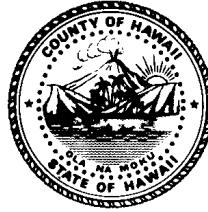


Harry Kim  
Mayor



Roy Takemoto  
Managing Director

Barbara J. Kossow  
Deputy Managing Director

## County of Hawai'i Office of the Mayor

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March 9, 2020

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Russell E. Ruderman, Vice Chair  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Ruderman, and Committee Members:

### RE: **HB 1854, HD1 Relating to Little Fire Ants**

The little fire ant (LFA), to those who have experienced it, is a horrific species. It causes great pain in humans and has been reported to cause blindness in pets and horses. It has proliferated so widely that some have given up on eradication, and may even be ready to throw in the towel on control efforts. That is not acceptable. We must fight back, and that is why I appreciate the opportunity to testify on HB 1854, HD1.

I do not have the expertise to judge the most effective way to treat this menace, but it seems reasonable to have the DOA, in conjunction with the Hawai'i Ant Lab and private sector, working together to identify best practices, and making those best practices known to a wide audience.

More broadly, whether you pass this bill or not, I ask that you please provide as much funding for an anti-LFA initiative as you can justify in your budget for the coming fiscal year. In that way, government efforts to control, and even eliminate, LFA from Hawai'i can be maximized. The threat is great and warrants your much-appreciated attention.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Harry Kim". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing "H" and "K".

Harry Kim  
MAYOR