

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 24 2026RE: H.B. No. 1929
H.D. 1
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2026
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture and Environment, to which was referred H.B. No. 1929, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO BIOSECURITY,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Require and appropriate funds for the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to develop a Molokai Biosecurity Plan to prevent the spread of invasive species found elsewhere in the State to the island of Molokai; and
- (2) Authorize the issuance of general obligation bonds and appropriate funds for a plants and plant materials inspection and quarantine facility on the island of Molokai and facility staffing.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Hawai'i Farm Bureau, Hawai'i Farmers Union United, Mālama Learning Center, Kūpuna for the Mo'opuna, Free Access Coalition, Shimanchu Mamuyaa, The Nature Conservancy, Sierra Club of Hawai'i, Conservation



Council for Hawai'i, Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo, Restore the Commons, and forty-three individuals.

Your Committee finds that as invasive species continue to spread across the State, islands like Molokai that remain free from certain invasive species can serve as refuge for native species. Protecting Molokai preserves biodiversity and safeguards subsistence and traditional and customary practices. Creating a biosecurity plan, as this measure contemplates, is key to preventing the spread of invasive species. Your Committee further finds that Molokai does not have a plant and plant material quarantine or inspection facility and does not have any dedicated inspection staff located on island, leaving Molokai extremely vulnerable to the introduction of invasive species. This measure will strengthen secondary inspection capacity, enhance interisland safeguards, and provide an added layer of protection for Molokai's agricultural economy, natural resources, and community well-being.

Your Committee notes concerns raised in the public hearing on this measure that the Molokai biosecurity plan should be locally-informed. Accordingly, amendments to this measure are necessary to address this concern.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Inserting language establishing a Molokai Biosecurity Advisory Board to advise the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity in its development of the biosecurity plan for the island of Molokai and specifying the membership requirements for the Advisory Board;
- (2) Clarifying that the quarantine facility shall accommodate livestock and other domestic animals;
- (3) Inserting a blank appropriation for the establishment and operation of the Molokai Biosecurity Advisory Board;
- (4) Amending section 1 to reflect its amended purpose;
- (5) Inserting an effective date of July 1, 2050, to encourage further discussion; and



- (6) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

Your Committee notes that this measure, as amended, contains and unspecified appropriation amount with regard to the establishment and operation of the Molokai Biosecurity Advisory Board. Should your Committee on Ways and Means choose to deliberate on this measure, your Committee respectfully requests that it consider an appropriation amount of \$150,000 for the establishment and operation of the Molokai Biosecurity Advisory Board.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture and Environment that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1929, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1929, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

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


MIKE GABBARD, Chair



