

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 24 2026

RE: H.B. No. 2207
H.D. 2
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. 2207, H.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Allow the use of certain monofilament netting for the protection of plants against invasive species; and
- (2) Require the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to establish rules allowing the sale and distribution of fine mesh nets, including monofilament netting, in the State to protect plants from the coconut rhinoceros beetle.

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, Office of the Mayor of the County of Maui, Hawai'i Farm Bureau, Hawai'i Farmers Union United, Big Island Invasive Species Committee, Hawai'i Food+ Policy, and one individual.

Your Committee finds that one of the most effective non-chemical methods to protect palm trees and other coconut



rhinoceros beetle target species is to use a physical cover of monofilament fine mesh nets. Providing individuals with lawful access to effective pest control tools is critical to supporting the State's biosecurity efforts. This measure will improve pest management to directly support food security and agricultural productivity while establishing regulations for the safe use of certain monofilament netting.

Your Committee acknowledges the concerns raised in the testimony of the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity that more tools are necessary to mitigate the impacts of the coconut rhinoceros beetle due to the devastating damage the insect has caused in the State. Act 236, Session Laws of Hawaii 2025 (Act 236), established key biosecurity protocols by authorizing the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to enter into government-industry agreements to manage and control invasive species, such as the coconut rhinoceros beetle. However, the Department does not have the workforce or capability to effectively carry out the purposes of Act 236. Your Committee notes that after the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity began discussions with private industry parties about the government-industry agreements, it became apparent that Act 236 should be refined to address certain issues.

Your Committee also acknowledges the concerns raised in the testimony of the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity that the use of pesticides for pest control is often required on private property. Your Committee notes that those participating in rapid response or pest mitigation actions should have minimized liability for the required management protocols. Accordingly, amendments to this measure are necessary to address these issues.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

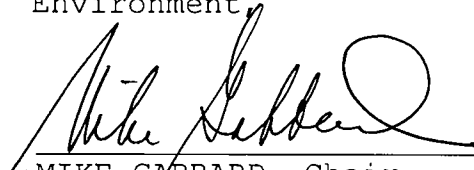
- (1) Inserting language that establishes a Biosecurity Government-Industry Working Group;
- (2) Inserting language clarifying that the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity and the counties, and their officers, employees, and authorized agents shall not be liable when entering private property to control and eradicate pests;



- (3) Inserting language that renames government-industry agreements to biosecurity government-industry agreements and requires the Biosecurity Government-Industry Working Group, consisting of private industry signatories to inform joint decision-making with regard to the agreements;
- (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.

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. 2207, H.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 2207, H.D. 2, 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



The Senate
 Thirty-Third Legislature
 State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Agriculture and Environment
AEN

Bill / Resolution No.:* HB 2207 HD2	Committee Referral: AEN, WAM	Date: 03/18/2026		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
GABBARD, Mike (C)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
RICHARDS, III, Herbert M. "Tim" (VC)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
DECOITE, Lynn	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
RHOADS, Karl	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
AWA, Brenton	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
TOTAL	5	—	—	—
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature: 				
Distribution: Original Yellow Pink File with Committee Report Committee Drafting Agency				

***Only one measure per Record of Votes**