SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAIʻI

Aloha
My name is _____, and I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB2758/SB3237.

This measure will fill critical gaps in our biosecurity planning and response systems and mitigate the present and future potential impacts of invasive pests and noxious weeds on our native ecosystems, cultural practices, food security, public health, economy, and the overall quality of life of present and future generations.

While communities across the islands are now taking action to detect, control, and eradicate pests in their neighborhoods, these efforts have been frustrated by a lack of sufficient government support, including and particularly from the Hawaiʻi Department of Agriculture (HDOA). For example, the HDOA's failure to prohibit the intraisland movement and sale of infested plants and other commodities has likely contributed to the establishment of the coconut rhinoceros beetle on Oʻahu, which has now spread to Maui and Hawaiʻi Island. The HDOA's lack of comprehensive planning and programming to detect and control or eradicate invasive pests and noxious weeds is now confounding efforts to stop the spread of little fire ants across Oʻahu, and leaves all islands at risk of experiencing the devastating consequences of these or other invasive species.

We simply can no longer wait for the HDOA to take action to comprehensively address the real and present threat of invasive pests and noxious weeds. Comprehensive detection, control, and eradication strategies, including the licensing of nurseries and regulatory mechanisms to prevent the import and inter- and intra-island spread of invasive pests and noxious weeds, are needed now.
This measure will help to bring our biosecurity systems into the 21st century, and give our communities a much better chance at protecting our islands and future generations from the wide-ranging harms of invasive pest species.

I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to PASS HB2758/SB3237. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,
[FULL NAME]
[TOWN, ZIP CODE]