

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF  
HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of  
SUZANNE D. CASE  
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on  
FINANCE**

**Friday, February 22, 2019  
11:00 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 308**

**In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 1548, HOUSE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO RAPID OHIA DEATH**

House Bill 1548, House Draft 1 proposes to appropriate funds for research, surveys, and outreach for Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Budget request.**

Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death (ROD) threatens Hawaii's most important tree species that makes up 80% of the remaining native Hawaiian forests. It is caused by two recently arrived fungal species detected in 2014 and named and described by scientists in 2018.

On Hawaii island, approximately 135,000 acres are currently affected by ROD with some stands seeing over 90% mortality. Much of that area has lower levels of mortality and the Department is working with other agencies to contain new outbreaks and protect remaining healthy forests. Both fungal pathogens causing ROD have now been detected on the island of Kauai as of 2018, requiring additional resources to respond there. The islands of Maui, Molokai, Lanai, and Oahu still have no ROD detections, and statewide surveys are conducted two times a year to find new outbreaks before the disease is widely established.

In addition to survey and response, funding is needed for forest pathology research, disease diagnostics, monitoring using remote sensing techniques, removal of hooved animals from fenced areas to prevent additional ROD infections, and public outreach to inform communities what they can do to prevent the spread of ROD. Funds appropriated to the Department's budget for ROD in FY19 were used to leverage approximately \$1,000,000 in federal, private, and other funds.

**SUZANNE D. CASE**  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

**ROBERT K. MASUDA**  
FIRST DEPUTY

**M. KALEO MANUEL**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

The Department looks forward to working with the Legislature as well as federal and private funders to ensure that the statewide multi-agency ROD response receives the support it needs to succeed.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

DAVID Y. IGE  
Governor

JOSH GREEN  
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
Acting Chairperson  
Board of Agriculture

State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

FEBRUARY 22, 2019  
11:00 A.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 308

HOUSE BILL NO. 1548 HD1  
RELATING TO RAPID OHIA DEATH

Chairperson Luke and Members of the Committee:

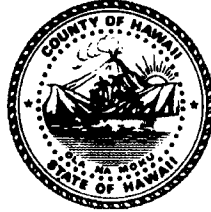
Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 1548 HD1, relating to rapid ohia death. The bill appropriates funds to the Department of Land and Natural Resources to study and combat rapid ohia death. The Department supports this bill.

Funding for combatting invasive species such as rapid ohia death is critical to ensure appropriate responses can be implemented and maintained. Providing additional funds to DLNR for continued support in combating ROD is critical and much needed. The Department supports the many efforts in researching and mitigating ROD throughout the State.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



Harry Kim  
Mayor



Wil Okabe  
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

February 21, 2019

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair  
Committee on Finance

Representative Ty J.K. Cullen, Vice Chair  
Committee on Finance

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Committee Members:


**RE: HB 1548, HD1 Relating Rapid Ohia Death**

The initial shock of the discovery of Rapid Ohia Death (ROD) 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 the authors of this bill, and to you and your Committee, 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, HD1 or in the House version of the State budget.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Harry Kim  
MAYOR



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759  
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921  
e-mail [info@hfbf.org](mailto:info@hfbf.org); [www.hfbf.org](http://www.hfbf.org)

February 22, 2019

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**TESTIMONY ON HB 1548, HD1**  
RELATING TO RAPID OHIA DEATH

Room 325  
8:55 AM

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,900 farm family members statewide, and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

**Hawaii Farm Bureau supports HB 1548, HD1**, which appropriates funds to the Department of Land and Natural Resources to combat rapid ohia death in the State.

Watersheds are the lifeblood of our communities. It is important not just to agriculture but to our social and environmental health. The spread of rapid ohia death has been alarming and its' management before spreading to other islands is very critical. Many of the other islands depend on surface water for their drinking and irrigation needs. Loss of trees will severely impact watersheds.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i  
Supporting HB 1548 HD1 Relating to Rapid Ōhi'a Death  
House Committee on Finance  
Friday, February 22, 2019, 11:00AM, Room 308

---

*The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i is a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the preservation of the lands and waters upon which all life depends. The Conservancy has helped protect more than 200,000 acres of natural lands in Hawai'i and Palmyra Atoll. We manage 40,000 acres in 13 preserves and work in over 30 coastal communities to help protect the near-shore reefs, waters and fisheries of the main Hawaiian Islands. We forge partnership with government, private parties and communities to protect forests and coral reefs for their ecological values and the many benefits they provide to people.*

---

The Nature Conservancy strongly supports HB 1548 HD1 proposing to provide additional funding to the Department of Land and Natural Resources to address Rapid Ōhi'a Death.

We appreciate the crisis situation that exists with respect to Rapid Ōhi'a Death as well as other pests of the environment, agriculture, and human health and well-being. We support a strong and coordinated response to this disease that is threatening the dominant native tree species in the Hawaiian forest—a tree that is central to the forests' ecological, cultural and watershed values statewide.

We also hope that providing the necessary and critical support for addressing Rapid Ōhi'a Death will continue to be additive. We are concerned about unintended financial impacts of a piecemeal approach to invasive species funding. For example, in Fiscal Year 2007 the Legislature's provision of specific funding for coqui frog control was really a shifting of existing funds from other important invasive species programs, which then caused layoffs in the Island Invasive Species Committees and a hiatus in the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council's research grant program.

The [Hawai'i Interagency Biosecurity Plan](#)—prepared by the Department of Agriculture with the support of its many government and non-government partners—addresses the full range of invasive species prevention, early detection, rapid response, control, research, and outreach priorities across the state. Beyond this bill's additive funding, we encourage the Legislature, the Administration and partners to enhance our collective attention and funding applied to the full range of pest issues across the islands as outlined in the comprehensive Biosecurity Plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Mark E. Agne Duke E. Ah Moo Paul D. Alston Dr. C. Tana Burkert Richard A. Cooke III Ka'iulani de Silva Brian J. Doyle  
Robert J. Dzielak Dr. Alan M. Friedlander James J.C. Haynes III Sean A. Hehir Brett MacNaughton Kathy M. Matsui  
Janet Montag Alicia Moy James C. Polk Dustin E. Sellers Nathan E. Smith (Chair) Peter K. Tomozawa Richard N. Zwern

*Ihupani Advisory Council:* Christopher J. Benjamin Kenton T. Eldridge Eiichiro Kuwana Duncan MacNaughton Jean E. Rolles Crystal K. Rose  
*Founders:* Samuel A. Cooke Herbert C. Cornuelle

**HB-1548-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2019 10:24:40 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2019 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Melodie Aduja	O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai`i	Support	No

Comments:

**HB-1548-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/20/2019 3:58:12 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2019 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Michael Miyahira	Individual	Support	No

Comments:



**HB-1548-HD-1**

Submitted on: 2/21/2019 7:28:40 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/22/2019 11:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Leimomi Khan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:



**LATE**

House Committee on Finance  
Friday, February 22, 2019, 11:00AM, Room 308

Testimony of the *Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species*  
Supporting Funding for the Department of Land and Natural Resources'  
in HB1548 *Relating to Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death*

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Committee Members,

The Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS) **is in support of HB 1548, Relating to Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death.** The aim of this measure is to make appropriations to continue the multi-agency response to Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death (ROD).

Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death (ROD) is a new fungal disease caused by two recently discovered pathogens that infect 'ōhi'a lehua (*Metrosideros polymorpha*), and is killing 'ōhi'a at an alarming rate. 'Ōhi'a is Hawaii's most important native tree and is the backbone of Hawaii's remaining native forests. The tree provides habitat and food for native species, captures rain and fog drip to recharge aquifers, and is of fundamental importance in Hawaiian culture and cosmology. Wide-scale loss of nearly one million acres of 'ōhi'a forests is difficult to imagine for many, and would be an environmental catastrophe for the state. The multi-agency response to ROD is ongoing, which includes research, management actions, surveys, and outreach.

We would like to call your attention to the DLNR's critical role in the response efforts to the two fungal pathogens causing ROD that continue to spread on Hawaii Island and both pathogens were confirmed on Kauai last year. Funding provided by the Legislature for ROD is critical for leveraging federal and other non-state funds for research and field work necessary to prevent, monitor, and manage the spread of the disease as well as seek means for controlling it. The total need for this work, including work on Kauai, is \$3.2 million for each FY 20 and FY 21 to continue the response on Hawaii Island and Kauai. See the ROD Strategic Response Plan: <https://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/dl/rod/strategicresponseplanfinal.pdf>.

We encourage the committee to support this measure. Mahalo for your consideration.

Aloha,  
Chelsea Arnott  
CGAPS