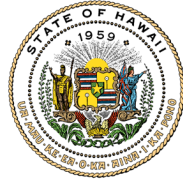


**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
Governor

**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 COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 2026  
10:03 AM  
CONFERENCE ROOM 211 & VIDEO CONFERENCE**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 2139, HD1, SD1  
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committees:

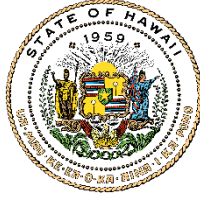
Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2139, HD1, SD1, relating to invasive species. This bill appropriates monies to the University of Hawai'i to conduct a study on effective treatment methods to reduce populations of the Queensland Longhorn Beetle (QLB) in Hawai'i.

QLB is a pest that targets not only agricultural crops such as cacao, avocado, and citrus, but also plants of significant cultural value in Hawaiian culture, such as kukui and 'ulu. The Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity ("Department") recognizes the importance of having a diverse range of management strategies and treatment methods to effectively address this threat. This includes supporting research and innovation to identify effective, environmentally responsible solutions. Therefore, the Department supports this bill.

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 Committee on  
EDUCATION

Wednesday, April 1, 2026  
10:03 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 2139, HOUSE DRAFT 1, SENATE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

House Bill 2139, House Draft 1, Senate Draft 1 appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i to conduct a study on effective treatment methods to reduce populations of the Queensland longhorn beetle. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure, provided it does not replace or adversely impact priorities outlined in the Executive Supplemental Budget request.**

*Acalolepta aesthetica*, often called the Queensland longhorn beetle (QLB), poses a serious threat to many tropical plant species in Hawai'i. QLBs tend to attack stressed, weakened, and dying trees. Larvae bore into trunks and branches as they develop, which can severely weaken small trees. Repeated attacks may ultimately kill the trees. Of particular concern to the Department, federal researchers have confirmed that QLBs have been found attacking the native plant alahe'e. This invasive beetle most often infests culturally important plants in Hawai'i, such as kukui and 'ulu. It has also decimated cacao trees on the east side of Hawai'i Island, causing several cacao farmers to abandon the crop.

By 2026, nearly 20 plant species have been identified as larval hosts for QLB in East Hawai'i. As this invasive beetle continues to spread, the list of vulnerable plants is expected to grow.

No traditional pesticides are known to effectively control tree-larva infestations over the long term. However, an integrated pest management program that combines targeted systemic

insecticide treatments at the right stage of beetle development with cultural and mechanical controls may offer dependable management options.

Hawai'i needs effective long-term management tools and integrated pest management programs to identify, treat, and reduce QLB populations at all life stages. Therefore, the Department strongly supports funding more research on QLB to effectively address this significant invasive threat.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## ‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

### Legislative Testimony

#### Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
April 1, 2026 at 10:03 a.m.

By

Bonnie Irwin

Chancellor

University of Hawai'i at Hilo

HB 2139 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES.

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2139 HD1 SD1. The University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UH Hilo) supports HB 2139 HD1 SD1 which will allocate funding to essential research needed to address the growing threat posed by the Queensland Longhorn Beetle (QLB) in Hawai'i.

As QLB spreads across East Hawai'i, it has been devastating to farmers who are losing cacao, citrus, avocado, and several other crop plants to these larvae. By targeting profitable crops on which local farmers depend, QLB has the potential to cause millions of dollars in losses to Hawai'i farmers. QLB also has ecological consequences. At UH Hilo's restoration site in Keaukaha, we have seen widespread mortality of kukui and 'ulu trees as a result of QLB damage. The death of these key canopy trees allows for invasive plants to move in and take over the forest. We must address this issue to mitigate the harm QLB can cause to local farms, forests, and community spaces.

Nematode biocontrol offers a promising solution to the issue of QLB. In an approach developed by scientists at USDA-ARS, locally isolated nematodes, *Heterorhabditis indica*, are injected into QLB-infested trees, where they then selectively target and kill the larvae. UH Hilo research on kukui and 'ulu trees in the summer of 2025 found that in most cases, nematode treatment either reduces or eliminates QLB infection. Numerous accounts from local growers also reflect the effectiveness of this treatment. Additionally, *H. indica* are non-toxic and safe to other organisms like cattle and their human handlers. This biocontrol gives us an opportunity to proactively control QLB before it spreads across Hawai'i and to other islands.

While this biocontrol is effective, it remains very time intensive and often more than one treatment is necessary to eliminate QLB in the tree altogether. It is therefore essential that we invest in research on the life cycle of QLB and implementation of different treatment methods that might be faster or more effective. It is essential to develop procedures to scale up the treatment of trees on large areas of land and to assist local farmers. Such research will contribute to reducing QLB populations in East Hawai'i and support growers in protecting their trees using a non-toxic method. In addition, a low-

cost, effective treatment that is scalable will be extremely valuable if QLB eventually makes it to other islands.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2139 HD1 SD1.

BIISC  
23 E. Kawili St.  
Hilo, HI 96720  
(808) 933-3340  
[www.biisc.org](http://www.biisc.org)



March 30, 2026

Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
RE: HB2139

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the committee,

On behalf of the Big Island Invasive Species Committee (BIISC), I write in strong support of HB2139. We are in dire need of dedicated researchers to assist with battling the Queensland Longhorn Beetle or QLB (*Acololepta aesthetica*) to protect our natural resources on the Big Island.

As an organization that deals with many invasive pests, we must emphasize how alarming the QLB invasion is. While many bugs are fairly host specific - even the high profile CRB has a relatively narrow host profile of palms and a handful of plants - QLB has been confirmed in more than 15 relatively unrelated species of plants in Hawaii, with several more suspected to be hosts. Many agricultural and landscape plants are on the list, including ulu (breadfruit), multiple varieties of citrus, cycads, hibiscus, mulberry, passionfruit, croton, elderberry, but by far the most critically affected species has been cacao. Cacao farmers here tend to be small-scale agriculturalists, supplying a high quality crop to create a unique, value-added product in the form of award-winning chocolate. It is a heartening success story - until those farmers relay stories of grueling hours spent meticulously searching every branch of every tree, trying to yank out the larvae that are girdling trees to death just under the bark. Multiple farmers have told me they either gave up on cacao, or have sold their farms, unable to keep up with the damage and demands of QLB.

A recent study published by USGS researchers in Hawaii found only one tree is more appealing to QLB than cacao - our official state tree, the kukui. Kukui is one of the original species brought by Polynesian voyagers over 1,000 years ago. It holds deep significance in Hawaiian culture and is an integral part of the landscapes that shape Hawaii. At least one native species, the alahe'e, has also been identified as a host for QLB, and the only reason we do not know whether QLB attacks other natives is because there has been no research to determine this. Natural areas have not yet been surveyed to determine the extent of QLB infestation. In the ten years since it was first known to be naturalized here, QLB has rapidly expanded its range from central Puna, through Hilo, and along the Hamakua coast. It is now present in an area of our island that exceeds the size of the entire island of Oahu.

Before QLB arrived in Hawaii, it had never shown up as a pest elsewhere in the world, so there was little knowledge available. Through the generosity and cooperative efforts of several different programs, including USDA ARS and USFS researchers in Hilo and UH-Hilo faculty and students, there have been some gains in learning more about QLB and identifying at least one promising control (entomopathogenic nematodes) has developed. Now is the time to build on those efforts and move forward with dedicated researchers who can tackle this insect and develop the methods needed to find and fight QLB. It is only a matter of time before QLB arrives on other islands, and we should arm ourselves with the understanding and tools that are needed to mount an effective response.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Franny Brewer, Program Manager



The Senate  
Committee on Ways and Means  
Wednesday, April 1, 2026  
10:03 AM Conference Room 211 & Videoconference  
State Capitol

### Testimony in Support of HB2139 SD1

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) is **in support of HB2139 SD1**, *Relating to Invasive Species*, which provides funds to the University of Hawaii to study effective treatment methods to reduce populations of the Queensland Longhorn beetle (QLB).

As noted in the bill, QLB can damage or kill a number of agriculturally and culturally significant tree species, including breadfruit, kukui, citrus, cacao, avocado, and many others. At this time, QLB are found in limited areas of Hawaii Island. Unfortunately, there is no treatment for QLB infestation. The only control method is to destroy infested trees, chip them in place, and avoid moving infested material to new areas.

The funds provided by HB2139 SD1 will allow the University of Hawaii to study promising treatments for QLB to reduce population numbers, and, hopefully, prevent the spread of the pest to new areas and islands.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and to support HB2139 SD1.

Aloha,

Christy Martin  
CGAPS Program Manager

Stephanie Easley  
CGAPS Legal Fellow



**THE SENATE  
KA 'AHA KENEKOA  
THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2026**

**COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair**

**Wednesday, April 1 2026 10:03am  
Conference Room 211  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street**

**RE: HB2139HD1 SD1 RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES.**

My name is Eric S. Tanouye and I am the President for the Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association. HFNA is a statewide umbrella organization with approximately 350 members. Our membership is made up with breeders, hybridizers, propagators, growers, shippers, wholesalers, retailers, educators, and the allied industry, which supports our efforts in agriculture.

The Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association (HFNA) **SUPPORTS House Bill 2139 HD1 SD1** appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i to conduct a study on effective treatment methods to reduce populations of the Queensland Longhorn Beetle

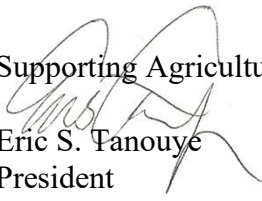
We appreciate any efforts to help strengthen and enforce Biosecurity. The Long Horn Beetle has started to become a concern for our Floriculture Nurserymen and Women. We support this pro-active attempt to conduct a study so we can better understand how to fight and repel this invasive pest.

We ask that you support our industry and agriculture, so that we may continue to bring the beauty of Hawaii to others through flowers and ornamentals.



If you have any questions at this time, I would be happy to discuss them and can be reached by phone at 808-959-3535 ext 2627, cell 960-1433 and email [eric@greenpointnursery.com](mailto:eric@greenpointnursery.com).

Supporting Agriculture and Hawaii,

  
Eric S. Tanouye  
President

Hawaii Floriculture and Nursery Association



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759  
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921  
e-mail [info@hfbf.org](mailto:info@hfbf.org); [www.hfbf.org](http://www.hfbf.org)

April 1, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

**TESTIMONY ON HB 2139, HD1, SD1**  
**RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference  
10:03 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Moriwake, 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 2139, HD1, SD1**, which appropriates funds to the University of Hawaii to conduct a study on effective treatment methods to reduce populations of the Queensland Longhorn Beetle.

The Queensland Longhorn Beetle (QLB) is an invasive pest that targets many agriculturally important and culturally significant plants, including 'ulu, cacao, avocado, citrus, hibiscus, and kukui. The first known detection in Hawai'i occurred in Puna in 2009, and since then, it has expanded its host range and is now established in Hilo and throughout the Hāmākua Coast, with confirmed presence as far north as Honoka'a and Āhualoa. Once established, QLB infestations can result in severe damage or death of host plants.

Although the Queensland Longhorn Beetle is a relatively newer invasive threat compared to other pests Hawai'i has faced, its spread underscores a familiar and concerning pattern. When invasive species are not addressed early and effectively, they become far more costly and difficult to manage over time. Farmers and ranchers are often the first to experience these impacts directly, through lost production, increased management costs, and reduced viability of certain crops.

HB 2139, HD1, SD1 represents a proactive step by investing in research to identify effective treatment and control methods before this pest becomes further entrenched statewide. Supporting research through the University of Hawai'i is consistent with past

efforts to strengthen Hawai'i's invasive species response by pairing science-based solutions with on-the-ground agricultural realities.

More broadly, this measure highlights the need for Hawai'i to continue strengthening its biosecurity and invasive species prevention systems. Without sustained and coordinated efforts to address invasive species at all stages, prevention, detection, research, and response, Hawai'i will continue to face new pest introductions that threaten agricultural production. This directly undermines shared goals such as increasing local food production, expanding Farm to School and institutional purchasing programs, and strengthening food system resilience.

HFB supports HB 2139, HD1, SD1 as part of a larger strategy to protect Hawai'i's agricultural sector, environment, and food security. Addressing invasive species early and effectively is essential if we expect farmers and ranchers to meet the State's long-term agricultural goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important measure.

## Officers

Kaipo Kekona  
State President

Christian Zuckerman  
Vice-President

Maureen Datta  
Secretary

Reba Lopez  
Treasurer

## Chapter Presidents

Kelii Gannet  
Kohala, Hawai'i

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Maureen Datta  
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Gina Lind  
Hāna, Maui

Mason Scharer  
Haleakalā, Maui

Kaiea Medeiros  
Mauna Kahālāwai,  
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Kaipo Kekona  
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Kilia Avelino-Purdy  
Moloka'i

Negus Manna  
Lāna'i

India Clark  
North Shore, O'ahu

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Wai'anae, O'ahu

Rachel LaDrig  
Waimānalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura  
Honolulu, O'ahu

Natalie Urminska  
Kaua'i



**LATE**

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Ways and Means 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 HB2139.**

HB2139 HD1 is an essential legislative measure that directs much-needed resources to address the threat posed by the Queensland longhorn beetle. By allocating funds to the University of Hawaii for a study on effective treatment methods, this bill provides a scientific foundation for developing strategies to mitigate the beetle's damaging impact. The Queensland longhorn beetle poses a dire risk to crucial crops like 'ulu, cacao, avocado, and citrus, which are not only integral to Hawaii's agricultural economy but also to the cultural heritage and food security of the islands.

Prompt action through research and development of treatment methods is imperative to prevent the establishment and spread of such destructive pests. Proactive efforts in tackling invasive species are vital to preserving the livelihoods of local farmers and fostering a future of sustainable agriculture. Delaying intervention only allows these invasive populations to grow, exacerbating their negative effects on our ecosystem and agricultural productivity.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin  
Advocacy Director  
Hawai'i Farmers Union

**HB-2139-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 6:17:47 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jim Klyman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

ABSOLUTELY SUPPORT THIS BILL. Our entire Keaau town neighborhood has 30 year and older mature bearing citrus and fruit trees that a being descimated by this invasive pest. It is attacking such a wide variety of food crops we locally consume and export in addition to culturally important trees that have no defense or treatment against this pest. It has spread from the Keaau area to additional farm and nursery locations along the north shore of Hawaii Island. We need researhers, staff, and funding to combat this invasive pest before it can infest and take out any more of our tropical fruit trees. This pest makes the rhinoceros beetle look tame in comparison to the number of food plants the Longhorn beetle attacks. Palms are important, but not as important as saving our fruit crops we use for food and export.

## HB 2139 Written Testimony in Support 3/30/2026

ke Aloha Legislators,

We are small sub-urban town farmers with an agroforestry orchard of over 40 different species of fruiting trees, and donate over a ton of food every year to the Hawai`i Island community- including food banks, public outreach events and neighbors. We are doing the Food Security work that many legislators are calling their constituents to do.

In 2020, our little Kea`au neighborhood was hit with Queensland Longhorn Beetle (*Acalopecta aesthetica*) – QLB, and our orchard trees began to show the indications of impact by March of 2020, just before the lockdown. In the beginning of our infestation, the only treatment was to go through our orchard and physically check each and every limb for soft areas or stringy frass/sap leaks out of the bark and dig out the larvae. We have lost a few citrus trees and all of our lilikoi, and we have had to cut back many infested limbs from our remaining host trees.

We have been injecting the BIISC (Big Island Invasive Species Committee) recommended, and supplied, nematode treatment into our host trees for a few years with success, to a point. We have neighboring unattended properties (fallow orchards) that allow re-infestation of QLB to our small orchard. At each re-infestation, we must re-inject nematode treatment into infested trees to control QLB damage on host trees.

I am not sure if you are aware, during the end of January and the first week of February 2026, there were no nematode treatments available for the public, and we had a new infestation outbreak on our host trees. We know there have been funding hiccups over the past few years that have made the consistent supply of nematodes something farmers cannot count on. We need funding for consistent current treatment and research in order to halt, and potentially push-back, this invasive pest. Each time we are re-infested with QLB, this infestation can grow in strength, expanded host preference and in range of infestation around Hawai`i.

This should not be new information for any legislator. You have seen this in other invasive pest infestations, however the host plant selection of QLB (attached) is extensive. Local news covered the devastating effects of QLB in 2019, and National news in 2025 (links below).

In a USGS survey in 2023, QLB was identified around Honoka`a (link below). QLB can spread from tree to tree, also at the speed of any vehicle, as Stacey Chun (DOAB - entomology) has noted: ULB adults can emerge from larvae infected logs that have been stacked in his facility for months, so host firewood and smoke-meat wood can spread QLB to anywhere in our state.

I have attached the most recent QLB host list - more host species have been added every year. This list includes native, canoe, culturally significant, agriculturally significant and ornamental trees used around Hawai`i.

I cannot understand any legislator that would have this information and not make sure there is funding to halt, and possibly even reverse the spread and agricultural impact of this highly invsive pest species.

A hui hou!

Carey Yost - Researcher - [https://projects.sare.org/sare\\_project/fw25-015/](https://projects.sare.org/sare_project/fw25-015/)

**Hawai`i News Now 10/30/2019 coverage of QLB:** <https://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/video/2019/10/31/farmers-scramble-contain-invasive-beetle-attacking-big-island-crops/>

**USNews 11/07/25 Coverage of QLB:** <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/hawaii/articles/2025-11-07/farmers-want-hawaii-to-tackle-the-tree-killing-queensland-longhorn-beetle-before-it-spreads>

**Dept. Of Ag. 12/10/2023 Updated Pest Advisory with QLB distribution range in Hamakua:**  
<https://dab.hawaii.gov/pi/files/2023/12/Acalolepta-aesthetica-NPA-12-13-2023.pdf>

# Queensland Longhorn Beetle- *A.aesthetica* (QLB) Host Plants

This list represents Orders of magnitude of potential damage to Hawai`i Agriculture. This is not hyperbole, as there are over a dozen Order clades of plants represented here!!!

## Trumpet tree (*Cecropia obtusifolia*)

<https://dab.hawaii.gov/pi/files/2025/12/Acalolepta-aesthetica-NPA-12-08-2025-2.pdf>

## Cacao (*Theobroma cacao*)

<https://dab.hawaii.gov/pi/files/2025/12/Acalolepta-aesthetica-NPA-12-08-2025-2.pdf>

## ‘ulu (*Artocarpus altilis*; breadfruit)

<https://dab.hawaii.gov/pi/files/2025/12/Acalolepta-aesthetica-NPA-12-08-2025-2.pdf>

## Citrus (*Citrus sp.*)

<https://dab.hawaii.gov/pi/files/2025/12/Acalolepta-aesthetica-NPA-12-08-2025-2.pdf>

## Avocado (*Persea americana*)

<https://dab.hawaii.gov/pi/files/2025/12/Acalolepta-aesthetica-NPA-12-08-2025-2.pdf>

## Kukui (*Aleurites moluccanus*)

<https://dab.hawaii.gov/pi/files/2025/12/Acalolepta-aesthetica-NPA-12-08-2025-2.pdf>

## Queen sago (*Cycas circinalis*)

<https://dab.hawaii.gov/pi/files/2025/12/Acalolepta-aesthetica-NPA-12-08-2025-2.pdf>

## Mulberry (*Morus alba*)

<https://dab.hawaii.gov/pi/files/2025/12/Acalolepta-aesthetica-NPA-12-08-2025-2.pdf>

## Norfolk pine (*Araucaria heterophylla*)

<https://dab.hawaii.gov/pi/files/2025/12/Acalolepta-aesthetica-NPA-12-08-2025-2.pdf>

## Moringa, kalamungay (*Moringa oleifera*)

<https://dab.hawaii.gov/pi/files/2025/12/Acalolepta-aesthetica-NPA-12-08-2025-2.pdf>

## Gunpowder tree (*Trema orientalis*)

<https://dab.hawaii.gov/pi/files/2025/12/Acalolepta-aesthetica-NPA-12-08-2025-2.pdf>

## Hibiscus (*Hibiscus sp.*)

<https://dab.hawaii.gov/pi/files/2025/12/Acalolepta-aesthetica-NPA-12-08-2025-2.pdf>

## Croton (*Codiaeum variegatum*)

<https://dab.hawaii.gov/pi/files/2025/12/Acalolepta-aesthetica-NPA-12-08-2025-2.pdf>

## Lilikoi, passion fruit (*Passiflora edulis*)

<https://dab.hawaii.gov/pi/files/2025/12/Acalolepta-aesthetica-NPA-12-08-2025-2.pdf>

## Elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*)

<https://dab.hawaii.gov/pi/files/2025/12/Acalolepta-aesthetica-NPA-12-08-2025-2.pdf>

## -Cycads -ornamental (order Cycadales)

<https://dab.hawaii.gov/pi/files/2025/12/Acalolepta-aesthetica-NPA-12-08-2025-2.pdf>

## -Durian (*Durio sp.*)

<https://dab.hawaii.gov/pi/files/2025/12/Acalolepta-aesthetica-NPA-12-08-2025-2.pdf>

## -Tree spinach, chaya (*Cnidoscolus aconitifolius*)

<https://dab.hawaii.gov/pi/files/2025/12/Acalolepta-aesthetica-NPA-12-08-2025-2.pdf>

## -Jade Plant (*Crassula ovata*)

### \*\*\*NATIVE AND ENDEMIC NOT ON STATE LIST:

“Host preferences of non-native *Acalolepta aesthetica* (Coleoptera: Cerambycidae) on the Island of Hawai`i” Sofaer et.al. 2025. <https://resjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/afe.70015>

**HB-2139-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 7:52:52 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STRONG SUPPORT!!! MAHALO!

**HB-2139-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:41:33 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ann Kobsa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this funding for research on methods to control the QLB in Hawai'i. This beetle has severely impacted my quality of life and made my primary activity of forest restoration much more challenging. Since its arrival in my area a few years ago, QLB has been decimating my food trees, primarily cacao and citrus, and is also killing the 4 native tree species that were my strongest reforestation trees. Since ROD killed most of the 'ohi'a in my area, I've been using 'ohe, neleau, 'akia and alahe'e to recover some amount of canopy in the forest, but all of these are being killed by QLB. Please help by funding this measure.

Mahalo nui,

Ann Kobsa, PhD, Biologist and Subsistence Farmer

**LATE**

**HB-2139-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 10:39:22 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emma Stierhoff	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the committee,

My name is Emma Stierhoff, and I am a Lead Technician at UH Hilo under the Liko Nā Pilina Restoration Project. I am writing to express my support of HB 2139, which will allocate funding to essential research needed to address the growing threat posed by the Queensland Longhorn Beetle (QLB) in Hawai‘i. As QLB spreads across East Hawai‘i, it has been devastating to farmers who are losing cacao, citrus, avocado, and several other crop plants to these larvae. By targeting many profitable crops on which local farmers depend, QLB has the potential to cause millions of dollars in losses to Hawai‘i farmers. In a 2025 survey by the Hawai‘i Department of Agriculture, the top issue identified by Hawai‘i growers was invasive species and pest management. QLB also has ecological consequences. At our restoration site in Keaukaha, we have seen widespread mortality of kukui and ‘ulu trees as a result of QLB damage. The death of these key canopy trees allows for invasive plants to move in and take over the forest. We must address this issue to mitigate the harm QLB can cause to local farms, forests, and community spaces.

Nematode biocontrol offers a promising solution to the issue of QLB. In an approach developed by scientists at USDA-ARS, locally isolated nematodes, *Heterorhabditis indica*, are injected into QLB-infested trees, where they then selectively target and kill the larvae. Research we did on kukui and ‘ulu trees in the summer of 2025 found that in most cases, nematode treatment either reduces or eliminates QLB infection. Numerous accounts from local growers also reflect the effectiveness of this treatment. Additionally, *H. indica* are non-toxic and safe to other organisms like cattle and their human handlers. This biocontrol gives us an opportunity to proactively control QLB before it spreads across Hawai‘i and to other islands.

While this biocontrol is effective, it remains very time intensive and often more than one treatment is necessary to eliminate QLB in the tree altogether. It is therefore essential that we invest in research that will contribute to establishing faster and more effective means of treating. This will allow us to develop procedures to scale up the treatment of trees on large areas of land and to assist local farmers. Such research will contribute to reducing QLB populations in East Hawai‘i and support growers in protecting their trees using a non-toxic method. In addition, a low-cost, effective treatment that is scalable will be extremely valuable if QLB eventually makes it to other islands.

Please vote for HB 2139 to help mitigate the spread of Queensland Longhorn Beetle in Hawai‘i, supporting our local farmers and our ‘āina.

Mahalo nui for your time,

Emma Stierhoff

**LATE**

**HB-2139-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 3:54:14 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lilah Shapiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2139. I strongly **support** this bill.

My name is Lilah Shapiro and I work under Dr Ostertag where my focus is on the Queensland longhorn beetle and the use of nematodes as a biological control. QLB is a generalist pest known to target and often kill nearly 20 host species including culturally and agriculturally important plants like 'ulu, kukui, cacao, and citrus. By targeting many profitable crops on which local farmers depend, QLB has the potential to cause millions of dollars in losses to Hawai'i farmers. Nematodes provide an effective and low-cost solution that has the opportunity to protect the economic vitality of Hawai'i's agricultural sector.

QLB larvae bore the tree until they pupate and emerge as adults, causing substantial damage in the process. When injected into trees, nematodes are able to kill these larvae. This method has been extremely effective in reducing and even eliminating infection in trees. Many farmers and other community members applying this biocontrol have seen the health of their trees improve. **Preliminary results from our pilot study at UH Hilo in 2025 show that nematode application reduced or completely eliminated QLB infection in 74% of kukui and 80% of 'ulu trees.** For such a novel biocontrol effort, these results are extremely promising.

However, this treatment is time intensive which is why it is essential that we invest in research on different treatment methods that might be more effective. This bill would allow us to research the best methods for applying this biocontrol so it can be scaled up for farmers with hundreds if not thousands of trees.

This biocontrol offers an opportunity to be proactive about managing QLB populations before it spreads to other islands and causes widespread devastation like we have seen with the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle. So often with invasive species, it is too little too late but now we have a chance to actually combat this growing issue.

Along with additional research, HB 2139 would allow us to continue our outreach and community involvement in this project.

We have lead treatment workshops at OK farms and Hawai'i Academy of Arts and Sciences as well as working with middle school and high school students. Working with them hands on to treat trees themselves and collect long term data monitoring their infection and health has shown them how everyone has a kuleana in protecting our ecosystems and we can all be a part of the science behind it. I've heard the excitement in their voices when they report back to me that the trees on their campus are doing better. This is getting them direct experience in science and aloha 'āina work.

I have seen firsthand the devastating impact QLB has had on our forests and farms. At the Liko Nā Pilina restoration site, many canopy trees have been lost to QLB, reducing shade and worsening the encroachment of invasive plants. With this nematode treatment, I witnessed trees go from being covered in oozing infection and losing all their leaves to completely recovering. It is remarkable to finally have a tool that actually works to fight an extremely destructive pest.

Taking action against QLB is essential to our environmental health, local food security, and cultural heritage. Mahalo for your time.

Lilah Shapiro

**LATE**

**HB-2139-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/31/2026 9:42:06 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/1/2026 10:03:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sherry Pollack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Invasive species management becomes exponentially more expensive and difficult once infestations become widespread. Support our local farmers and our 'āina and PASS this measure.