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March 13, 2019

Senator Kaiali'i Kahele, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Committee on Water and Land

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

Dear Chairs Kahele and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Keith-Agaran and Ruderman, and Committee Members:

RE: HB 1548, HD1 Relating to Rapid Ohia Death

The initial shock of the discovery of Rapid Ohia Death has passed, and therefore the media has largely moved on. But the devastation of ROD and the loss of Ohia in Hawai'i should not be ignored. Therefore, I am grateful to all of you for keeping this issue alive at the Legislature, and hopefully furthering the battle to defeat this terrible scourge.

I will defer to the scientists as to how much funding can be productively used, and urge that, at the end of the Session, there be sufficient money allotted to find an ROD cause and cure, or at least treatment.

With whatever amendments are appropriate, please approve funding to combat ROD, either via HB 1548 or in your committees' priorities for the State budget.

Respectfully Submitted,

Harry Kim
MAYOR