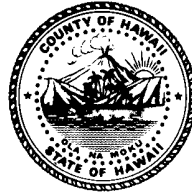


Mitchell D. Roth
Mayor

Lee E. Lord
Managing Director

West Hawai'i Office
74-5044 Ane Keohokālole Hwy
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740
Phone (808) 323-4770
Fax (808) 327-3563



County of Hawai'i

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Zendo Kern
Director

Jeffrey W. Darrow
Deputy Director

East Hawai'i Office
101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720
Phone (808) 961-8288
Fax (808) 961-8742

DATE: March 10, 2022

TO: DR. LEYLA KAUFFMAN
Hawai'i Invasive Species Council

FROM: KONA CDP ACTION COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: Support for Hawai'i Ports-of-Entry Biosecurity Program

Aloha,

The Kona Community Development Plan Action Committee on the Big Island of Hawai'i would like to express support for the Ports-of-Entry (POE) Biosecurity Program (formerly known as Māmālu Poepoe), which actively surveils our ports for pests like invasive ants, coconut rhinoceros beetle, Africanized bees, new mosquito species, and more.

We are highly supportive of proactive efforts taken to prevent the naturalization of new damaging species. For many years, the Kona district has been subject to severe impacts from invasive pests that have cost us not only monetarily but have also negatively impacted our health and well-being. From the destructive coffee berry borer which has the potential to reduce crop yields by up to 90 percent, to the aggressive fountain grass that degrades pasture lands and increases the intensity of wildfires, to the little fire ants that blind our pets and make growing more difficult for our farmers, we are plagued by the worst of the worst in Hawai'i. Our burden is already great without the addition of new pests known to be some of the worst in the world.

For many years now, economic analyses have made it clear that relatively small investments into biosecurity can have large payoffs later. Just one of the invasive ants targeted by this POE program, the red imported fire ant (RIFA), has been projected to cost Hawai'i more than \$200 million *per year* should it become established here. The health costs of diseases carried by certain species of mosquitoes, the losses to our honey industry and pollination services caused by Africanized bees - any of these impacts run into the millions of dollars annually, yet this statewide program costs less than a million dollars a year. Truly a bargain!

Kona has a wonderful mixture of many large- and small-scale agricultural endeavors. We are currently engaged in a robust effort to implement and move forward a community-driven vision to enhance and improve our district. We appreciate any biosecurity efforts that seek to allow us

Dr. Leyla Kauffman
Hawai'i Invasive Species Council
March 10, 2022
Page 2

to plan for the future of our community without additional strains from new invasive species that could affect our environment, our farmers, and the health and well-being of our residents.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Charles Young
Chair, Kona Community Development Plan Action Committee

KM:hb

\\COH01\planning\public\wpwin60\CDP\Kona_CDP\Action_Committee\Meetings\2022\2022-03-10\AC-HISC_Ports_of_Entry_Biosecurity_Program.DRAFT.2.24.22.docx