheduled Board meeting at which the proposals are accepted for review. This approach ensures that each proposal receives the same one hundred eighty-day review period, regardless of when the Board meeting occurs. Even so, the Department remains concerned that, depending on the number of requests or taxa proposed for review, there may not be sufficient time for the noxious weed coordinator to complete the review and provide recommendations to the Committee, and for the Committee to conduct its assessment and issue recommendations before the one hundred eighty-day deadline.

The Department is unclear on the intent of §152-C(f) of Section 2 of the bill. The Department does not believe that the Chair can “recommend” an emergency revision of the noxious weed list to the Board without proper notice, and notes that “petitions” are typically used for contested case hearings, to initiate rule changes, or for declaratory orders - none of which appear applicable here. Further, because the current noxious weed list is incorporated into the Hawai‘i Administrative Rules by reference, revisions to the list function as revisions to the rules themselves, which ordinarily triggers the procedural requirements of Chapter 91, Hawai‘i Revised Statutes (HRS). After the bill’s three-year exemption for initial rulemaking expires, it is unclear how emergency list

revisions would comply with Chapter 91, HRS or whether they could be legally adopted without a public hearing. Additionally, if the Board adopts an emergency revision to the noxious weed list and the Committee does not concur, it is unclear how the Committee's recommendation would affect the Board's order that has already been enacted.

The Department seeks clarification on the phrase 'limited distribution' as used in Section 8 of the bill, which states that Class A noxious weeds shall not be known to occur, or are of very limited distribution, in the State. The bill also states that Class B noxious weeds are those that are known to occur in the State but are of limited distribution on one or more islands. However, the term 'limited distribution' is not defined in the bill, and without clear criteria or thresholds, its meaning is open to interpretation. This lack of specificity may lead to inconsistent application of the classification system and uncertainty when determining whether a species meets the criteria for Class A or Class B designation.

In §152-4(g) of Section 8 of the bill, it states that any interested person may provide oral and written comments "during the period after the board accepts proposals for review under section 152-C...." The Department seeks clarification on when this comment period ends and respectfully recommends that it be concluded when the Board votes on the proposal. In addition, the Department seeks clarification on whether oral comments for a specific proposal may be provided at multiple Board and/or Committee meetings. Furthermore, the bill states that any interested person may "[p]rovide written comments on the proposal to the board and the state noxious weed coordinator." The Department seeks clarification on whether the Committee should also receive these written comments, particularly when comments are submitted after the Committee has issued its written recommendations to the Board.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

‘Ōlelo Hō‘ike ‘Aha Kau Kānāwai

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 1931 HD2

RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Ke Kōmike ‘Aha Kenekoa o ka ‘Oihana Mahi‘ai a me ke Ao Kūlohelohe
(Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment)

Ke Kapikala o Hawai‘i
(Hawai‘i State Capitol)

Malaki 20, 2026

4:00PM

Lumi 224

Aloha e Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS HB1931 HD2**, which modernizes Hawai‘i’s noxious weed list by establishing a noxious weed coordinator and establishes a process for public input for the invasive species on the list.

Hawai‘i’s natural resources, agricultural lands, and culturally significant plants and animals are increasingly at risk due to the rapid spread of invasive plants. The State’s current noxious weed framework has not kept pace with these threats. The state’s noxious weed list has not been updated since 1992. Many of the invasive species this list is intended to track have degraded our upland forests, wetlands, and coastal environments that Native Hawaiian have long relied upon for traditional practices. This outdated regulatory list means that emerging and evolving threats go unaddressed.

HB1931 HD2’s provision to incorporate public proposals to add, change, and remove noxious weed designations is critical in ensuring the list is updated as quickly as possible when a new species is identified. Native Hawaiian land stewards have long observed the establishment and impact of invasive species firsthand. Their kilo (observations) are critical to informing the list is as accurate as possible.

For the reasons stated above, OHA respectfully urges this committee to **PASS HB1931 HD2**. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this critical issue.



The Senate
Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Friday, March 20, 2026
4:00 PM Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
State Capitol

Testimony in Support of HB1931 HD2

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) is **in support of HB1931 HD2**, *Relating to Agriculture*, which sets out a plan to revitalize noxious weed prevention and control efforts at the State level. The bill requires the noxious weed list to be updated annually by order of the Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity (the Board), establishes a process for the public to propose plant species for designation as noxious weeds, authorizes the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) to carry out noxious weed control actions without a contribution from the landowner/land occupier of each parcel where the actions will take place, designates a State noxious weed coordinator within DAB, and strengthens enforcement.

Noxious weeds impact agriculture, livestock, natural resources, cultural resources, and quality of life, and may require expensive management and ongoing herbicide treatments. However, noxious weed prevention and control have not been prioritized by the DAB, as other priorities have required its attention and resources. As noted in HB1931 HD2, the list of designated noxious weeds in chapter 4-68 Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR) was last updated in 1992 and now includes many widespread species, while omitting highly invasive species, allowing them to be imported into and sold within the State. The noxious weed statute, chapter 152, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), and administrative rules, chapter 4-68, HAR, are holdovers from an earlier time and do not address current noxious weed issues in the State.

HB1931 HD2 is a much-hoped-for overhaul of the noxious weed program. The process set out in the bill for annually updating the noxious weed list is similar to the effective noxious weed listing process used in Washington State¹ and to the recommendations of a working group led by DAB that met in 2020-21, comprised of experts from DAB, representatives of agricultural producers, the island-based invasive species committees, Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC), Bishop Museum, CGAPS, and others. HB1931 HD2 incorporates sensible changes to the process and timeline for updates to the State's noxious weed list. We note that the requirements in HB1931 HD2 for public input on proposed noxious weed designations are similar to the requirements for public input set out in section 150A-6.6 HRS and section 4-71-4.2 HAR, that allow additions to, or deletions from, the lists of restricted and prohibited animal species to be made by order of the Board, instead of amending the lists through chapter 91 HRS

¹ <https://www.nwcb.wa.gov/get-involved>

rulemaking. We also note that the existing noxious weed statutes allow the Board to modify the list of noxious weeds without chapter 91 HRS rulemaking.

Another important update proposed in HB1931 HD2 is the removal of the requirement that DAB enter into a cooperative agreement with each landowner/land occupier of a parcel where DAB intends to control a noxious weed. (§152-6(d) HRS) Currently, DAB cannot control a noxious weed unless the landowner/land occupier contributes materials, personnel, or other resources to the control effort. The only exceptions to this requirement are cases where the landowner/occupier “will not benefit materially or financially by the control or eradication of the noxious weed; or when the noxious weed infestation is on state-owned land not leased or under control of private interest.” (§152-6(e) HRS) This requirement for a landowner/occupier contribution made sense when agriculture in Hawaii was carried out by large landowners to avoid situations in which the State was fully providing weed control for a large agricultural interest. However, now, the requirement prevents DAB from identifying an area infested with a noxious weed and carrying out a control program that will benefit the public generally, as well as agricultural, natural, and cultural resources, unless each landowner/occupier in that area enters into a cooperative agreement and provides materials, personnel, or other resources.

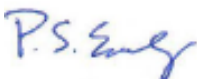
Finally, we note that HB 1931 HD2 does not propose adding definitions in statute for the terms “limited distribution” and “very limited distribution.” We also note that the state of Washington, which has a similar noxious weed listing process, does not include similar definitions in its statute. The lack of a statutory definition is a sensible approach, as what constitutes “limited distribution” and “very limited distribution” will vary among the species of noxious weeds. For instance, “limited distribution” for a grass or ground covering weed could be very different than for a woody species. Leaving this determination to the experts at DAB will allow flexibility to address the biological characteristics of the different noxious weed species.

We hope this Committee will support HB1931 HD2 and the attempt to modernize the State’s noxious weed laws and to revitalize noxious weed control efforts at the State level. 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



Officers

Kaipo Kekona
State President

Christian Zuckerman
Vice-President

Maureen Datta
Secretary

Reba Lopez
Treasurer

Chapter Presidents

Kelii Gannet
Kohala, Hawai'i

East Hawai'i

Puna, Hawai'i

Ka'u, Hawai'i

Maureen Datta
Kona, Hawai'i

Gina Lind
Hāna, Maui

Mason Scharer
Haleakalā, Maui

Kaiea Medeiros
Mauna Kahālāwai,
Maui

Kaipo Kekona
Lahaina, Maui

Kilia Avelino-Purdy
Moloka'i

Negus Manna
Lāna'i

India Clark
North Shore, O'ahu

Christian Zuckerman
Wai'anae, O'ahu

Rachel LaDrig
Waimānalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura
Honolulu, O'ahu

Natalie Urminska
Kaua'i

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Senate Agriculture and Environment Committee,

The Hawai'i Farmers Union is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFU supports HB1931.**

HB1931 modernizes Hawaii's biosecurity infrastructure by establishing a State Noxious Weed Coordinator and an agile, science-based process for managing invasive plant threats. By establishing a State Noxious Weed Coordinator, the bill ensures dedicated leadership and oversight in safeguarding our lands from invasive plant species. This role will be pivotal in coordinating efforts and resources across various stakeholders, enhancing the effectiveness of weed management programs.

Transitioning noxious weed list updates from a slow rulemaking process to an order-based system allows the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to respond in real-time to the numerous new species entering the state annually. The inclusion of public proposals in the process is a progressive move that encourages community involvement and leverages local knowledge to address the unique challenges faced by different regions in the state.

While HFU supports strengthened penalties to deter negligence, we urge the Legislature to ensure that the Department provides technical assistance and cost-sharing for small-scale producers so that those with limited capital are not unfairly penalized for infestations originating from neighboring unmanaged lands or public corridors.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin
Advocacy Director
Hawai'i Farmers Union



SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

March 20, 2026

4:00 PM

Conference Room 224

In **SUPPORT** of **HB1931 HD2**: RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of our over 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **SUPPORTS HB1931 HD2**, which will help to mitigate the ongoing and future impacts of invasive plants on our native ecosystems, cultural practices, food security, public health, economy, and the overall quality of life of present and future generations.

Hawai'i's history provides us with a host of lessons regarding the wide-ranging and potentially irreversible damage that invasive species can inflict on our islands and ways of life. Invasive plants and wildlife have overtaken entire watersheds, impacting not just native habitat but also reducing aquifer recharge, increasing our vulnerability to floods and wildfires, and smothering our nearshore reefs and waters with runoff. Parasites and diseases carried by invasive and introduced species have impacted local food production and increased the use of toxic pesticides on farms and in home gardens, risking both public health as well as threatening stream and nearshore species critical to our aquatic ecosystems. Invasive plants can also crowd out, displace, and extirpate native species, undermining the biodiversity that defines our islands, culture, and unique ways of life.

Accordingly, the Sierra Club strongly supports this measure, which would implement long-awaited recommendations that can facilitate much more timely and effective government responses to invasive weeds, including through dedicated staff who can track and coordinate weed response efforts; mechanisms for public participation in identifying new invasive plants for the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) to take action on; additional DAB authorities to address invasive plant infestations, and other long-sought and much-needed changes to the existing statutory invasive plant biosecurity framework. This comprehensive and common-sense suite of fixes will be critical to minimizing or avoiding the impacts of invasive plant species on our islands, as well as the exponentially increasing financial, ecological, agricultural, and cultural costs associated with delayed action.

Therefore, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i respectfully urges the Committee to **PASS** HB1931 HD2. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

March 20, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

TESTIMONY ON HB 1931, HD2
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
4:00 PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice-Chair Richards, 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 1931, HD2, which, among other things, establishes a State Noxious Weed Coordinator, updates the process for designating and managing noxious weeds to include the acceptance of public proposals to add or remove noxious weed designations, and updates departmental duties for noxious weed control and eradication.

HFB looks forward to the revitalization and modernization of the noxious weed management program, which is significantly outdated and ineffective. The proposed program will serve as an essential State function to prevent the importation and sale of harmful and invasive species that devastate natural and agricultural resources and ultimately lower our quality of life. The process described in the bill is well-informed, multi-leveled, and has the input and support of experts in the field as well as stakeholder representatives.

While we understand the intent to expedite implementation, HFB encourages the DAB to maintain meaningful stakeholder engagement when adopting initial rules, even if those rules are exempt from Chapter 91 requirements. Continued transparency and input will strengthen the program and build confidence among affected agricultural producers.

Thank you for your continued support of agriculture through measures like this, which will help sustain local food production and protect our farming and ranching history and culture.

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 6:08:41 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nakoolani Warrington	Testifying for Kupuna for the Moopuna	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STRONG SUPPORT of HB 1931 HD2

We, Kūpuna for the Mo‘opuna, a hui of Hawaiian Homes Commission Act kūpuna beneficiary farmers from Pana‘ewa, Hawai‘i, **testify in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 1931 HD2.**

HB 1931 HD2 would implement longstanding recommendations to boost our ability to fight back against invasive weeds and plants, and the threats they pose to our food security, water security, ecological and cultural integrity, climate resilience, and economy. It would support and strengthen the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity in its efforts to track and coordinate weed response efforts and other enforcement tools, especially needed in its management of incoming pest-infested materials and noxious weeds.

Our ‘āina and people are in critical need of stronger protection from invasive infestation.

SUPPORT and PASS HB 1931 HD2. Mahalo.



Date of Hearing: 20 March, 2026

To: Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Subject: **HB1931 HD2**, Relating to Agriculture

Aloha,

Hawai'i Food+ Policy is writing in **strong support** of **HB1931 HD2**, which modernizes Hawai'i's noxious weed law by establishing a State Noxious Weed Coordinator, clarifying the authority of the Department and Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity, and creating a transparent, science-based process for updating, classifying, and enforcing the State's noxious weed list.

Hawai'i's agricultural sector and natural ecosystems remain highly vulnerable to invasive species. Despite these ongoing threats, Hawai'i's official noxious weed list has not been updated since 1992, limiting its effectiveness as a management and regulatory tool. Estimates from the Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC) indicate that new non-native species become established in Hawaii approximately every 18 days, emphasizing the urgency of maintaining an effective and current regulatory framework.

Early detection and prevention are critical to supporting local agriculture. Research and management guidance show that early detection and rapid response (EDRR) is one of the most effective strategies for controlling invasive weeds and preventing widespread infestation. By creating a clear, legally structured pathway for updating the noxious weed list and strengthening enforcement provisions, this measure provides the State with appropriate tools to act before threats become unmanageable.

This also promotes transparency and community participation by allowing submission of proposals to provide input on noxious weed designations. Those working directly on the land are often the first to see emerging threats in which this measure can create a clear pathway to inform biosecurity action.

Strengthening Hawai'i's noxious weed framework supports not only agricultural productivity but also the protection of conservation districts, natural resources, and cultural landscapes foundational to Hawai'i's communities. Clear legal authority combined with public transparency ensures that invasive species management remains both effective and accountable. For these reasons, **I urge this committee to pass HB1931 HD2.**

Mahalo,

Brandon Kinard & the Food+ Policy Team

#fixourfoodsystem

[1] U.S. National Invasive Species Information Center. *Control Mechanisms & Early Detection and Rapid Response*.
<https://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/subject/control-mechanisms>

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.

BIISC
23 E. Kawili St.
Hilo, HI 96720
(808) 933-3340
www.biisc.org



Mar 19, 2026

Hearing: Mar 20 Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment
RE: HB1931

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards , and members of the committee,

I would like to express BIISC's support for HB1931 which creates a State noxious weed coordinator and overhauls the existing noxious weed statutes, including provisions to allow the Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity to update the noxious weed list by order and requiring the Board to accept petitions from the public for the designation of plants as noxious weed species.

Hawai'i's Noxious Weed Law has not been updated since 1992. Our understanding of the impacts and movement of invasive organisms has grown exponentially in the decades since. Worldwide movement of goods also accelerated dramatically during that time - all while our regulatory framework remained largely static. This mismatch has left the State reactive rather than proactive, resulting in the proliferation of many harmful plant species that frustrate farmers, land managers, and residents on a daily basis.

As the primary entity on the Big Island responsible for finding and evaluating newly naturalized plants, we work hard to slow the flow of new plants onto the landscape. Sometimes, it can feel like we are chasing our tails, trying to get control of current populations while also being flooded by new species. Last year, our community alerted BIISC staff that a retailer in Hilo was selling the highly invasive Australian tree fern, even as conservation programs are using tax dollars to control that plant's destructive spread into our watersheds. BIISC staff (and members of the public) contacted store managers and urged them to remove the plants from sale. The retailers declined to act, however, stating that they had checked with the HDAB and learned that the plant was not listed as a Noxious Weed, and therefore was completely legal to sell. But in 1992 we did not yet know that ATF would be an invasive plant in Hawaiian landscapes. This is a clear example of how outdated statutes limit regulatory authority and actually work against the interests of our state.

Our Invasive Plant Prevention program, working with UH researchers, actively documents escapes from cultivation, and found 24 new species last year alone. For example, BIISC is currently monitoring an incipient population of *Rosa rugosa*, a popular horticulture plant that is now listed as noxious in several U.S. states and in Canada. Despite its known invasiveness elsewhere, the species was - and is - still able to be legally imported and cultivated in Hawai'i. The purple-flowered rubbervine (*Cryptostegia madagascariensis*) has been found twice in the last 3 years in cultivated landscaping, even as we have worked to eradicate it for nearly a decade - indicating continued importation despite BIISC having invested years of staff time and resources to control it in the wild.

The current noxious weed law relies on decades-old information, assigning status to individual islands as being "free" or "relatively free" of certain species when many of these plants are now widespread on those islands. Species such as *Anredera cordifolia* and *Bocconia frutescens* are well established across Hawai'i Island, while *Chromolaena odorata* is widespread on O'ahu. This

muddies the waters of response and of communication to the public. Without a more nimble, regularly updated system, the noxious weed list cannot serve as an effective management tool.

HB1931 provides a practical, science-based framework to modernize Hawai‘i’s noxious weed program, improve coordination, facilitate training and collaboration, and most importantly, allow the State to act earlier—when control is still feasible and affordable.

We strongly urge this committee to support HB1931 and help align Hawai‘i’s noxious weed laws with the realities we face on the ground today.

Mahalo for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Franny Kinslow Brewer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Franny Kinslow Brewer
Program Manager
Big Island Invasive Species Committee

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 6:28:01 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha!

The Free Access Coalition supports HB1931.

[HB1931 HD2](#) would implement longstanding recommendations to boost our ability to fight back against invasive weeds and plants, and the threats they pose to our food security, water security, ecological and cultural integrity, climate resilience, and economy. It would provide for dedicated staff who can track and coordinate weed response efforts; mechanisms for the public to identify new invasive plants for the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) to take action on; additional DAB authorities to prevent and address invasive plant infestations; and strengthened compliance and enforcement tools, including added penalties.

Mahalo for your time.

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 3:16:38 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kim Jorgensen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY SUPPORT this bill.

Invasive plants have destroyed or have caused the destruction of so much of the islands already.

This bill needs to pass urgently because it will mitigate the existing invasive plants, and identify and prevent new ones from thriving.

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 2:28:23 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marcia Kemble	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Greetings Committee Members,

I am writing in strong support of HB1931 HD2.

Invasive species, including noxious weeds and plants, threaten tremendous harm to our water security, agricultural operations, ecological and cultural integrity, recreational activities, climate resilience, and local economy.

Unfortunately, despite a litany of hard lessons about the dangers of invasive plants, and despite longstanding recommendations made by experts and stakeholders to shore up our defenses against even more invasive plant introductions to our islands, the state’s noxious weed program has not been updated since 1992.

This bill would accordingly provide much-needed updates to our beleaguered noxious weed program, providing it with dedicated staff, allowing for a public alert process to submit newly found invasive plant species for follow-up assessment and action, and giving the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) additional regulatory and enforcement authorities. These critical adjustments, consistent with the recommendations of DAB’s Noxious Weed Working Group, could save hundreds of millions of dollars or more in damages and remedial costs; more importantly, however, this bill will protect our future generations from the harshest consequences of living on invasives-infested landscapes -- which may be all but inevitable under the current status quo.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Marcia Kemble

Makiki

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 2:44:04 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Denise Boisvert	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It's time to stop rolling out the red carpet to invasive plants!

**Delaying, deferring, and being in denial, have allowed
invasive plants to thrive for decades - centuries even.**

**They threaten our food security, water security, ecological
and cultural integrity, climate resilience, and economy.**

This bill needs to pass....like...*yesterday*!!

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 1:38:40 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chuck Chimera	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide follow-up testimony in strong support of HB1931 HD2.

This measure represents an important and timely step forward in strengthening Hawai‘i’s approach to invasive plant management. As noted in previous testimony, the State’s noxious weed list has not been updated since 1992, despite the continued arrival and spread of new non-native plant species. HB1931 HD2 addresses this critical gap by establishing a clear, science-based, and transparent process for regularly reviewing and updating the list, while also improving coordination through the creation of a State Noxious Weed Coordinator.

From an agriculture and environmental perspective, this bill is especially important. Invasive plants degrade pasture productivity, increase management costs for farmers and ranchers, alter fire regimes, and threaten native ecosystems and watershed function. By enabling early detection, prioritization, and rapid response, this measure supports both agricultural viability and the long-term health of Hawai‘i’s natural resources.

Equally important, HB1931 HD2 strengthens community engagement by allowing public input and participation in the listing process. This ensures that local knowledge, on-the-ground observations, and stakeholder concerns can help inform timely and effective decisions.

HB1931 HD2 reflects a proactive, collaborative, and science-driven approach to biosecurity. It will help protect Hawai‘i’s farms, forests, and communities by addressing invasive plant threats before they become widespread and costly to manage.

I therefore respectfully urge your support of HB1931 HD2.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Chuck Chimera

Honoka‘a, Hawaii

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 3:52:41 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keili McEvelly	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Ioha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Committee members,

My name is Ke‘ili McEvelly from Kaneohe, and I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB1931 HD2.

Invasive species, including noxious weeds and plants, threaten tremendous harm to our water security, agricultural operations, ecological and cultural integrity, recreational activities, climate resilience, and local economy. For example, miconia and guava have already displaced entire native ecosystems, preventing our drinking water aquifers from recharging and contributing to flooding and runoff events; highly invasive and toxic fireweed threatens to upend our livestock industry; and cane and guinea grasses are a bane for both farmers as well as backyard gardeners, and exacerbate the risks of wildfires throughout the islands.

Unfortunately, despite a litany of hard lessons about the dangers of invasive plants, and despite longstanding recommendations made by experts and stakeholders to shore up our defenses against additional invasive plant introductions to our islands, the state’s noxious weed program has not been updated since 1992.

This bill would accordingly provide much-needed updates to our beleaguered noxious weed program, providing it with dedicated staff, allowing for a public alert process to submit newly found invasive plant species for follow-up assessment and action, and giving the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) additional regulatory and enforcement authorities. These critical adjustments, consistent with the recommendations of DAB’s Noxious Weed Working Group, could save hundreds of millions of dollars or more in damages and remedial costs; more importantly, however, this bill will protect our future generations from the harshest consequences of living on invasives-infested landscapes -- which may be all but inevitable under the current status quo.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committee to PASS this measure. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Ke'ili

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 6:11:51 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dr. Osa Maiyanne Adaján	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Committee members,

My name is Dr. Osa Maiyanne Adaján and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT** HB1931 HD2.

Invasive species, including noxious weeds and plants, threaten tremendous harm to our water security, agricultural operations, ecological and cultural integrity, recreational activities, climate resilience, and local economy. For example, miconia and guava have already displaced entire native ecosystems, preventing our drinking water aquifers from recharging and contributing to flooding and runoff events; highly invasive and toxic fireweed threatens to upend our livestock industry; and cane and guinea grasses are a bane for both farmers as well as backyard gardeners, and exacerbate the risks of wildfires throughout the islands.

Unfortunately, despite a litany of hard lessons about the dangers of invasive plants, and despite longstanding recommendations made by experts and stakeholders to shore up our defenses against additional invasive plant introductions to our islands, the state’s noxious weed program has not been updated since 1992.

This bill would accordingly provide much-needed updates to our beleaguered noxious weed program, providing it with dedicated staff, allowing for a public alert process to submit newly found invasive plant species for follow-up assessment and action, and giving the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) additional regulatory and enforcement authorities. These critical adjustments, consistent with the recommendations of DAB’s Noxious Weed Working Group, could save hundreds of millions of dollars or more in damages and remedial costs; more importantly, however, this bill will protect our future generations from the harshest consequences of living on invasives-infested landscapes -- which may be all but inevitable under the current status quo.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committee to **PASS** this measure. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Dr. Osa Maiyanne Adaján,

1L Law Student, William S. Richardson School of Law

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 9:08:42 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane Ware	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Committee members,

I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB1931 HD2.

Invasive species, including noxious weeds and plants, threaten tremendous harm to our water security, agricultural operations, ecological and cultural integrity, recreational activities, climate resilience, and local economy. For example, miconia and guava have already displaced entire native ecosystems, preventing our drinking water aquifers from recharging and contributing to flooding and runoff events; highly invasive and toxic fireweed threatens to upend our livestock industry; and cane and guinea grasses are a bane for both farmers as well as backyard gardeners, and exacerbate the risks of wildfires throughout the islands.

Unfortunately, despite a litany of hard lessons about the dangers of invasive plants, and despite longstanding recommendations made by experts and stakeholders to shore up our defenses against additional invasive plant introductions to our islands, the state’s noxious weed program has not been updated since 1992.

This bill would accordingly provide much-needed updates to our beleaguered noxious weed program, providing it with dedicated staff, allowing for a public alert process to submit newly found invasive plant species for follow-up assessment and action, and giving the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) additional regulatory and enforcement authorities. These critical adjustments, consistent with the recommendations of DAB’s Noxious Weed Working Group, could save hundreds of millions of dollars or more in damages and remedial costs; more importantly, however, this bill will protect our future generations from the harshest consequences of living on invasives-infested landscapes -- which may be all but inevitable under the current status quo.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committee to PASS this measure. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Diane Ware Volcano 96785

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 10:24:58 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kealii Pang, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Keali‘i Pang, Ph.D. I am a resident of Kaimukī, a lifetime member of the Hawaiian Civic Club, and have served as an environmentalist in Hawai‘i for the last 35 years. I am also a retired federal biologist and currently serve as a State Commissioner. **I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB1931 HD2.**

From a scientific perspective, I understand that our insular ecosystems are uniquely vulnerable to invasive species. From a cultural perspective, as a Native Hawaiian, I know that the health of our ‘āina is inseparable from the health of our people. Invasive plants like miconia and fireweed don't just harm our watersheds and agriculture — they choke out the native forests that hold our stories, our traditions, and the living memory of who we are.

As a retired federal biologist who has worked across Hawai‘i's landscapes, I have watched this problem compound for decades. Our current noxious weed list, last updated in 1992, is a relic of a bygone era. In those 30-plus years, hundreds of new species have arrived, and we are perpetually playing catch-up in ways that threaten our food security, our water security, and our cultural integrity. The status quo is not a neutral position — it is a slow surrender.

HB1931 HD2 brings our biosecurity defenses into the 21st century, consistent with the expert recommendations of DAB's Noxious Weed Working Group. It establishes a dedicated Noxious Weed Coordinator to lead a proactive, coordinated response; creates a transparent, science-based process for the public and experts to nominate new threats for review; and strengthens enforcement tools and penalties to deter the spread of these destructive species. Each of these elements addresses a real gap that I have witnessed firsthand in my career.

This bill is an investment in our future. It could save hundreds of millions of dollars in damages and remedial costs, but more importantly, it will protect the integrity of our ecosystems and our cultural heritage for generations to come. We cannot afford to wait any longer.

I respectfully urge the Committee to **PASS** HB1931 HD2.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Me ka ‘oia‘i‘o,

Keali'i Pang, Ph.D.

Kaimukī, O'ahu

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 8:36:13 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Frederick Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Frederick Smith. I live in the Kealakekua ahupua‘a, and I am a graduate student in marine science and policy at the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo. I am writing in **strong support of HB1931 HD2.**

HB1931 HD2 is fiscally responsible and will save the State money in the long run. Hawai‘i’s noxious weed list has not been updated since 1992, even though harmful invasive plants continue to arrive and spread statewide. When these species establish, the costs of management shift to the State through watershed degradation, increased wildfire risk, agricultural losses, infrastructure impacts, and expensive long-term control efforts. Static noxious weed lists, like the one from 1992, are simply inadequate to address new and evolving threats to our farms, properties, and natural places.

This bill modernizes an outdated system by establishing a State Noxious Weed Coordinator, creating a transparent and science-based process for public proposals and expert review, and authorizing regular updates to a three-class noxious weed list. These improvements allow the State to act early, when intervention is far more cost-effective than large-scale control or restoration once invasive plants are widespread.

Strengthening enforcement authority and clarifying departmental responsibilities will reduce future liabilities and improve administrative efficiency across agencies. HB1931 HD2 is a forward-looking, prevention-focused measure that aligns with the State’s expanded biosecurity responsibilities and supports farmers, landowners, and natural resource managers.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge your **support for HB1931 HD2.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Frederick Smith

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 10:34:45 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaleiheana-a-Pohaku Stormcrow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Committee members,

My name is Kaleiheana Stormcrow and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT HB1931 HD2.**

Invasive species, including noxious weeds and plants, threaten tremendous harm to our water security, agricultural operations, ecological and cultural integrity, recreational activities, climate resilience, and local economy. **For example, miconia and guava have already displaced entire native ecosystems, preventing our drinking water aquifers from recharging and contributing to flooding and runoff events; highly invasive and toxic fireweed threatens to upend our livestock industry; and cane and guinea grasses are a bane for both farmers as well as backyard gardeners, and exacerbate the risks of wildfires throughout the islands.**

Unfortunately, despite a litany of hard lessons about the dangers of invasive plants, and despite longstanding recommendations made by experts and stakeholders to shore up our defenses against additional invasive plant introductions to our islands, the state’s noxious weed program has not been updated since 1992.

This bill would accordingly provide much-needed updates to our beleaguered noxious weed program, providing it with dedicated staff, allowing for a public alert process to submit newly found invasive plant species for follow-up assessment and action, and giving the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) additional regulatory and enforcement authorities. These critical adjustments, consistent with the recommendations of DAB’s Noxious Weed Working Group, could save hundreds of millions of dollars or more in damages and remedial costs; more importantly, however, this bill will protect our future generations from the harshest consequences of living on invasives-infested landscapes -- which may be all but inevitable under the current status quo.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committee to **PASS** this measure. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Kaleiheana Stormcrow

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 10:53:10 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Committee members,

My name is Bo Breda and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT HB1931 HD2.**

Invasive species, including noxious weeds and plants, threaten tremendous harm to our water security, agricultural operations, ecological and cultural integrity, recreational activities, climate resilience, and local economy. **For example, miconia and guava have already displaced entire native ecosystems, preventing our drinking water aquifers from recharging and contributing to flooding and runoff events; highly invasive and toxic fireweed threatens to upend our livestock industry; and cane and guinea grasses are a bane for both farmers as well as backyard gardeners, and exacerbate the risks of wildfires throughout the islands.**

Unfortunately, despite a litany of hard lessons about the dangers of invasive plants, and despite longstanding recommendations made by experts and stakeholders to shore up our defenses against additional invasive plant introductions to our islands, the state’s noxious weed program has not been updated since 1992.

This bill would accordingly provide much-needed updates to our beleaguered noxious weed program, providing it with dedicated staff, allowing for a public alert process to submit newly found invasive plant species for follow-up assessment and action, and giving the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) additional regulatory and enforcement authorities. These critical adjustments, consistent with the recommendations of DAB’s Noxious Weed Working Group, could save hundreds of millions of dollars or more in damages and remedial costs; more importantly, however, this bill will protect our future generations from the harshest consequences of living on invasives-infested landscapes -- which may be all but inevitable under the current status quo.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committee to **PASS** this measure. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Bo Breda

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 10:56:59 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Hello Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Committee members,

My name is Nanea Lo and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT HB1931 HD2.**

Invasive species, including noxious weeds and plants, threaten tremendous harm to our water security, agricultural operations, ecological and cultural integrity, recreational activities, climate resilience, and local economy. **For example, miconia and guava have already displaced entire native ecosystems, preventing our drinking water aquifers from recharging and contributing to flooding and runoff events; highly invasive and toxic fireweed threatens to upend our livestock industry; and cane and guinea grasses are a bane for both farmers as well as backyard gardeners, and exacerbate the risks of wildfires throughout the islands.**

Unfortunately, despite a litany of hard lessons about the dangers of invasive plants, and despite longstanding recommendations made by experts and stakeholders to shore up our defenses against additional invasive plant introductions to our islands, the state's noxious weed program has not been updated since 1992.

This bill would accordingly provide much-needed updates to our beleaguered noxious weed program, providing it with dedicated staff, allowing for a public alert process to submit newly found invasive plant species for follow-up assessment and action, and giving the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) additional regulatory and enforcement authorities. These critical adjustments, consistent with the recommendations of DAB's Noxious Weed Working Group, could save hundreds of millions of dollars or more in damages and remedial costs; more importantly, however, this bill will protect our future generations from the harshest consequences of living on invasives-infested landscapes -- which may be all but inevitable under the current status quo.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committee to **PASS** this measure.

Me ke aloha 'āina,

Nanea Lo, 96826

Sierra Club of Hawai'i Member

Hawai'i Workers Center Board Member

Clean Elections Hawai'i Member

Honolulu Tenants Union Member

350 Hawai'i Member

Carbon Cashback Hawai'i Member

Hawai'i Tax Fairness Coalition Member

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 10:58:50 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Committee members,

My name is Peter Wilson and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT HB1931 HD2.**

Invasive species, including noxious weeds and plants, threaten tremendous harm to our water security, agricultural operations, ecological and cultural integrity, recreational activities, climate resilience, and local economy. **For example, miconia and guava have already displaced entire native ecosystems, preventing our drinking water aquifers from recharging and contributing to flooding and runoff events; highly invasive and toxic fireweed threatens to upend our livestock industry; and cane and guinea grasses are a bane for both farmers as well as backyard gardeners, and exacerbate the risks of wildfires throughout the islands.**

Unfortunately, despite a litany of hard lessons about the dangers of invasive plants, and despite longstanding recommendations made by experts and stakeholders to shore up our defenses against additional invasive plant introductions to our islands, the state’s noxious weed program has not been updated since 1992.

This bill would accordingly provide much-needed updates to our beleaguered noxious weed program, providing it with dedicated staff, allowing for a public alert process to submit newly found invasive plant species for follow-up assessment and action, and giving the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) additional regulatory and enforcement authorities. These critical adjustments, consistent with the recommendations of DAB’s Noxious Weed Working Group, could save hundreds of millions of dollars or more in damages and remedial costs; more importantly, however, this bill will protect our future generations from the harshest consequences of living on invasives-infested landscapes -- which may be all but inevitable under the current status quo.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committee to **PASS** this measure. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Peter Wilson

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 11:37:46 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Committee members,

My name is Keri Zacher and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT HB1931 HD2.**

Invasive species, including noxious weeds and plants, threaten tremendous harm to our water security, agricultural operations, ecological and cultural integrity, recreational activities, climate resilience, and local economy. **For example, miconia and guava have already displaced entire native ecosystems, preventing our drinking water aquifers from recharging and contributing to flooding and runoff events; highly invasive and toxic fireweed threatens to upend our livestock industry; and cane and guinea grasses are a bane for both farmers as well as backyard gardeners, and exacerbate the risks of wildfires throughout the islands.**

Unfortunately, despite a litany of hard lessons about the dangers of invasive plants, and despite longstanding recommendations made by experts and stakeholders to shore up our defenses against additional invasive plant introductions to our islands, the state’s noxious weed program has not been updated since 1992.

This bill would accordingly provide much-needed updates to our beleaguered noxious weed program, providing it with dedicated staff, allowing for a public alert process to submit newly found invasive plant species for follow-up assessment and action, and giving the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) additional regulatory and enforcement authorities. These critical adjustments, consistent with the recommendations of DAB’s Noxious Weed Working Group, could save hundreds of millions of dollars or more in damages and remedial costs; more importantly, however, this bill will protect our future generations from the harshest consequences of living on invasives-infested landscapes -- which may be all but inevitable under the current status quo.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committee to **PASS** this measure. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely, Keri Zacher

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 11:59:58 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anne Lorenzo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Committee members,

My name is [Anne M. Lorenzo and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT HB1931 HD2.**

Invasive species, including noxious weeds and plants, threaten tremendous harm to our water security, agricultural operations, ecological and cultural integrity, recreational activities, climate resilience, and local economy. **For example, miconia and guava have already displaced entire native ecosystems, preventing our drinking water aquifers from recharging and contributing to flooding and runoff events; highly invasive and toxic fireweed threatens to upend our livestock industry; and cane and guinea grasses are a bane for both farmers as well as backyard gardeners, and exacerbate the risks of wildfires throughout the islands.**

Unfortunately, despite a litany of hard lessons about the dangers of invasive plants, and despite longstanding recommendations made by experts and stakeholders to shore up our defenses against additional invasive plant introductions to our islands, the state’s noxious weed program has not been updated since 1992.

This bill would accordingly provide much-needed updates to our beleaguered noxious weed program, providing it with dedicated staff, allowing for a public alert process to submit newly found invasive plant species for follow-up assessment and action, and giving the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) additional regulatory and enforcement authorities. These critical adjustments, consistent with the recommendations of DAB’s Noxious Weed Working Group, could save hundreds of millions of dollars or more in damages and remedial costs; more importantly, however, this bill will protect our future generations from the harshest consequences of living on invasives-infested landscapes -- which may be all but inevitable under the current status quo.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committee to **PASS** this measure. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Anne M. Lorenzo

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 11:38:20 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Kuzmier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing in support of HB1931. I believe it is a policy that provides needed updates for reducing toxic weeds in our state. Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 1:22:16 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Malia Marquez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Committee members,

My name is Malia Marquez and I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB1931 HD2.

Invasive species, including noxious weeds and plants, threaten tremendous harm to our water security, agricultural operations, ecological and cultural integrity, recreational activities, climate resilience, and local economy. For example, miconia and guava have already displaced entire native ecosystems, preventing our drinking water aquifers from recharging and contributing to flooding and runoff events; highly invasive and toxic fireweed threatens to upend our livestock industry; and cane and guinea grasses are a bane for both farmers as well as backyard gardeners, and exacerbate the risks of wildfires throughout the islands.

Unfortunately, despite a litany of hard lessons about the dangers of invasive plants, and despite longstanding recommendations made by experts and stakeholders to shore up our defenses against additional invasive plant introductions to our islands, the state’s noxious weed program has not been updated since 1992.

This bill would accordingly provide much-needed updates to our beleaguered noxious weed program, providing it with dedicated staff, allowing for a public alert process to submit newly found invasive plant species for follow-up assessment and action, and giving the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) additional regulatory and enforcement authorities. These critical adjustments, consistent with the recommendations of DAB’s Noxious Weed Working Group, could save hundreds of millions of dollars or more in damages and remedial costs; more importantly, however, this bill will protect our future generations from the harshest consequences of living on invasives-infested landscapes -- which may be all but inevitable under the current status quo.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committee to PASS this measure. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Malia Marquez

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 2:04:26 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
irene kloepfer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. We need to start to take climate change seriously and bring our aina back into balance. Please pass this bill. Mahalo. Irene

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 2:07:55 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
janice palma-glenie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

as a 4-plus decades long member of the Kona ag community, i ask that you support hb1931 hd2. as an organice plant nursery grower and landscape designer, i know the tragedies and inconveniences of fighting invasive plants. this bill which will help enhance our fight against invasive weeds and plants and the threats they pose to our food security, water security, ecological and cultural integrity, climate resilience, and economy.

having the proper agency and staff is critical, so this bill would insure staff to track and coordinate weed response efforts as well as mechanisms for the public to identify new invasive plants for the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB). this would help DAB authorities prevent and address invasive plant infestations by strengthening legal compliance by adding enforcement and added penalties violations.

Mahalo for your support of hb1931 hd2.

best regards,

janice palma-glennie

kailua-kona

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 2:00:01 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. Thank you.

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 2:32:54 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephanie Austin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Biosecurity is important, and Hawaii's funding should be with the DLNR, who has the staff and resources to implement important programs!

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 3:22:07 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Greg Kahn	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the passage of HB1931.

Greg Kahn

Molokai

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 4:51:40 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patti Choy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Committee members,

I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB1931 HD2.

I hope the Committee passes this measure.

Thank you.

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 4:56:02 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shay Chan Hodges	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB1931 HD2.

Invasive species, including noxious weeds and plants, threaten tremendous harm to our water security, agricultural operations, ecological and cultural integrity, recreational activities, climate resilience, and local economy. **For example, miconia and guava have already displaced entire native ecosystems, preventing our drinking water aquifers from recharging and contributing to flooding and runoff events; highly invasive and toxic fireweed threatens to upend our livestock industry; and cane and guinea grasses are a bane for both farmers as well as backyard gardeners, and exacerbate the risks of wildfires throughout the islands.**

Unfortunately, despite a litany of hard lessons about the dangers of invasive plants, and despite longstanding recommendations made by experts and stakeholders to shore up our defenses against additional invasive plant introductions to our islands, the state’s noxious weed program has not been updated since 1992.

This bill would accordingly provide much-needed updates to our beleaguered noxious weed program, providing it with dedicated staff, allowing for a public alert process to submit newly found invasive plant species for follow-up assessment and action, and giving the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) additional regulatory and enforcement authorities. These critical adjustments, consistent with the recommendations of DAB’s Noxious Weed Working Group, could save hundreds of millions of dollars or more in damages and remedial costs; more importantly, however, this bill will protect our future generations from the harshest consequences of living on invasives-infested landscapes -- which may be all but inevitable under the current status quo.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committee to **PASS** this measure. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 7:30:54 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katherine Fryer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB1931 HD2.

Invasive species threaten tremendous harm to our water security, agricultural operations, ecological and cultural integrity, climate resilience, and local economy. For example, miconia and guava have already displaced entire native ecosystems, preventing replenishment of our drinking water aquifers and contributing to flooding and runoff events; highly invasive and toxic fireweed threatens our livestock industry; and cane and guinea grasses are highly flammable and exacerbate the risks of wildfires throughout the islands.

I live in an East Oahu Ridgeline community that has faced three wildfires in the last decade. In the woods below our homes, my neighbors and I have seen 20 foot flames racing fast through invasive vegetation, most especially guinea grass. During dry seasons, it can ignite in an instant. We're thankful that none of our houses have been lost to wildfires, but other communities have not been so lucky. As we've learned from Lahaina, Hawaii's wildland-urban interface areas urgently need comprehensive management of invasive plants, particularly species that die back during summer to produce dry, dense fire fuel.

As a geography masters candidate at UH Manoa, I have helped to develop invasive species identification algorithms for use in local forests managed by the US Army and by DLNR. My studies taught me that endemic Hawaiian forests practice kokua, with each tree species taking the rainwater it needs while also allowing rain to reach the understory species below. The lowest ground-dwelling plants channel rainwater not only to their roots but also into the aquifer, replenishing our groundwater. Invasive rainforest plants are more competitive, spreading fast, shading the ground heavily to smother rivals, and crowding out the endemic biodiversity that protects our aquifer and prevents erosion. Even in Oahu's most remote areas, invasives are establishing themselves with alarming speed. Many of these species can quickly overrun large areas if they are not removed when they first take root. We should prioritize an updated, optimized system to identify them and weed them out.

Unfortunately, despite many hard lessons about the dangers of invasive plants, and despite longstanding recommendations made by experts and stakeholders to improve our defenses against additional invasive plant introductions to our islands, the state's noxious weed program has not been updated since 1992.

HB1931 HD2 would provide this program with urgently needed updates and with a dedicated

staff, allowing for a public alert process to submit newly found invasive plant species for follow-up assessment and action, and giving the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) additional regulatory and enforcement authorities. These critical adjustments, consistent with the recommendations of DAB's Noxious Weed Working Group, could save hundreds of millions of dollars or more in damages and remedial costs. More importantly, this bill will protect our future generations from the long-term consequences of biodiversity loss and environmental degradation due to invasive species.

I respectfully urge the Committee to PASS this measure.

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 10:29:35 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
KEALA FUNG	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Committee members,

My name is Keala Fung and I **STRONGLY SUPPORT HB1931 HD2.**

Invasive species, including noxious weeds and plants, threaten tremendous harm to our water security, agricultural operations, ecological and cultural integrity, recreational activities, climate resilience, and local economy. **For example, miconia and guava have already displaced entire native ecosystems, preventing our drinking water aquifers from recharging and contributing to flooding and runoff events; highly invasive and toxic fireweed threatens to upend our livestock industry; and cane and guinea grasses are a bane for both farmers as well as backyard gardeners, and exacerbate the risks of wildfires throughout the islands.**

Unfortunately, despite a litany of hard lessons about the dangers of invasive plants, and despite longstanding recommendations made by experts and stakeholders to shore up our defenses against additional invasive plant introductions to our islands, the state’s noxious weed program has not been updated since 1992.

This bill would accordingly provide much-needed updates to our beleaguered noxious weed program, providing it with dedicated staff, allowing for a public alert process to submit newly found invasive plant species for follow-up assessment and action, and giving the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) additional regulatory and enforcement authorities. These critical adjustments, consistent with the recommendations of DAB’s Noxious Weed Working Group, could save hundreds of millions of dollars or more in damages and remedial costs; more importantly, however, this bill will protect our future generations from the harshest consequences of living on invasives-infested landscapes -- which may be all but inevitable under the current status quo.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committee to **PASS** this measure. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Keala Fung

HB-1931-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 3:52:15 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 4:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jodi Rodar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Committee members,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 1931 HD2.

Invasive species, including noxious weeds and plants, threaten tremendous harm to our water security, agricultural operations, ecological and cultural integrity, recreational activities, climate resilience, and local economy. **For example, miconia and guava have already displaced entire native ecosystems, preventing our drinking water aquifers from recharging and contributing to flooding and runoff events; highly invasive and toxic fireweed threatens to upend our livestock industry; and cane and guinea grasses are a bane for both farmers as well as backyard gardeners, and exacerbate the risks of wildfires throughout the islands.**

Unfortunately, despite a litany of hard lessons about the dangers of invasive plants, and despite longstanding recommendations made by experts and stakeholders to shore up our defenses against additional invasive plant introductions to our islands, the state's noxious weed program has not been updated since 1992.

This bill would accordingly provide much-needed updates to our beleaguered noxious weed program, providing it with dedicated staff, allowing for a public alert process to submit newly found invasive plant species for follow-up assessment and action, and giving the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) additional regulatory and enforcement authorities. These critical adjustments, consistent with the recommendations of DAB's Noxious Weed Working Group, could save hundreds of millions of dollars or more in damages and remedial costs; more importantly, however, this bill will protect our future generations from the harshest consequences of living on invasives-infested landscapes -- which may be all but inevitable under the current status quo.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committee to **PASS** this measure. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Jodi Rodar