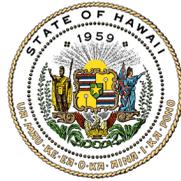


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

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 AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2026
3:10 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 224 & VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2885
RELATING TO BIOSECURITY**

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2885 relating to biosecurity. This measure, beginning January 1, 2027, establishes mandatory handling and storage rules for commercial and residential coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB) host material to reduce the spread of CRB within infested zones and to prevent spread into non-infested zones. The Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (Department) supports the intent of this measure and offers comments.

The Department is appreciative of the intent of this measure as it seeks to resolve one of the largest challenges relating to CRB, the storage and/or accumulation of CRB host material. However, as currently drafted, the Department has concerns about implementation and affects on the Department of Health's (DOH) regulations related to solid waste management of green waste.

It is the Department's understanding that the majority of large commercial composters are already permitted by DOH and are already subjecting green waste to the turning and heat treatment requirements, making some provisions in subsection (a) redundant. Similarly, subsection (e) appears to partially be covered under requirements for illegal dumping, and the Department is unclear if this interferes with HRS 342H.

Regarding subsection (a), it appears to require mechanical turning and spreading, or a heat treatment for all contractors, commercial operators, and facilities that generate, store, transport, sell, or distribute green waste. The Department is

unsure of the feasibility of this section for a number of reasons such as: appearing to require the respective Counties' green waste pick ups to verify turning or heat treatment before pick up; does not allow for the use of chemical treatments that have been verified to eliminate all CRB life stages; requires heat treatment for imported goods regardless of how they were stored after importation; and require essentially all non-residential properties with landscaping to turn or heat treat. Additionally, the Department is unaware of the effectiveness of subsection (a)(1). Turning and aeration are critical components of windrow composting, but without sufficient material, the piles themselves would likely not reach sufficient temperatures to eliminate CRB. Thinly spread green waste that is less than 2" in depth has been shown to preclude CRB reproduction, provided it is allowed to dry out, regardless of temperature. The Department has similar concerns about the treatments in subsection (c).

Regarding subsection (b), the Department believes the intent is to prevent accumulation of a single pile of CRB host material greater than a yard. As currently drafted, it is clear that a residential homeowner cannot create, maintain, or accumulate a pile greater than a cubic yard, however, this section also appears to prohibit the creation, maintenance, or accumulation of any other CRB host material, such as keeping potted plants. To rectify this, the Department suggests the following changes:

(b) No residential property owner or occupant shall create, maintain, store, or accumulate a pile of mulch [pile], green waste [pile], [or] compost, or other coconut rhinoceros beetle host material capable of supporting larval development [pile] larger than one cubic yard[~~, or any other coconut rhinoceros beetle host material capable of supporting larval development~~].

The Department is concerned about this subsection's requirement to use county-issued green waste bins or require transfer to an appropriate county facility. The Department is unaware of how widespread this program is across each County and is unsure if it would be unduly burdensome on some residents, particularly those in more rural or remote areas. Additionally, the Department is unsure on how this section could reasonably be effectuated.

The Department is unclear on the intent of subsection (d) as it appears to conflict or is redundant with other sections. For example, this section seems to conflict with subsection (b) as it requires homeowners to treat green waste if they do not have access to a county-issued green bin. Additionally, subsection (c) already appears to cover the treatment requirements. Based on this, the Department believes this section could be removed.

The Department believes the intent of subsection (e) is to prevent long-term storage of large volumes of green waste without any form of treatment. The Department

is concerned that treated materials that were subjected to treatments that eliminated CRB and subsequently stored appropriately to prevent subsequent reinfestation would require retreatment every 60 days. This can be remedied by adding an exception for this in subsection (f). This would also appear to essentially prohibit the maintenance of potted plants as they would either have to be repotted or destroyed every 60 days.

Regarding subsection (h), should this measure move forward, the Department believes that the existing biosecurity website and pest hotline, biosecurity.hawaii.gov and 808-643-7378 (PEST), respectively, should be used for this as opposed to creating an entire a new number and hotline system. The Department is already fielding reports of CRB through this manner.

Ultimately, the Department believes green waste management is necessary to reduce impacts by CRB. Should this measure move forward, additional distinctions between the Department's and DOH's respective authorities need to be made to ensure there is no duplication of the State's limited resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify to this measure.

SOLID WASTE DIVISION

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

TROY K. TANIGAWA, P.E., COUNTY ENGINEER

BOYD GAYAGAS, DEPUTY COUNTY ENGINEER



DEREK S.K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR
REIKO MATSUYAMA, MANAGING DIRECTOR

Testimony of Allison Fraley
Solid Waste Division Chief
County of Kaua'i, Department of Public Works

Before the
Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Friday, February 13, 2026 3:10 PM
Conference Room 244 and Videoconference

In consideration of
Senate Bill 2885
Relating to Biosecurity – Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle

Honorable Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee:

The Kaua'i County Solid Waste Division **supports the intent** adds **comments** to SB 2885 and its recognition that effective management of the coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB) must focus on the treatment of mulch and green waste, where the majority of the beetle's life cycle occurs. Targeting breeding material provides the most direct opportunity to interrupt population growth before adult beetles emerge.

County Refuse Transfer Stations (RTS) function primarily as collection and consolidation points. We accept green waste from residents and small businesses and haul it to designated facilities for further processing. We recognize that RTSs represent major aggregation sites and therefore present important opportunities for intervention.

Accordingly, the Kaua'i County Solid Waste Division is prepared to assist in suppression efforts by developing and managing controlled bait stations at refuse facilities. Under this approach, green waste can be staged in designated areas that attract CRB adults, after which the material would be periodically treated with steam or other approved heat methods to destroy larvae prior to maturation. This strategy supports the bill's objective of addressing CRB at the breeding-site level while allowing the County to remain within its primary responsibility of receiving and transporting materials.

However, it is important to note that steam or other heat-treatment activities are not currently funded within County operations or budgets. Implementing bait stations and periodic treatments will require **dedicated State funding**. For this model to succeed, counties will require State partnership to provide funding for steam or heat-treatment equipment and coordinated technical guidance on treatment standards, monitoring, and documentation.

We echo the concern raised by community leaders that regulatory requirements alone will not achieve the desired outcome without practical implementation capacity. Providing accessible, well-supported

treatment options at public facilities will encourage compliance, reduce unmanaged disposal, and improve overall effectiveness.

In closing, the Kaua'i County Solid Waste Division **supports the intent** of SB 2885 and stands ready to partner with the State in reducing CRB populations through managed bait and treatment operations at our transfer stations while continuing to fulfill our essential role in green waste collection and transport, **provided the necessary resources are made available.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



The Senate
Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Friday, February 13, 2026
3:10 PM Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
State Capitol

Testimony in Support of SB 2885

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) is **in support of SB 2885, *Relating to Biosecurity***. This bill establishes mandatory handling and storage rules for coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB) host material to prevent the spread of CRB in the State.

As set out in SB 2885, CRB is a devastating pest that was first detected in Hawaii in 2013. CRB is now widespread on the islands of Oahu and Kauai, and Hawaii County is fighting an infestation on the west side of the island. Managing green waste, which CRB uses as breeding material, is critical to controlling CRB populations, and SB 2885 sets out a comprehensive program to manage green waste to suppress CRB populations on infested islands and prevent the spread to uninfested areas. The program in SB 2885 treats all commercial operations the same, creating an even playing field for businesses on CRB-infested islands. We respectfully suggest that the Committee may want to consider adding provisions that allow for the storage of treated CRB host material in CRB-resistant containers after treatment and for material stored indoors overnight when CRB are active.

We are grateful for approaches to reduce CRB populations and prevent further spread within the State. We note that funding will be required to implement a comprehensive CRB control program for DAB and, potentially, for the counties and businesses.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and our support for SB 2885.

Aloha,

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

Christy Martin
CGAPS Program Manager

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Stephanie 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

February 13, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

TESTIMONY ON SB 2885
RELATING TO BIOSECURITY

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
3:10 PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice-Chair Richards, 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 the intent of SB 2885, which establishes statewide standards for the handling, treatment, and movement of mulch and green waste in areas impacted by coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB).

CRB continues to pose a serious threat to Hawai'i's agricultural and natural landscapes. Targeting breeding sites, particularly unmanaged mulch and decomposing green waste, is a science-based strategy that addresses the root of the infestation rather than only treating adult beetles. Strengthening prevention and containment measures is critical to protecting farms, nurseries, and communities across the State.

As this measure advances, HFB respectfully encourages careful attention to implementation. The bill establishes detailed operational requirements, including mandatory turning schedules, heat treatment standards, storage limits, documentation requirements, and restrictions on transfer or sale of untreated material. These standards will directly impact nurseries, farmers, landscapers, composting facilities, green waste processors, and counties operating in affected zones.

Many agricultural and landscaping operations generate green waste as part of normal business activity and may not currently have the equipment, staffing, or infrastructure necessary to meet mechanical turning or temperature-monitoring requirements without additional cost. For smaller operators in particular, compliance could require investments in new equipment, increased labor, or higher disposal costs.

HFB encourages the Committee to consider phased implementation, technical guidance, and education-first enforcement to ensure that operators understand compliance requirements and have practical pathways to meet them. Technical assistance or cost-share support for composting equipment and treatment systems may also help ensure broad compliance and prevent unintended economic strain on compliant businesses.

With thoughtful rollout and continued stakeholder coordination, SB 2885 can strengthen CRB containment efforts while maintaining the stability of Hawai'i's agricultural and green waste management sectors.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.

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 Urminka
Kaua'i

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Senate Agriculture and Environment 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 SB2885.**

SB2885 provides a vital framework for safeguarding Hawaii's agriculture and environment by establishing mandatory handling and storage rules for coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB) host material. This measure is crucial as it addresses the spread of this destructive invasive species within infested zones and prevents its infiltration into non-infested areas. Controlling the CRB population is not just an economic imperative but also an environmental necessity, as this beetle poses a severe threat to palm species and can disrupt Hawaii's delicate ecosystem. With proper management protocols, SB2885 helps to protect our agricultural interests and our unique natural landscapes, ensuring that future generations can enjoy both.

However, it is essential to address potential issues regarding the access to soil media that could arise from this bill. Farmers and residential gardeners rely on soil media for sustaining plant health and productivity. Ensuring that supply chains remain unaffected by the new regulations is imperative for both commercial enterprises and local communities. By adding provisions to ensure uninterrupted access to soil media, SB2885 can effectively balance biosecurity with the practical needs of Hawaii's farmers, gardeners, and landscapers. Collaboratively, we can safeguard our islands' agricultural resources while maintaining ecological integrity.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin
Advocacy Director
Hawai'i Farmers Union

SB-2885

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 7:06:01 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
michael santos	Testifying for The Fairways at Ko Olina Resort	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm in favor of this bill as we have had trees that have been affected by CRB in the past 3 years. We had our trees treated and we only lost 1 tree so far. The treatment has been working. It is vital not for only our property, but to all properties in the State, this bill needs to be passed.

February 10, 2026

**Subject: Strong Support for SB No. 2885 - Relating to Biosecurity
Committee on Agriculture and Environment**

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

My name is Joanna Kwon, and I submit testimony in strong support of SB No. 2885.

The coconut rhinoceros beetle threatens more than palm trees. It threatens places of gathering, coastal resilience, traditional practices, and plants of deep cultural significance including hala and kalo. Mature palms define many of our shorelines and communities. Their loss would fundamentally alter Hawai'i's landscape and identity.

This bill recognizes an important scientific reality: most of the beetle's life cycle occurs in undisturbed green waste and mulch piles. Addressing these breeding sites through standardized handling, storage, and treatment requirements is essential for meaningful population reduction.

SB 2885 strengthens Hawai'i's biosecurity framework and reinforces the principle of kuleana — shared responsibility. By requiring responsible management of green waste at both residential and commercial levels, this measure promotes community participation in invasive species control.

This bill would also establish a consistent statewide framework which is what is needed to effectively address the crippling CRB issue. Currently there are incomplete patchwork efforts that allow CRB to persist and spread due to inconsistencies. Protecting our natural and cultural resources today safeguards them for future generations.

I urge your favorable consideration of SB No. 2885.

Mahalo nui for your leadership.

Respectfully,
Joanna Kwon
Seagull Schools Ko Olina



Date of Hearing: February 10, 2026

To: Chair Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair Herbert M. Richards, III, and the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Subject: **SB 2885**, Relating to Biosecurity

Aloha,

Hawai'i Food+ Policy respectfully submits testimony in **support of SB2885**, which establishes enforceable handling and treatment standards for mulch and green waste in coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB) infested zones.

Current voluntary practices and fragmented guidance are not sufficient to stop reinfestation. SB 2885 addresses a clear gap by taking a practical, science-based, and preventative approach and creating mandatory, enforceable standards that target one of the beetle's most critical breeding pathways: untreated mulch, green waste, and organic debris. This bill will benefit local farmers and fishers, whose livelihoods depend on healthy soils, forests, and watersheds from mauka to makai, and small-scale producers and local food systems, which are more vulnerable to ecological disruption. By protecting organic material flows, SB 2885 supports regenerative, Indigenous, and climate-resilient food systems.

At the same time, it is important to acknowledge potential concerns and implementation challenges. First, small operators, rural residents, and community composters may face higher compliance costs or logistical barriers if technical assistance and access to facilities are limited. Second, overly rigid application could unintentionally discourage regenerative or Indigenous composting practices that are ecologically sound but do not fit conventional documentation models. It is therefore important to pair SB 2885 with education, clear communication of infested zones, phased implementation where appropriate, and support for small-scale compliance.

We urge AEN to support SB 2885, with continued attention to equity, education, and practical enforcement.

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.

SB-2885

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 1:07:25 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Taylor Kellerman	Testifying for Kualoa Ranch	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Taylor Kellerman and I am submitting testimony in strong support of SB No. 2885.

Over the past 12 months we have seen a huge influx of CRB on the whole windward side, and have been heavily impacted here at the ranch. Due to a limited toolkit, we are now at a point where damage has reached critical levels for many of our over 1000 coconut trees on property, and the concern this pest will forever change the landscape of Kualoa and Hawaii is now a realized fact.

The coconut rhinoceros beetle threatens more than palm trees. It threatens places of gathering, coastal resilience, traditional practices, and plants of deep cultural significance including hala and kalo. Mature palms define many of our shorelines and communities. Their loss would fundamentally alter Hawai'i's landscape and identity.

This bill recognizes an important scientific reality: most of the beetle's life cycle occurs in undisturbed green waste and mulch piles. Addressing these breeding sites through standardized handling, storage, and treatment requirements is essential for meaningful population reduction.

SB 2885 strengthens Hawai'i's biosecurity framework and reinforces the principle of kuleana — shared responsibility. By requiring responsible management of green waste at both residential and commercial levels, this measure promotes community participation in invasive species control.

This bill would also establish a consistent statewide framework which is what is needed to effectively address the crippling CRB issue. Currently there are incomplete patchwork efforts

that allow CRB to persist and spread due to inconsistencies. Protecting our natural and cultural resources today safeguards them for future generations.

I urge your favorable consideration of SB No. 2885.

Mahalo nui for your leadership.

Taylor Kellerman

Director of Diversified Agriculture and Land Stewardship

Kualoa Ranch Hawaii

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment
February 13, 2026
3:10pm
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Conference Room 224
In **STRONG SUPPORT** of SB 2885

Aloha e Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and members of the committee,

My name is Dr. Joy Leilei Shih-Casado, I am a scientist, and a conservationist for over 25 years. I am in strong support of SB 2885, which would establish consistent, statewide handling of Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle host material, where it spends 80-90% of its lifecycle. This method is considered to be the most effective for mitigating the impact of this destructive invasive species, and for preventing its further spread. Hawai'i is known as the "Endangered Species Capital" of the world. CRB not only causes damage to our iconic niu, but threatens our endemic and endangered palms, kalo, banana, hala, and more. It is impossible to imagine Hawai'i without these culturally important species, but right now we are being forced to imagine it.

The standards that are defined in SB 2885 are straightforward, manageable, and most importantly, effective. The timely passage of SB 2885 may be our best if not final opportunity to win the battle against CRB. While certain regions and islands in Hawai'i have taken strong measures to prevent the movement of CRB into their areas, these patchwork efforts leave vulnerabilities that allow CRB to persist and spread due to inconsistent handling.

Economic losses due to CRB are projected to reach \$1 billion in the next decade and \$169 million annually by 2040 if its spread continues. However, these do not capture indirect cultural, environmental, and tourism costs. We cannot afford to rely on our small communities efforts and research labs to implement small scale or future solutions. This is an issue for the state, and the time is now for a simple but consistent and effective framework.

Mahalo nui for your attention to this critical matter and for the opportunity to testify. I am available for further discussion or if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Joy Leilei Shih-Casado, Ph.D
joyshih@hawaii.edu

SB-2885

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 2:22:19 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly support SB2285, We need to protect our precious islands from more harm from invasive species. SB2285 will help to do that by establishing mandatory, enforceable standards for the handling, storage, treatment, and movement of mulch and green waste materials in coconut rhinoceros beetle infested zones. These efforts will help ensure early intervention at CRB breeding sites, reduce CRB reinfestation risk, and support statewide biosecurity resilience--something that is critically needed.

Please pass SB2285. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

SB-2885

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 3:10:06 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristin Vasquez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Kristin Vasquez and reside in O`ahu. I submit this testimony in strong support of SB No. 2885.

The coconut rhinoceros beetle is not only an environmental threat — it is an economic one. Agricultural projections estimate potential losses reaching \$169 million annually by 2040 if CRB spreads further. Crops such as coconut, banana, hala, and other culturally significant plants are vulnerable.

Current regulations focus primarily on movement restrictions, but they do not adequately address breeding-site reduction. As this bill recognizes, untreated mulch and green waste are the primary drivers of CRB population growth. By requiring mechanical turning, verified heat treatment, and documentation prior to transfer or sale, SB 2885 closes significant regulatory gaps.

Importantly, this bill establishes enforceable, science-based standards while allowing equivalent validated treatment methods approved by the Department. It balances flexibility with accountability.

Failing to act will increase costs to businesses, counties, and taxpayers. Proactive management protects local agriculture, food security, and rural economies.

I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB No. 2885.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Kristin Vasquez

SB-2885

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 4:02:18 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hogan Williams	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Hogan Williams of Kailua, Ohau, and I submit testimony in strong support of SB No. 2885.

The coconut rhinoceros beetle threatens more than palm trees. It threatens places of gathering, coastal resilience, traditional practices, and plants of deep cultural significance, including hala and kalo. Mature palms define many of our shorelines and communities. Their loss would fundamentally alter Hawai‘i’s landscape and identity.

This bill recognizes an important scientific reality: most of the beetle’s life cycle occurs in undisturbed green waste and mulch piles. Addressing these breeding sites through standardized handling, storage, and treatment requirements is essential for meaningful population reduction.

SB 2885 strengthens Hawai‘i’s biosecurity framework and reinforces the principle of kuleana — shared responsibility. By requiring responsible management of green waste at both residential and commercial levels, this measure promotes community participation in invasive species control.

This bill would also establish a consistent statewide framework which is what is needed to effectively address the crippling CRB issue. Currently there are incomplete patchwork efforts that allow CRB to persist and spread due to inconsistencies. Protecting our natural and cultural resources today safeguards them for future generations.

I urge your favorable consideration of SB No. 2885.

Mahalo nui for your leadership.

Respectfully,

Hogan Williams

SB-2885

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 5:52:23 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jones	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is V. Jones and I submit testimony in strong support of SB No. 2885.

The coconut rhinoceros beetle threatens more than palm trees. It threatens places of gathering, coastal resilience, traditional practices, and plants of deep cultural significance including hala and kalo. Mature palms define many of our shorelines and communities. Their loss would fundamentally alter Hawai‘i’s landscape and identity.

This bill recognizes an important scientific reality: most of the beetle’s life cycle occurs in undisturbed green waste and mulch piles. Addressing these breeding sites through standardized handling, storage, and treatment requirements is essential for meaningful population reduction.

SB 2885 strengthens Hawai‘i’s biosecurity framework and reinforces the principle of kuleana — shared responsibility. By requiring responsible management of green waste at both residential and commercial levels, this measure promotes community participation in invasive species control.

This bill would also establish a consistent statewide framework which is what is needed to effectively address the crippling CRB issue. Currently there are incomplete patchwork efforts that allow CRB to persist and spread due to inconsistencies. Protecting our natural and cultural resources today safeguards them for future generations. I urge your favorable consideration of SB No. 2885.

Mahalo nui for your leadership.

Respectfully,

V. Jones

SB-2885

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 10:54:48 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Rubinstein	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

February 11, 2026

Subject: Strong Support for SB No. 2885 - Relating to Biosecurity

Committee on Agriculture and Environment

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

My name is Richard Rubinstein, and I reside in Kapolei, Oahu. I am writing in strong support of SB No. 2885.

The coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB) poses one of the most serious invasive threats our state has faced in decades. As outlined in the bill, up to 90% of the CRB life cycle occurs hidden within mulch and green waste piles. Without consistent, enforceable statewide standards, these breeding sites will continue to fuel reinfestation and spread.

SB 2885 takes a science-based, proactive approach by addressing the source of the problem — untreated mulch and green waste — rather than focusing only on palm treatment. By establishing clear standards for turning, heat treatment, storage limits, and documentation, this measure strengthens Hawai‘i’s biosecurity infrastructure and reduces long-term economic risk.

The projected financial losses from CRB — potentially hundreds of millions of dollars — do not even account for the cultural and environmental impacts to our landscapes, agriculture, and tourism economy. Prevention is far more responsible and cost-effective than reaction.

This bill would establish a consistent statewide framework which is what is needed to effectively address the crippling CRB issue. Currently there are incomplete patchwork efforts that allow CRB to persist and spread due to inconsistencies. For these reasons, I respectfully urge your favorable consideration and passage of SB No. 2885.

Mahalo for your leadership and commitment to protecting Hawai‘i.

Respectfully,

Richard Rubinstein
248-752-6257

SB-2885

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 9:49:37 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brown Cannon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Brown Cannon, and I submit testimony in strong support of SB No. 2885.

The coconut rhinoceros beetle threatens more than palm trees. It threatens places of gathering, coastal resilience, traditional practices, and plants of deep cultural significance including hala and kalo. Mature palms define many of our shorelines and communities. Their loss would fundamentally alter Hawai‘i’s landscape and identity.

This bill recognizes an important scientific reality: most of the beetle’s life cycle occurs in undisturbed green waste and mulch piles. Addressing these breeding sites through standardized handling, storage, and treatment requirements is essential for meaningful population reduction.

SB 2885 strengthens Hawai‘i’s biosecurity framework and reinforces the principle of kuleana — shared responsibility. By requiring responsible management of green waste at both residential and commercial levels, this measure promotes community participation in invasive species control.

This bill would also establish a consistent statewide framework which is what is needed to effectively address the crippling CRB issue. Currently there are incomplete patchwork efforts that allow CRB to persist and spread due to inconsistencies. Protecting our natural and cultural resources today safeguards them for future generations.

I urge your favorable consideration of SB No. 2885.

Mahalo nui for your leadership.

Respectfully,

Brown Cannon

COUNTY COUNCIL

Mel Rapozo, Chair
KipuKai Kualii, Vice Chair
Addison Bulosan
Bernard P. Carvalho, Jr.
Felicia Cowden
Fern Holland
Arryl Kaneshiro



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Jade K. Fountain-Tanigawa, County Clerk
Lyndon M. Yoshioka, Deputy County Clerk

Telephone: (808) 241-4188
Facsimile: (808) 241-6349
Email: cokcouncil@kauai.gov

Council Services Division
4396 Rice Street, Suite 209
Lihu'e, Kaua'i, Hawaii 96766

February 12, 2026

TESTIMONY OF FERN HOLLAND
COUNCILMEMBER, KAUAI COUNTY COUNCIL
ON
SB 2885, RELATING TO BIOSECURITY
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Friday, February 13, 2026
3:10 p.m.
Conference Room 224
Via Videoconference

Dear Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT of the intent of SB 2885, Relating to Biosecurity. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a member of the Kaua'i County Council and as the Parks & Recreation / Transportation Committee Chair.

I have witnessed firsthand the widespread devastation at the Wailua Golf Course as we struggle to manage an active infestation of coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB) with limited resources, while relying almost entirely on State and Federal leadership for a biosecurity response. Over the past year, it has been deeply troubling to watch the rapid, islandwide spread of CRB. As an ecologist, I also understand what lies ahead for our county parks, historical sites, and culturally significant landscapes if we do not act decisively.

We need action and funding now.

On Kaua'i, CRB is no longer a theoretical risk. It is an active and escalating challenge impacting residents, landscapers, farmers, and county operations. SB 2885 accurately reflects the latest science: **80% to 90% of the CRB lifecycle occurs hidden within mulch and green waste piles**, not in palm crowns. As such, breeding-site management is the most effective intervention point.

However, our on-the-ground experience makes clear that response efforts are currently hindered by a lack of direction, resources, and public education. Any regulatory framework must be paired with meaningful support mechanisms to be effective.

For more than a year, I have urged the State of Hawai'i Department of Agriculture, and now the Department of Biosecurity, to provide islandwide educational outreach so residents and operators clearly understand what actions they can take immediately and what options are available to them, strongly advocating for islandwide mailers about severe biosecurity threats for Kaua'i (e.g., Little Fire Ant and CRB currently); this has yet to happen. What is urgently needed is education, equipment, trap materials, and small grants to support steam treatment and other control measures. The challenge on Kaua'i is not a lack of concern or willingness, but a lack of accessible resources, funding, and coordinated systems to respond at the scale and urgency that this threat requires.

CRB is not only an agricultural pest, but also a biosecurity, cultural, fiscal, and community resilience issue. Projected losses in the hundreds of millions of dollars over the next decade are realistic, and secondary impacts to coastal stability, cultural practices, tourism landscapes, and community identity cannot be overstated. While legislative action is critical, I respectfully suggest that equal attention be given to ensuring existing regulations are enforced. For example, the State of Hawai'i Department of Health must ensure composting facilities are consistently achieving and maintaining lethal temperatures where required. Do they have the capacity to oversee more regulations? From my perspective, it does not seem like it. I urge the Committee to carefully consider how this bill would be implemented by agencies already struggling to enforce existing requirements. A compliance-driven approach without adequate education, tools, and funding risks falling short.

Regulation Without Resources Risks Worsening the Problem

While SB 2885 establishes clear, science-based standards, regulations without parallel funding and technical support risk pushing CRB breeding material into unmanaged or illegal disposal pathways. When compliance becomes burdensome or costly and without assistance, green waste does not disappear, it moves. Often it ends up in gulches, forest edges, vacant lots, or informal dumping areas, where CRB can still breed successfully, even in less ideal habitat.

On Kaua'i, where illegal dumping and unmanaged forested areas are already widespread, this risk is especially acute. CRB will adapt. If optimal mulch or green waste piles are unavailable, they will lay eggs in leaf litter, unmanaged organic debris, and disturbed soils, expanding their footprint and making detection and control even more difficult. Invasive species respond to pressure by exploiting system weaknesses, not by disappearing.

Using Mulch Management and Steam Treatment as a Solution

Given the abundance of mulch, green waste, and organic material across Kaua'i's unmanaged expanses, we should consider using mulch strategically as part of the solution. By creating managed mulch piles in key locations and ensuring they are sterilized before larvae mature into adult beetles, we can disrupt the life cycle at scale.

With appropriate investment and oversight, a regional bait-trap system in established infestation areas could significantly reduce the number of beetles reaching maturity. These managed piles could be enhanced with attractants such as

ultraviolet (UV) light or pheromones to draw beetles away from surrounding unmanaged sites. Properly deployed, this approach could dramatically reduce population pressure and protect vulnerable trees.

Steam treatment, when applied correctly and consistently, is a proven, non-chemical, heat-based control method that reliably kills CRB larvae and pupae within mulch and green waste piles. When integrated into baited trap systems, steam treatment can be used to:

- Draw adult beetles into designated breeding material,
- Kill larvae before emergence, and
- Reduce overall population pressure over time.

CRB larvae take approximately five (5) to seven (7) months to develop, providing a critical window to interrupt the life cycle. That opportunity exists only if treatment tools are accessible, affordable, and widely deployed. Steam technologies, including commercially available systems such as those produced by Sioux Corporation, are already widely used in agriculture and biosecurity applications.

The Priority Must Be Management Capacity, Not Just Rules

The most effective path forward is to place resources directly into the hands of counties, community groups, landscapers, and tree trimmers so breeding sites can be managed at scale. This includes funding for mobile and fixed green waste treatment infrastructure like heavy machinery, steam treatment, curtain burners, and hot composting systems. Cost-share programs, grants, and direct financial support should be developed and promoted along with materials and support for regional trapping networks. Rapid response teams must be organized and deployed to address new infestations. Finally, it is crucial to invest in biological controls.

Urgency Matters

CRB populations on Kaua'i are entering a rapid growth phase, with islandwide detections increasing. When breeding sites remain untreated, populations grow exponentially. Compliance-heavy systems that delay action will not keep pace with the biology of this pest. Hawai'i does not have the luxury of slow rollouts or fragmented implementation. Therefore, what is needed now are:

- Rapid deployment of treatment tools,
- Community-scale solutions,
- County-level flexibility, and
- Stable funding streams for implementation, not simply oversight.

Conclusion

SB 2885 is grounded in sound science and correctly targets the source of CRB population growth. I urge the Committee to retain its core intent while amending or supplementing the bill to ensure funding, equipment, education, and community-based management capacity are prioritized alongside regulatory standards.

Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee
Re: Testimony in Support of SB 2885
February 12, 2026
Page 4

Regulation that cannot be enforced is a poor use of limited time and resources. Worse, it risks unintentionally driving behaviors that exacerbate the problem. Any regulatory framework must be paired with cost-sharing, technical support, and clear guidance to avoid counterproductive outcomes.

CRB will exploit gaps faster than regulations can be enforced. The State's strongest defense is to make proper treatment easier, cheaper, and more accessible than noncompliance, and to aggressively target breeding sites before beetles emerge. People want to do the right thing; they simply need the necessary education and support to do so.

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2885, and *mahalo* for your leadership on Hawai'i's biosecurity future. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Council Services Staff at (808) 241-4188 or via email to cokcouncil@kauai.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "F. Holland", with a stylized flourish at the end.

FERN HOLLAND
Councilmember, Kaua'i County Council

RM:dmc

SB-2885

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 10:43:23 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marguerite Casillas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB) poses one of the most serious invasive threats our state has faced in decades. As outlined in the bill, up to 90% of the CRB life cycle occurs hidden within mulch and green waste piles. Without consistent, enforceable statewide standards, these breeding sites will continue to fuel reinfestation and spread.

SB 2885 takes a science-based, proactive approach by addressing the source of the problem — untreated mulch and green waste — rather than focusing only on palm treatment. By establishing clear standards for turning, heat treatment, storage limits, and documentation, this measure strengthens Hawai‘i’s biosecurity infrastructure and reduces long-term economic risk.

The projected financial losses from CRB — potentially hundreds of millions of dollars — do not even account for the cultural and environmental impacts to our landscapes, agriculture, and tourism economy. Prevention is far more responsible and cost-effective than reaction.

This bill would establish a consistent statewide framework which is what is needed to effectively address the crippling CRB issue. Currently there are incomplete patchwork efforts that allow CRB to persist and spread due to inconsistencies. For these reasons, I respectfully urge your favorable consideration and passage of SB No. 2885.

Mahalo for your leadership and commitment to protecting Hawai‘i.

SB-2885

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 12:49:32 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara Barnes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a resident of Kai Lani at Ko Olina, and as Landscape Chair for our condominium, I am writing in support of SB2885. We are spending over \$30,000 a year to combat CRB on our property and even so, have had to remove 4 trees. We have over 150 coconut palms at Kai Lani and they are a very important part of our beautiful landscape. We appreciate the regular updates we are receiving from the Hawaii Government and glad to know of ongoing tests for fungus that may kill the larvae. But more help is needed to stop the spread of CRB while we all wait of a possible cure. Thank you, Sara Barnes, Resident and Landscape Chair, Kai Lani

SB-2885

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 12:56:51 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melissa Kasik	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

February 10, 2026

Subject: Strong Support for SB No. 2885 - Relating to Biosecurity

Committee on Agriculture and Environment

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

My name is Melissa Kasik-Requilman and I submit testimony in strong support of SB No. 2885.

The coconut rhinoceros beetle threatens more than palm trees. It threatens places of gathering, coastal resilience, traditional practices, and plants of deep cultural significance including hala and kalo. Mature palms define many of our shorelines and communities. Their loss would fundamentally alter Hawai‘i’s landscape and identity.

This bill recognizes an important scientific reality: most of the beetle’s life cycle occurs in undisturbed green waste and mulch piles. Addressing these breeding sites through standardized handling, storage, and treatment requirements is essential for meaningful population reduction.

SB 2885 strengthens Hawai‘i’s biosecurity framework and reinforces the principle of kuleana — shared responsibility. By requiring responsible management of green waste at both residential and commercial levels, this measure promotes community participation in invasive species control.

This bill would also establish a consistent statewide framework which is what is needed to effectively address the crippling CRB issue. Currently there are incomplete patchwork efforts that allow CRB to persist and spread due to inconsistencies. Protecting our natural and cultural resources today safeguards them for future generations.

I urge your favorable consideration of SB No. 2885.

Mahalo nui for your leadership.

Respectfully,

Melissa Kasik-Requilman

February 12th, 2026

Dee Meredith
91-3475 Nana Hope Street, #804
Ewa Beach, HI 96706

Subject: Strong Support for SB No. 2885 – Relating to Biosecurity Committee on
Agriculture and Environment

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

My name is Dee, and I submit testimony in strong support of SB No. 2885.

The coconut rhinoceros beetle threatens more than palm trees. It threatens places of gathering, coastal resilience, traditional practices, and plants of deep cultural significance including hala and kalo. Mature palms define many of our shorelines and communities. Their loss would fundamentally alter Hawai'i's landscape and identity.

This bill recognizes an important scientific reality: most of the beetle's life cycle occurs in undisturbed green waste and mulch piles. Addressing these breeding sites through standardized handling, storage, and treatment requirements is essential for meaningful population reduction.

SB 2885 strengthens Hawai'i's biosecurity framework and reinforces the principle of kuleana — shared responsibility. By requiring responsible management of green waste at both residential and commercial levels, this measure promotes community participation in invasive species control.

This bill would also establish a consistent statewide framework which is what is needed to effectively address the crippling CRB issue. Currently there are incomplete patchwork efforts that allow CRB to persist and spread due to inconsistencies. Protecting our natural and cultural resources today safeguards them for future generations.

I urge your favorable consideration of SB No. 2885.

Mahalo nui for your leadership.

Respectfully,
Dee Meredith

SB-2885

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 1:41:46 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Claire Van Wingerden	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a homeowner in Hawaii, I urge the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment to approve the passage of SB2885, which is intended to limit the spread of the coconut rhinoceros beetle. This is an invasive species which harms Hawaii's palm trees, landscaping and agricultural resources. The bill sets clear standards for handling, transport and storage of beetle host materials. This will limit further infestation by the beetle and protect Hawaii's environment and economy. Thank you for considering my support of this bill.

February 10, 2026

**Subject: Strong Support for SB No. 2885 - Relating to Biosecurity
Committee on Agriculture and Environment**

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

My name is Carey Aoyagi, and I am the General Manager for The Coconut Plantation AOAO with a degree in Horticulture Science. I submit this testimony in strong support of SB No. 2885.

The coconut rhinoceros beetle is not only an environmental threat — it is an economic one. Agricultural projections estimate potential losses reaching \$169 million annually by 2040 if CRB spreads further. Crops such as coconut, banana, hala, and other culturally significant plants are vulnerable.

Current regulations focus primarily on movement restrictions, but they do not adequately address breeding-site reduction. As this bill recognizes, untreated mulch and green waste are the primary drivers of CRB population growth. By requiring mechanical turning, verified heat treatment, and documentation prior to transfer or sale, SB 2885 closes significant regulatory gaps.

Importantly, this bill establishes enforceable, science-based standards while allowing equivalent validated treatment methods approved by the Department. It balances flexibility with accountability.

Failing to act will increase costs to businesses, counties, and taxpayers. Proactive management protects local agriculture, food security, and rural economies.

I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB No. 2885.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Carey Aoyagi, ARM

General Manager
The Coconut Plantation AOAO

thecoconutplantationhi@gmail.com

808-677-2612

SB-2885

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 2:47:54 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicholas Blenis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concern,

The need to control the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle (CRB) in Hawaii is one of the most important things the state could do right now culturally and monetarily. It is affecting not only palm's but will eventually jump host to banana, hala, and kalo once the palms die out. If the state doesn't act soon, it will lose one of the most identifiable crops Hawaii is known for.

SB No. 2885 will help reduce the chances of CRB spreading by setting standard rules for its main breeding ground. This bill uses the most up to date scientific information for its standards, making it one of the most comprehensive bill's pushed for CRB population control. It also establishes responsibility on a private and commercial level, whereas right now very few know as much information on the spreading or don't enforce control measures.

I hope that by passing this bill it will help reduce the spread of CRB and eventually will allow for more intensive measures to be taken to control the spread. Hopefully the state will eventually investigate the use of biological agents as this bill will only control so much of the spread of CRB.

Please consider SB No. 2885 as step in the right direction for the state to control this very serious matter.

Respectfully,

Nicholas Blenis

SB-2885

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 2:55:17 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lance Thomas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am submitting this testimony in support of the intent of SB2885.

The Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle (CRB) is a huge threat to the agriculture of Hawai'i and we need to collectively do our part to slow down their numbers. A huge part of the puzzle is simply educating the residents of Hawai'i what they are truly up against. There are some people who still don't even know what a CRB is, and at this point, that is highly unacceptable.

The common sentiment is—if someone doesn't have a coconut tree then it's not their problem, and we all know this is far from the truth. Not everyone has a coconut tree, but everyone has some type of green waste on their property. Everyone has been looking up for CRB damage when they need to be looking down. This is what needs to be addressed, CRB breeding grounds, as this is where the numbers are, not the trees.

I have two K9s that were trained by the Conservation Dogs of Hawai'i to locate CRB breeding sites, and throughout our training I have had the opportunity to actively dig through various types of material, and what I saw was astonishing. Hundreds of larvae in small amounts of material, beetles, eggs, as well as pupae. This is where the numbers get out of control, when these breeding sites go undetected and untreated.

I started a company called Mr Lance's Steam LLC, and we use our detection dogs to help us locate these breeding sites and then we treat them with Steam, eliminating every life cycle of CRB. Steam is highly effective for all breeding sites of CRB, but it needs to be done correctly in

order to effectively eliminate them all. We have had great success in our efforts and agree that the use of Steam should be available to all residents.

If we can give our residents the ability to financially abide to this bill, it could prove to be highly effective. Without proper resources, you will be handing out fines that will probably never get paid and make people resentful. We are all here to help each other, no one asked for these things to come here and tear apart our food sources. With the proper support, everyone will be on board and do their part, and if they still choose not to be responsible with proper resources available, now the fines are fair. Thank you for your time.

Mahalo

Lance Thomas

SB-2885

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 7:23:38 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/13/2026 3:10:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ingrid lassleben	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

My name is Ingrid Lassleben and I am an Agriculture Manager at Kualoa Ranch. I am writing to submit strong support of SB2885 because I am witnessing first hand the devistating impacts of CRB to our communities, environment and economy and the efforts to control and eradicate it must be coordinated.

Not only are the niu impacted which are our first line of defence in the case of another global pandemic or famine but our other crops are being impacted. As much as we try to work individually to mitigate the impacts, we need support, research, data, guidance, feedback and resources to keep up with the CRB that are in our forests, our orchards and the soil.

Our number one concern is the breeding site reduction as this is where we are seeing them multiply at a terrifying rate. Individuals cannot keep accountability on their own as I have heard so much misinformation from folks trying to do the right thing. We need regulatory guidance and documentation for accountability.

Mahalo for your attention to this matter,

Ingrid