



# University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

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## SB 2070 MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR DETECTION OF ALIEN PEST SPECIES AT THE STATE'S PORTS OF ENTRY

Senate Committee on Economic Development

Public Hearing - January 30, 1998  
1:00P.M., Room 212 State Capitol

By

John T. Harrison, Environmental Center  
Michael Hadfield, Kewalo Marine Laboratory  
Kenneth Kaneshiro, Center for Conservation Research and Training

SB 2070 would appropriate an unspecified sum for hiring additional inspectors and for purchasing inspection equipment to effectuate interdiction of entry of alien pest species into the state.

Our statement on this measure is compiled from voluntarily submitted opinions of the listed academic reviewers, and as such, does not constitute an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

We note with approval that the Department of Agriculture has made significant progress in stepping up efforts to interdict entry of alien pest species. However, the native ecosystem remains beleaguered, and new invaders continue to find their way into the state. The impact of alien species is the number one priority for those concerned with the native ecosystem, and whatever can be done to prevent the onslaught of alien species into the islands should be facilitated. Hawaii, after all, leads the nation in both the number of threatened and endangered species, and in the number of extinctions.

While we recognize the straits of economic hardship faced by the state, the relatively small additional investment in detection and interdiction of alien species represents a security deposit on a desirable future for rare endemic and indigenous species. A false economy here, by contrast, represents a death warrant.

Paul Ehrlich has said that extinction is like losing rivets from an airplane: up to a point, things will seem unaffected, but sooner or later, the flight will come to an abrupt end.