

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



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

SHARON HURD
Chairperson
Board of Agriculture & Biosecurity

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA
Deputy to the Chairperson

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

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON WATER, LAND, CULTURE
AND THE ARTS AND AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 2026
1:03 P.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 224 & VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1601, HD2
RELATING TO BIOSECURITY**

Chairs Lee and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Inouye and Richards, and Members of the Committees:

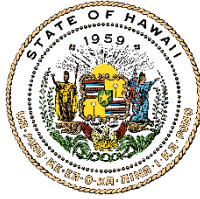
Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 1601, HD2, relating to biosecurity. This bill amends the amount and expending agency for a fiscal year 2026-2027 appropriation for the Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC) from the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (Department) to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR); and effective 7/1/3000. The Department supports this bill.

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

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

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



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

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

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

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

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

**Before the Senate Committees on
WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS
and
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

**Friday, March 20, 2026
1:03 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 224**

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 1601, HOUSE DRAFT 2
RELATING TO BIOSECURITY**

House Bill 1601, House Draft 2, amends the budget and responsible agency for a fiscal year 2026-2027 appropriation for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council, shifting it from the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department). **The Department supports this measure, provided that its passage does not replace or negatively affect priorities outlined in the Executive Supplemental Budget request.**

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

The Department supports this amendment to Act 236, which reassigns the appropriation of Act 236 HISC funds for FY 2027 from DAB to the Department. For future HISC appropriations, the Department recommends allocating the funds to the agency responsible for managing HISC.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



The Senate
Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts
Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Friday, March 20, 2026
1:03 PM Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
State Capitol

Testimony in Support of HB1601 HD2

Aloha Chairs Lee and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Inouye and Richards, and Members of the Committees,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) is **in support of HB1601 HD2**, *Relating to Biosecurity*. This bill provides the fiscal year 2026-2027 funding for the Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC) to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) rather than the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB).

Part VII of Act 236 (2025) transfers all functions and duties of HISC from DLNR to DAB, effective January 1, 2030. (Part VII & §47(6) Act 236 (2025)) HISC will remain attached to DLNR for administrative purposes until that time. However, section 42 of Act 236 transferred the fiscal year 2026-27 funding for HISC to DAB. HB1601 HD2 proposes to remedy this situation.

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

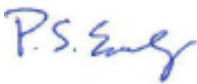
Other titles of Act 236 established new biosecurity authorities, funding, and responsibilities for DAB that the Legislature has prioritized and that should take precedence over managing HISC programs and the disbursement of HISC funds.

We hope you will support HB1601 HD2 to provide HISC's funding to its administrative agency for the fiscal year 2026-27. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and our support for this bill.

Aloha,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Martin'.

Christy Martin
CGAPS Program Manager

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P.S. Easley'.

Stephanie Easley
CGAPS Legal Fellow



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
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS

TESTIMONY ON HB 1601, HD2
RELATING TO BIOSECURITY

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
1:03 PM

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice-Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate, and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports HB 1601, HD2, which clarifies the expending authority for a fiscal year 2026–2027 appropriation for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) from the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

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

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

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

HFB appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony and supports HB 1601, HD2 as a necessary measure to ensure that the 2026-2027 appropriation for HISC is administered efficiently and in alignment with the current organizational structure during this transition period.



**SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

March 20, 2026

1:03 PM

Conference Room 224

In SUPPORT of HB1601 HD1: RELATING TO BIOSECURITY

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Chair Lee, Vice Chair Richards, Vice Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

On behalf of our over 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **SUPPORTS HB1601 HD1**, which will ensure that the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) can continue their vital and foundational role in our biosecurity strategy, without undue delay or disruption.

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

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

This measure would accordingly return HISC funds back to the DLNR where they are normally housed, and where they have been successfully administered for years. Notably, unlike DAB, DLNR has the experience and expertise to understand HISC's activities and



our biosecurity needs, and has staff specifically assigned to manage and distribute HISC funding.

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

Accordingly, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i respectfully urges the Committees to **PASS** HB1601 HD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 5:39:22 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

STRONG SUPPORT of HB 1601 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 1601 HD2**

HB 1601 HD2 would restore Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council funding back to the Department of Land and Natural Resources that has a long and proven track record of proper and effective use of these funds. DLNR and its dedicated staff have the experience and expertise to ensure these funds get to the programs that we depend on to protect our homes, farms, lands, and waters from invasive pests.

Last year, Hawaii Invasive Species Council funding oversight was turned over to the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity, a department that is struggling to follow its own mandates for allowing pest-infected goods into Hawai‘i. Let’s return funding oversight to the DLNR to avoid significant disruptions in the distribution of critical biosecurity resources.

HB1601 HD2 is essential to ensuring continuity for our most effective and critically needed biosecurity programs.

SUPPORT and PASS HB 1601 HD2. Mahalo.



Date of Hearing: 20 March, 2026

To: Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment and Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, and the Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture, and the Arts

Subject: **HB1601 HD2**, Relating to Biosecurity

Aloha,

Hawai'i Food+ Policy is writing in **support** of **HB1601 HD2**. This measure amends the expending agency for the fiscal year 2026-2027 appropriation for the Hawaii Invasive Species Council by transferring that responsibility from the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR).

Invasive species pose significant threats to Hawai'i's watersheds, native forests, and biodiversity. Many of the most damaging invasive species impacts in Hawai'i include habitat degradation, loss of native biodiversity, increased wildfire risk, and reduced water security which are directly tied to land and natural resource management. As the state agency responsible for managing public lands, natural area reserves, forests, and wildlife, DLNR is well positioned to oversee invasive species funding that can align with these ecological challenges.

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

Hawai'i Food+ Policy **urges the committee to pass HB1601 HD2** in its commitment to protecting Hawai'i's lands, ecosystems, and communities.

Mahalo,

Brandon Kinard & the Food+ Policy Team

#fixourfoodsystem

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.



The Senate
Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Committee on Water, Land, Culture and Arts
Friday, March 19, 2026
1:30 PM Room 224
State Capitol

SUBJECT: Testimony – In Support of HB1601 HD2 “Relating to Biosecurity”

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees:

The O’ahu Invasive Species Committee (OISC) **strongly supports HB1601 HD2, Relating to Biosecurity**. This measure would appropriate funds for fiscal year 2026–2027 for the operations of the Hawai’i Invasive Species Council (HISC) and would return the administration of HISC funds to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), where the Council is attached for administrative purposes only. Given the revision in this most recent version that removes the specified amount of \$4,250,000 that was established in Act 236, OISC **would also encourage that the full amount** be transferred administratively to DLNR for the fiscal year 2026-2027.

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

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

Any interruption in function or funding to HISC administratively would severely weaken current containment and eradication efforts occurring across the State. That includes the transfer of only a portion of the allocation. We are at a tipping point for several high-priority invasive species, so disrupting response efforts now would lead to irreparable damage to our ecosystems and communities. Any fragmentation of funding transferred would also negatively impact on-going responses, which is why we hope that the full amount can be

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

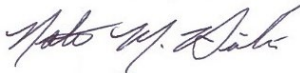
At the same time, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) continues to play a vital and expanding role in Hawai'i's biosecurity system. DAB has recently been granted new authorities, funding, and responsibilities that the Legislature has prioritized. As the department continues to carry out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

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

For these reasons, the O'ahu Invasive Species Committee respectfully urges your support of HB1601 HD2.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nate Dube". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

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

**Testimony of The Nature Conservancy
Supporting HB1601 HD2, Relating to Biosecurity
Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts
Committee on Agriculture and Environment
March 20, 2026 at 1:03 pm
Conference Room 224 and via Videoconference**

Dear Chairs Lee and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Inouye and Richards, and Members of the Committee:

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify today. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Hawai'i and Palmyra supports HB1601 HD2, which amends the expending agency for a Fiscal Year 2026-2027 appropriation for the Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC) from the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR).

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

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

HB1601 HD2 will properly address this looming threat for Fiscal Year 2026-2027 by amending the expending agency for HISC from DAB to DLNR. This simple fix will help prevent delays that could accelerate the spread of invasive species across Hawai'i's most vulnerable ecosystems.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of HB1601 HD2.

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

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HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 6:23:10 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 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 HB1601. With so many invasive species being flown and floated into our state, we cannot afford to let down our guard. We're fighting for today's generation as well as all the future generations to come.

[HB1601 HD1](#) would restore Hawai'i Invasive Species Council (HISC) funding back to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), where HISC is housed. The DLNR has a long and proven track record of ensuring HISC funds are efficiently distributed to HISC programs and community partners working to protect Hawai'i from invasive species and their impacts. Last year, however, HISC funding for FY26-27 was placed in the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB), instead of the DLNR. Given DAB's unfamiliarity with and lack of dedicated staff to administer HISC funds and programs, keeping HISC funding in DAB could result in significant disruptions in the distribution of critical biosecurity resources. Accordingly, this bill is essential to ensuring continuity for our most effective and critically needed biosecurity programs. Mahalo for your time.

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 2:16:50 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 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 HB1601. Hawaii’s invasive species problem continues to worsen and is already at a crisis level. DLNR and its dedicated staff have the experience and expertise to ensure Hawai’i Invasive Species Committee (HISC) funds get to the programs that we depend on, to protect our homes, farms, lands, and waters from invasive pests. These include the highly effective island invasive species committees, 643PEST.org, the Hawai’i Weed Risk Assessment, and the Plant Pono Program, among others. In contrast, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) has limited expertise in the breadth of HISC’s work, continues to struggle with implementing the new authorities and staff positions it was given last year, and has a track record of inadequately administering biosecurity funding and ignoring invasive species threats generally. Having DAB administer FY26-27 HISC funds on top of DAB’s current challenges, a change that was enacted last year, would only hinder HISC’s partners and programs with potential funding disruptions and bureaucracy - at a time when Hawai’i’s biosecurity crises need faster responses, not undue delays. HB1601 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please PASS this measure.

Mahalo for your attention.

Marcia Kemble

Makiki

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 7:05:06 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Diane Ware and I am writing in strong support of HB1601 HD2.

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

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

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

HB1601 HD2 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please PASS this measure.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Diane Ware Volcano 96785

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 3:51:18 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Ke‘ili McEvilly from Kaneohe, and I am writing in strong support of HB1601 HD2.

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

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

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

HB1601 HD2 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please PASS this measure.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Ke‘ili

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 6:06:58 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Dr. Osa Maiyanne Adaján and I am writing in **strong support** of HB1601 HD2.

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

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

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

HB1601 HD2 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Dr. Osa Maiyanne Adaján,

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

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 8:32:50 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Chair Lee, Vice Chair Richards, Vice Chair Inouye, and Committee Members,

My name is Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D., and I am a resident of Kaimuki, O‘ahu. As a former invasive species biologist who worked closely with the Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council, I am writing in strong support of HB1601 HD2.

Throughout my career, I had the privilege of witnessing HISC's work firsthand. What set HISC apart was not just technical expertise, but an integrated approach that few agencies can replicate: early detection and rapid response systems that caught threats before they became crises, deep community partnerships that extended the reach of limited state resources, and policy leadership that kept invasive species at the forefront of Hawai‘i's environmental agenda. That combination — science, community, and policy working in concert — is rare and hard-won.

That institutional capacity lives within DLNR. It has been built over years through DLNR's civil service staff and the relationships they have cultivated with on-the-ground partners across the islands. Redirecting FY26-27 HISC funding to the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity, while HISC's statutory authority remains with DLNR until 2030, risks fracturing those relationships and disrupting the very programs Hawai‘i depends on to protect its ecosystems.

As someone who has seen how quickly an undetected invasive species can cascade into an ecological and economic crisis, I know that timing is everything. Funding delays, administrative confusion, and bureaucratic transitions are not abstract concerns — they have real consequences for Hawai‘i's land, water, and communities.

HB1601 HD2 is the right fix at the right time. I urge the Committee to PASS this measure without delay.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,
Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.
Kaimuki, O‘ahu

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 8:23:14 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and Members of the Committees,

My name is Frederick Smith, and I **support HB1601 HD1.**

This bill would return Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council funding to the Department of Land and Natural Resources, where HISC is currently housed. Because HISC remains under DLNR until 2030, it makes sense for the funding to stay there as well.

Keeping HISC funding in DLNR will help avoid unnecessary delays or disruptions in the distribution of resources to important invasive species programs and partners across the state. At a time when Hawai‘i continues to face serious invasive species threats, maintaining continuity in the administration of these funds is a practical and important step.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **support of HB1601 HD1.**

Frederick Smith

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 8:35:06 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

Please SUPPORT and pass this bill.

**Restore the funding of the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council
to the real experts at DLNR.**

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 8:43:40 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 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 species and plants!

The real, and experienced, experts at the DLNR should get and manage funding for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council.

Please pass this bill.

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 10:33:53 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Kaleiheana Stormcrow, and I am writing in **strong support of HB1601 HD2**.

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

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

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

HB1601 HD2 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Kaleiheana Stormcrow

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 10:52:07 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Bo Breda, and I am writing in **strong support of HB1601 HD2**.

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

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

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

HB1601 HD2 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Bo Breda

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 10:53:04 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing in support of HB1601 HD2. I believe this allocation of funding is important for our statewide biosecurity. Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 10:55:59 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Nanea Lo, and I am writing in **strong support of HB1601 HD2.**

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

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

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

HB1601 HD2 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure.

Me ke aloha 'āina,

Nanea Lo, 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-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 11:58:55 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Anne M. Lorenzo, and I am writing in **strong support of HB1601 HD2**.

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

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

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

HB1601 HD2 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Anne M. Lorenzo

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 11:41:50 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Keri Zacher, and I am writing in **strong support of HB1601 HD2.**

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

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

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HB1601 HD2 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely, Keri Zacher

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 12:29:07 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of HB1601 HD2. By returning funding authority to the DLNR, HB1601 HD2 ensures critical biosecurity resources are administered swiftly and transparently.

This funding supports critical statewide biosecurity tools and programs. Invasive species have created a major crisis in Hawaii. We need to ensure that invasive species funding flows directly to frontline biosecurity efforts, without bureaucratic delays.

I urge you to please PASS this crucial measure.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 1:20:04 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Malia Marquez and I am writing in strong support of HB1601 HD2.

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

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

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

HB1601 HD2 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please PASS this measure.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Malia Marquez

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 1:52:35 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

aloha,

please support hb1601 hd2 which would once again allow DLNR ensure HISC funds are efficiently distributed to HISC programs and community partners working to protect Hawai'i from invasive species and their impacts-- actions and oversight essential to ensuring continuity for our most effective and critically needed biosecurity programs.

mahalo and sincerely,

janice palma-glennie

kailua-kona

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 2:01:13 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha. I strongly support this bill. Please put Hawaii first and pass this bill. Mahalo. Irene

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 1:59:04 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. Thank you.

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 4:49:51 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

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

I am writing in **strong support of HB1601 HD2.**

HB1601 HD2 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure.

Thank you for this wise legislation.

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 5:54:17 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of HB1601 HD2.

This bill would restore funding for the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), where the Council is housed, and where such funding has been successfully administered for years. DLNR and its dedicated staff have the experience to ensure that Hawai'i Invasive Species Committee (HISC) funds get to the programs that we depend on, to protect our homes, farms, lands, and waters from invasive pests. These programs include the highly effective island invasive species committees, 643PEST.org, the Hawai'i Weed Risk Assessment, and the Plant Pono Program, among others.

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

HB1601 HD2 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please PASS this measure.

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 3:49:38 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

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

I am writing in **strong support of HB1601 HD2.**

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

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

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

HB1601 HD2 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Jodi Rodar

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 4:55:08 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

I am writing in **strong support of HB1601 HD2.**

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

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

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

HB1601 HD2 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1601-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 10:25:39 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Keala Fung, and I am writing in **strong support of HB1601 HD2**.

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

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

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HB1601 HD2 will help ensure that invasive species response funds are deployed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner. I urge you to please **PASS** this measure.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Keala Fung, Honolulu Oahu