

ACT 128

H.B. NO. 1943

A Bill for an Act Relating to Invasive Species.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the brown tree snake is an invasive species that can damage the balance of the State's ecosystem; threaten native forest vertebrate species; precipitate power outages affecting private, commercial, and military activities; cause widespread loss of domestic birds and pets; and cause considerable emotional trauma to residents and visitors alike when invading human habitats. The brown tree snake was responsible for devastating the majority of the native bird population in Guam. Due to the availability of

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prey and lack of predators in introduced habitats such as Guam, brown tree snakes have been known to grow to sizes larger than their normal one to two meters (3.3 to 6.6 feet) in length.

The legislature has supported and provided for the biosecurity program under the department of agriculture since 2008, because it recognizes the impact of invasive species to Hawaii's agriculture, environment, natural resources, public health, and economy. To improve the effectiveness of the program, the legislature recommends reinstatement of the detector-dog program. The detector-dog program provides an important resource to improve interdiction of invasive species into Hawaii. The dogs excel in the detection of flora, snakes, aquatic animals, and in public relations. In airport baggage claim areas, the presence of detector-dogs alone assists in deterring smuggling of commodities through the passenger terminal area.

Previously, the detector-dog program was funded by federal funds, and thus limited to brown tree snake interdiction. The use of state funds will allow the department of agriculture to use these dogs in other invasive species prevention related activities. In addition to the brown tree snake inspections, detector-dogs will be used to inspect incoming airline baggage and incoming small-package air cargo shipments.

The purpose of this Act is to provide funding for detector-dog inspector positions within the department of agriculture.

SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$162,540 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2012-2013 to match the grant provided by the federal Office of Insular Affairs to fund the plant quarantine detector-dog program, including one inspector/detector-dog trainer and three inspectors/dog handlers.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of agriculture for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 3. The department of agriculture shall submit a report on the status of its progress in implementing the detector-dog program funded by this Act to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the 2013 regular session.

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2012.

(Approved June 15, 2012.)