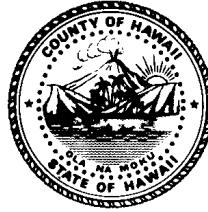


Harry Kim  
Mayor



Roy Takemoto  
Managing Director

Barbara J. Kossow  
Deputy Managing Director

## County of Hawai'i Office of the Mayor

25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2603 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 • (808) 961-8211 • Fax (808) 961-6553  
KONA: 74-5044 Ane Keohokālole Hwy., Bldg C • Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740  
(808) 323-4444 • Fax (808) 323-4440

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 2532, HD1 Relating to Invasive Species**

In the past three years, the Council of Mayors has identified invasive species as a top priority that deserves everyone's attention. Our best efforts at the county level are often inadequate to protect our islands from harmful pests, and limited resources make it imperative that the State, counties, Feds, and private sector work together in pursuing solutions to what often seem intractable problems. This Legislature has really stood up, and hopefully will do even more this year.

It can be discouraging to think of how many different invasive species are plaguing Hawai'i, and with the possible exception (so far) of the parakeet problem, it seems that Hawai'i County has suffered a disproportionate share of the damage caused by invasive species, including rapid ohia death, little fire ants, coqui frogs, coffee berry borer, miconia, two-lined spittlebug, and probably others. But we cannot give up. And since, as a county, we do not have the resources or expertise to fight these devastating invaders on our own, we need as much assistance from the State as you can offer.

While I would defer to others as to how precious dollars should be allocated, I strongly endorse the investment of funds in combatting invasives, and therefore urge passage of HB 2532, HD1 in some form. Please provide as much money as you can manage, broaden the initiative if you think it appropriate, include positions and funding in your proposal for the State budget, and let's move forward.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Harry Kim  
MAYOR