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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the coconut  
2 rhinoceros beetle, scientifically known as *oryctes rhinoceros*,  
3 is an invasive species that threatens coconut palms and other  
4 vegetation. The beetle bores into the crowns of coconut trees,  
5 feeding on the sap and causing severe damage. However, the  
6 beetle's appetite is not limited to coconut palms, and it  
7 threatens other tropical plants such as hala, sugarcane, taro,  
8 banana, and pineapple. From reduced property values and loss of  
9 tourism due to dying palms to increased costs for pest control  
10 and tree replacement, the economic consequences are vast and  
11 significant.

12           The legislature further finds that the coconut rhinoceros  
13 beetle endangers the State's cultural heritage by damaging  
14 plants, including hala and taro, that are integral to native  
15 Hawaiian practices. The protection of these plants is essential  
16 for preserving local traditions and maintaining a balanced  
17 ecosystem. Wreaking havoc since it was discovered in 2013 at



1 Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, the beetle has spread across  
2 Oahu and to the islands of Kauai, Maui, and Hawaii.

3 The purpose of this Act is to establish a two-year coconut  
4 rhinoceros beetle eradication pilot program under the department  
5 of land and natural resources to provide community-based  
6 incentives to eradicate the coconut rhinoceros beetle in certain  
7 areas of the State.

8 SECTION 2. For the purposes of this Act:

9 "Coconut rhinoceros beetle" means the species  
10 scientifically known as *oryctes rhinoceros*.

11 "Community member" means any resident, military personnel  
12 member, farmer, cultural practitioner, golf course staffer,  
13 green waste or compost facility worker, retailer, landscape  
14 professional, botanical garden staffer, or maintenance worker.

15 SECTION 3. (a) There is established within the department  
16 of land and natural resources a two-year coconut rhinoceros  
17 beetle eradication pilot program to incentivize community  
18 members to collect and submit to the department the coconut  
19 rhinoceros beetle and its larvae; provided that the program  
20 shall only be conducted in areas where there are established  
21 infestations of coconut rhinoceros beetles within counties with



1 a population of five hundred thousand or more. The Hawaii  
2 invasive species council shall oversee the pilot program and  
3 ensure the participation of stakeholders, including community  
4 members.

5 (b) The department of land and natural resources shall  
6 compensate community members for the collection and submission  
7 of coconut rhinoceros beetles and larvae that are captured. The  
8 compensation shall be determined by the department in  
9 consultation with the Hawaii invasive species council; provided  
10 that in no event shall the department compensate any person for  
11 collecting or submitting any beetle or larva that was bred by  
12 human intervention.

13 SECTION 4. The department of land and natural resources  
14 shall submit a report regarding the coconut rhinoceros beetle  
15 eradication pilot program, including its findings,  
16 recommendations, and any proposed legislation, to the  
17 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of  
18 the regular session of 2026.

19 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general  
20 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
21 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and



1 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal  
2 year 2026-2027 for the costs of operating the coconut rhinoceros  
3 beetle eradication pilot program, including:

- 4 (1) Compensation to community members;
- 5 (2) Program administration;
- 6 (3) Community engagement, workshops, and training events;
- 7 (4) Digital and social media campaigns;
- 8 (5) Media advertising; and
- 9 (6) Educational materials and outreach.

10 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department  
11 of land and natural resources for the purposes of this Act.

12 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



S.B. NO. 746  
S.D. 2  
H.D. 1

**Report Title:**

DLNR; Hawaii Invasive Species Council; Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle; Invasive Species; Pilot Program; Report; Appropriation

**Description:**

Establishes a two-year coconut rhinoceros beetle eradication pilot program in certain areas under the Department of Land and Natural Resources that incentivizes community members to collect and submit the coconut rhinoceros beetle and its larvae for compensation. Requires a report to the Legislature. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

