



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. NO. 1931, H.D. 1, RELATING TO AGRICULTURE.

BEFORE THE:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

DATE: Wednesday, February 18, 2026 **TIME:** 2:00 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 325

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Jennifer Waihee-Polk or Christopher J.I. Leong, Deputy Attorneys
General.

Chair Tarnas and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

This bill, among other things, establishes a State Noxious Weed Coordinator and updates the process for designating and managing noxious weeds.

The Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems recently amended the bill by deleting proposed section 152-D, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), and moving its provisions regarding public notification and input on changes to noxious weed designations to section 152-4, HRS.

However, the current version of the bill retains references to the now-deleted section 152-D, HRS. To correct this technical drafting issue, we recommend revising the new section 152-C, HRS, in section 2 of the bill as follows:

Section 152-C(b)(6) (page 8, lines 8-9)

- (6) Shall consider all oral and written comments submitted under section [~~152-D(b);~~] 152-4(g); and

Section 152-C(c)(1) (page 8, lines 14-17)

- (1) Shall review each proposal, the state noxious weed coordinator's written recommendations, and all oral and written comments submitted on the proposal under section [~~152-D(b);~~] 152-4(g);

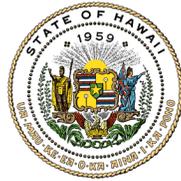
Section 152-C(d) (page 9, lines 6-10)

(d) Within one hundred eighty days after April 1, the board, after consideration of each recommendation of the advisory committee on plants and animals required by subsection (c) and all oral and written comments submitted under section [~~152-D(b);~~] 152-4(g), shall vote on each proposal.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & BIOSECURITY
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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 HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2026
2:00 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 325 & VIDEO CONFERENCE**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1931, HD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE**

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 1931, HD1 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.

The Department seeks clarification on the reference to “section 152-D(b)” that appears three times in §152-C of Section 2. The current bill does not include a “section 152-D(b).”

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 seeks clarification on §152-C(e) of Section 2 of the bill, which states that “...the board shall adopt by order the State noxious weed list for that year....” The Department believes the intent is for the noxious weed list to be maintained and adjusted over time, rather than requiring each taxon to be reviewed annually by the Board for approval. If the latter is the intent, significant changes to this measure would be necessary to provide clarity.

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 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. 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.

Section 5 of the bill proposes the addition of a new definition of “person” to section 152-1 of the Hawai‘i Revised Statutes (HRS). However, HRS section 152-1 already has a definition of “person”. Therefore, the Department respectfully recommends amending the existing definition rather than having two separate definitions.

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.

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
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DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
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COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
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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 House Committee on
JUDICIARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Wednesday, February 18, 2026
2:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 325

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 1931 HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

House Bill 1931 House Draft 1 establishes a State Noxious Weed Coordinator; updates the process for designating and managing noxious weeds; allows public proposals to add, amend, or remove noxious weed designations; requires notice and public reporting; clarifies the authority of the Department and Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity; authorizes updates to the noxious weed list to be adopted by order, 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 indicated in the Executive Supplemental Budget request.**

This bill highlights the serious problem 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 make the list of prohibited plant species as comprehensive and current as possible. Aside from plants on the noxious weed lists of the federal government and the State of Hawai'i, all other plants from anywhere in the world are currently permitted to enter the State.

The Hawai'i Noxious Weed List (NWL) hasn't 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 supports the establishment of a Noxious Weed Coordinator. Historically, the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) managed the NWL and its upkeep, but no dedicated position has been assigned to this function for some time. The Department also supports both the annual update of the NWL and the provision for emergency additions to the list.

Maintaining the NWL at DAB is essential for preventing the entry of some of the most invasive plants that threaten Hawai'i. Invasive plants regularly impact Hawai'i's ecosystems, culture, and economy, and the NWL helps the State stop some new threats from establishing themselves.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



House of Representatives
Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Thursday, February 19, 2026
2:00 PM Room 325
State Capitol

SUBJECT: Testimony – In Support of HB1931 HD1 “Relating to Agriculture”

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee:

The O’ahu Invasive Species Committee (OISC) **strongly supports HB1931 HD1, Relating to Agriculture**, which would modernize the Hawai’i noxious weed law and establish a transparent, systematic, and more timely process for updating the state noxious weed list. The state noxious weed list has not been comprehensively updated since 1992, underscoring the urgent need for revision and a system that encourages more timely updates.

Invasive plants are one of the most serious threats to Hawai’i watersheds, native ecosystems, agricultural lands, cultural resources, and communities. OISC works on the front lines of early detection and rapid response, and we’ve seen firsthand how quickly invasive weeds can establish, spread, and become exponentially more expensive to control. Designation as a noxious weed, especially before the species is known to be widespread, will lead to cost savings in regards to control and a higher likelihood of successful eradication.

The following provisions outlined in this bill would significantly enhance the State’s ability to fight priority noxious weeds:

1. Establishment of a State Noxious Weed Coordinator

A dedicated coordinator will significantly improve statewide coordination, scientific review, interagency collaboration, and public transparency. Management plans are needed for a number of noxious weeds. Centralizing oversight and proposal management will ensure consistency and accountability in how new threats are evaluated and addressed.

2. Transparent and Systematic Proposal and Review Process

Allowing public nominations for noxious species and establishing structured review timelines, scientific assessments, advisory committee input, and board action creates a transparent and defensible process. This framework will strengthen the credibility of designations, provide for community input and ensure decisions are properly contextualized and grounded in evidence.

3. Annual Adoption of the State Noxious Weed List

Regular updates are essential, especially in a state where new non-native plant species are continually detected. An annual adoption process, alongside an emergency listing authority and process when urgent action is required, will allow Hawai’i to respond more proactively rather than reactively.

4. Classification System (Class A, B, and C)

The proposed three-tiered system aligns management actions with distribution and risk.

Prioritizing eradication of species not yet widespread (Class A) is one of the most cost-effective biosecurity strategies available to the State and falls within the framework that emphasizes prevention.

5. Strengthened Enforcement and Penalties

Clear prohibitions and meaningful penalties are necessary to deter the importation, sale, and transport of harmful species. Strong enforcement authority supports responsible industry practices and protects the broader public interest.

6. Broader Definition of “Noxious Weed”

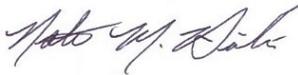
Expanding the definition beyond strictly agricultural impacts to include environmental, cultural, and public health impacts reflects the modern biosecurity mission and the integrated nature of our Hawai'i ecosystems.

Invasive species management is most effective when prevention and early action are prioritized. Updating this law will give agencies, land managers, and community partners the tools they need to prevent the next major invasion rather than manage its long-term consequences.

OISC respectfully urges the Committee to pass this important measure. This bill strengthens the Hawai'i biosecurity framework, promotes transparency and public engagement, and ensures that the State can act swiftly and strategically to protect our natural and agricultural resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



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



House of Representatives
Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Wednesday, February 18, 2026
2:00 PM Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
State Capitol

Testimony in Support of HB1931 HD1

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) is **in support of HB1931 HD1, *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 HD1, 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 HD1 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 HD1 incorporates sensible changes to the process and timeline for updates to the State's noxious weed list. We note that the requirements in HB1931 HD1 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-

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

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 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 HD1 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.

We hope this Committee will support HB1931 HD1 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



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February 18, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

TESTIMONY ON HB 1931, HD1
RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Poepoe, 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, HD1, 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.

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.

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 Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the House Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs 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 addresses the critical need to update and manage Hawaii's noxious weed policy, a pressing concern due to the ecological, agricultural, and economic threats posed by invasive plant species. Establishment of a State Noxious Weed Coordinator is a positive step for leadership and coordination to protect native species and ecosystems.

The provision for cooperative agreements with landowners for weed control is crucial. This collaborative approach should be supported by clear guidelines and incentives for participation to encourage engagement from the farming community.

Overall, HB1931 represents a significant advancement in managing invasive plant species in Hawaii. By encouraging public participation, improving regulatory processes, and enhancing enforcement mechanisms, the bill could significantly benefit local farmers and ecosystems. Continued collaboration with the farming community and other stakeholders will be essential for successful implementation.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin
Advocacy Director
Hawai'i Farmers Union

BIISC
23 E. Kawili St.
Hilo, HI 96720
(808) 933-3340
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February 17, 2026

Hearing: House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

RE: HB1931

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, 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 Ag 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 was enacted in 1992, and has never been updated. The phrase "invasive species" would not even be used in statute for another 7 years, until 1999, when the Clinton administration issued the first federal invasive species legislation. Hawaii did not adopt an official definition for another two years. 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 big-box retailer in Hilo was selling the highly invasive Australian tree fern, even as conservation programs use tax dollars to control its 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



**HAWAI'I
FOOD+
POLICY**

Honolulu, HI 96813
food@purplemaia.org

Date of Hearing: 18 February, 2026

To: Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and the House Committee on Judiciary & HAwaiian Affairs

Subject: **HB1931 HD1**, Relating to Agriculture

Aloha,

Hawai'i Food+ Policy is writing in **support of HB1931 HD1** and acknowledgement of the adopted proposed amendments allowing any individual to submit a proposal to add, change, or remove noxious weed designations at any time during the year. This amendment was included in our previous testimony and we appreciate that our proposed amendment was amicable with the Agriculture and Food Systems committee.

The addition of this amendment maintains a clear and explicit cutoff date for submission but allows for regular community engagement with the process. The remainder of the process language is still applicable while maintaining the heart of year round submissions and constant engagement while clearly articulating the cutoff date for annual considerations.

Within the proposed amendment included we make it easier to report weeds which may only be clearly identified or physically noticed during particular seasons. Year round reporting also allows us to say something when we see something instead of having to record, store, and remember to report potentially 9 months later. Again, we appreciate the adoption of the amendment in addition to further clarifications in the timeline to vote on proposals.

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, We **support HB1931 HD1** and appreciate your committee for taking the time to consider our testimony.

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.



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAII

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

February 18, 2026

2:00 PM

Conference Room 325

In **SUPPORT** of **HB1931 HD1**: RELATING TO AGRICULTURE

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of our over 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **SUPPORTS HB1931 HD1**, 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 for 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 HD1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1931-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 9:01:15 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/18/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support

1931 HB RELATING TO AGRICULTURE.

HB-1931-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 8:34:50 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/18/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STRONG SUPPORT!