



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

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**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

H.B. NO. 2207, H.D. 1, RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES.

**BEFORE THE:**

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

**DATE:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026      **TIME:** 2:00 p.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 329

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

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Chair Matayoshi and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

The original bill amended section 141-17, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), to specify that the administrative rules adopted by the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity under section 141-17, HRS, would include requirements to (1) allow for the use of monofilament netting for purposes of protecting plants against invasive species under certain conditions; and (2) allow distribution and sale of fine mesh nets provided that they are sold solely for the purpose of protecting plants from the coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB).

The Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems recently amended the bill as House Draft 1 to add a new subsection (b) to section 141-17, HRS, which subjects fine mesh nets to the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act under title 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 152.500 and chapter 460J, HRS. See page 3, lines 6-13.

CFR section 152.500 governs devices intended for "trapping, destroying, repelling, or mitigating any pest or other form of plant or animal life[.]" Section 460J-24.5, HRS, governs any device that purports to "eliminate or control pests by attracting, repelling, or killing pests without the use of chemicals" (see definition of "nonchemical pest control device" under section 460J-1, HRS). For these laws to apply to the use of fine mesh nets, the use of the nets would need to be to trap, destroy, repel, mitigate, attract, or kill the invasive pest itself. Fine mesh netting meant for non-aquatic usage

would not necessarily be regulated by these laws, unless the intended use of a particular fine mesh net was actually to trap, destroy, repel, mitigate, attract, or kill the invasive pest itself.

In contrast, section 141-17, HRS, only authorizes the limited use of nets "for the protection of plants against invasive species." This bill is not intended to expand section 141-17, HRS, as it states that the use of fine meshed nets can be "an effective means of preventing adult coconut rhinoceros beetles from accessing vulnerable plants, effectively mitigating their impact on local plants and the environment." See page 1, lines 4-7.

Because section 141-17, HRS, is limited to the use of fine mesh nets for protection of plants only, and does not authorize the use of fine mesh nets to trap, destroy, repel, mitigate, attract, or kill the actual pest, and because this bill does not expand the use beyond plant protection, the federal regulation and statute governing 40 CFR § 152.500 devices and section 460J-24.5, HRS, nonchemical pest control devices do not apply. Including subsection (b) is unnecessary and may be interpreted as subjecting the use of fine mesh nets under section 141-17, HRS, to the burden of laws they do not fall under.

To correct this issue, we recommend deleting the following wording from section 1 of this bill on page 1, lines 7-9:

Additionally, fine mesh netting, meant for non-aquatic usage, is a regulated device for pest control under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, title 7 United States Code section 136.

We also recommend deleting the new subsection (b) being added to section 141-17, HRS, by section 2 of this bill on page 3, lines 6-13, and restoring the designation of the existing subsection (b).

These recommended deletions do not affect the original intent of the bill, which is to specify that the administrative rules adopted under section 141-17, HRS, specifically allow for use of monofilament netting and distribution and sale of fine mesh nets for use in preventing adult CRB from accessing vulnerable plants.

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 CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2026  
2:00 PM  
CONFERENCE ROOM 329 & VIDEO CONFERENCE**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 2207, HD 1  
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES**

Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti, and Members of the Committee:

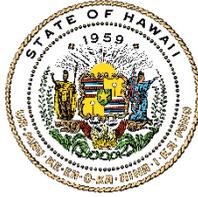
Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2207, HD1 relating to invasive species. This bill requires the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to establish rules allowing the sale and distribution of fine mesh nets, including monofilament netting, in the State to protect plants from the coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB). The Hawaii Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (Department) supports this bill.

The Department understands the need for more tools to mitigate the impacts of CRB due to the devastating damage the insect has caused within the State and in other parts of the world such as Guam. Proper netting has been proven to be an effective, nonchemical method that can enhance the repertoire of control methods for CRB. The Department will continue to encourage and provide support for the development of tools to combat CRB.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify to 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 HAWAI'I  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621  
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DAWN N.S. CHANG  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
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RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE  
FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
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KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

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

Before the House Committee on  
CONSUMER PROTECTION AND COMMERCE

Wednesday, February 24, 2026  
2:00 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 329

In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 2207 HOUSE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

House Bill 2207, House Draft 1 allows the use of certain monofilament netting for the protection of plants against invasive species; subjects fine mesh nets, including certain monofilament netting, to certain federal and state requirements; requires the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to establish rules permitting the sale and distribution of fine mesh nets, including monofilament netting, within the State to protect plants from the coconut rhinoceros beetle. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure as long as its passage does not replace or negatively affect priorities outlined in the Executive Supplemental Budget request.**

The coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB) is a significant pest throughout the Pacific Region. Its main host is the coconut palm (*Cocos nucifera*), which helps stabilize soil, prevent coastal erosion, serve as a food source, and is an important cultural symbol in Hawai'i. However, these beetles can also damage native forest species such as the native palm loulou (*Pritchardia spp.*), which are already threatened or endangered. They may also attack hala (*Pandanus tectorius*), a vital component of native lowland wet forests. Hala was historically used to weave sails for Hawaiian voyaging canoes and to create practical items like baskets and mats, making it an essential resource in Hawaiian culture.

According to Hawai'i CRB Response, one of the most effective non-chemical methods to protect palm trees (and other CRB target species) from CRB is using a physical cover of monofilament, fine mesh nets (with 1-3-inch holes) to wrap the crowns of palm trees and to cover breeding materials like mulch piles and compost.

The Department supports this bill and its provision for netting to limit the spread of CRB to palm trees and potential breeding materials. Although netting with 2-3-inch holes is currently permitted, this bill would approve smaller mesh sizes for use in protecting against invasive species. Smaller-holed netting is more effective at preventing CRB from passing through.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



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Kaua'i

Aloha Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti, and Members of the House Consumer Protection & Commerce 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 HB2207.**

HB2207 is an essential measure to address the persistent threat posed by the coconut rhinoceros beetle to Hawaii's agriculture. The bill empowers the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity to establish rules that allow the sale and distribution of fine mesh nets, including monofilament netting. This measure will provide an effective and environmentally friendly method for farmers to protect their plants from the destructive impact of these invasive pests. Fine mesh nets serve as a physical barrier, significantly reducing the likelihood of beetle infestation without the need for chemical interventions.

The economic ramifications of unchecked coconut rhinoceros beetle infestations are significant, threatening the livelihoods of local farmers and the broader agricultural sector. By safeguarding plants with readily available and efficient netting solutions, the bill supports not only the immediate crop yields but also the long-term viability of Hawaii's agricultural industry. Moreover, it represents a commitment to ensuring that farmers have access to necessary tools and resources, better enabling them to effectively manage pests. This legislation reinforces the collaboration between government agencies and the farming community towards shared goals of protecting Hawaii's ecosystem health and food security.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin  
Advocacy Director  
Hawai'i Farmers Union



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February 24, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

**TESTIMONY ON HB 2207, HD1**  
RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES

Conference Room 329 & Videoconference  
2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Matayoshi, Vice-Chair Grandinetti, 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 2207, HD1**, which allows the use, sale, and distribution of fine-mesh nets, including monofilament netting, for protecting plants from the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle (CRB).

Invasive species continue to pose one of the most serious threats to Hawai'i's agricultural economy and environment. The coconut rhinoceros beetle has the potential to cause significant damage to palm species that are important to agriculture, landscapes, and cultural resources across the State. Farmers and land managers need access to effective, non-chemical tools to prevent the spread and impact of this pest.

Fine-mesh netting has proven to be an effective tool for preventing CRB damage. HB 2207, HD1 provides the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity with clear authority to establish rules governing the responsible use of these nets, while incorporating safeguards to protect birds, native species, and aquatic environments.

Providing farmers with lawful access to effective pest control tools is critical to protecting agricultural operations and supporting the State's broader biosecurity efforts. HB 2207, HD1 represents a practical and targeted response to an urgent invasive species threat.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



Date of Hearing: 24 February, 2026

To: Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti, and the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Subject: HB2207 HD1, Relating to Invasive Species

Aloha,

Hawai'i Food+ Policy is writing in **support** of HB2207 HD1. This measure allows the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) to establish rules permitting the sale and use of fine mesh nets, including monofilament netting, for the purpose of protecting plants from the coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB).

CRB continues to pose a serious threat to Hawai'i's agricultural economy, cultural resources, and ecosystems, particularly palm species that are foundational to both food production and cultural landscapes. Expanding access to effective, non-chemical tools is an important step toward strengthening Hawai'i's integrated pest management strategies.

Physical exclusion and trapping methods like monofilament netting have been demonstrated as effective tools in Hawai'i's integrated pest management for CRB. University of Hawai'i Cooperative Extension guidance notes that monofilament netting of approximately ½" mesh and ~0.33 mm thickness can effectively catch or deter adult CRB when wrapped around palm crowns or mulch piles, helping to prevent feeding damage and reduce local beetle populations when combined with other practices. The amendment added to include adherence to federal and state requirements for fine meshed nets is appreciated and we hope state research may inform this requirement.

We also want to emphasize if monofilament netting is improperly used or discarded, it could pose potential risks to wildlife and non-target species. Ensuring accurate labeling, consumer education, and retailer accountability will help protect both the public and Hawai'i's environment while maintaining access to an effective CRB control tool.

With strong regulation and oversight, HB2207 HD1 can achieve an appropriate balance between effective invasive species control and environmental protection. For these reasons, we urge the committee to pass HB2207 HD1 with suggested recommendations that reinforce clear limitations, accountability, and ecological safeguards while supporting timely action against CRB.

Mahalo,  
Brandon Kinard & the Food+ Policy Team  
#fixourfoodsystem

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[1] Joshua Silva. (2023). Netting for Physical IPM of Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle. University of Hawai'i Cooperative Extension Service. [https://cms.organictransition.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/HanaiAi\\_CRB\\_Netting\\_Aug2023.pdf](https://cms.organictransition.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/HanaiAi_CRB_Netting_Aug2023.pdf)

**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.

**HB-2207-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2026 7:19:24 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support

2207 HB RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES.

**HB-2207-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 3:58:03 PM

Testimony for CPC on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

STRONG SUPPORT!!!