A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO RAPID OHIA DEATH.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the ohia is Hawaii's most common and widespread native tree. Ohia trees can be found at sea level and up to elevations of two thousand five hundred meters. The trees provide critical habitats for rare and endangered native birds and insects.

The legislature finds that in recent years, the disease known as rapid ohia death, caused by two non-native fungal pathogens, ceratocystis lukuohia and ceratocytis huliohia, has been killing ohia trees in forests and residential areas across the State. When infected, the crown of an ohia tree first turns yellow, and then brown within a few days or weeks. The fungal pathogen progresses up the stem of the tree and manifests as a dark stain in the sapwood along the outer margin of the trunk. Landowners have noticed that when healthy-looking trees begin to exhibit symptoms, the trees die in a matter of weeks.

As of 2014, approximately fifteen thousand acres on the island of Hawaii have shown greater than fifty per cent
mortality from rapid ohia death. Recent estimates have found that the disease has affected thirty thousand acres on the island of Hawaii. Recognizing the significant problem of rapid ohia death, Act 102, Session Laws of Hawaii 2016, appropriated $300,000 to the department of agriculture for research to combat the disease.

The legislature further finds that in the intervening years, rapid ohia death has become an increasingly pervasive problem in the State. In 2018, lab testing performed by the United States Department of Agriculture's agricultural research service confirmed that the more virulent fungal pathogen to cause rapid ohia death, ceratocytis lukuohia, is present in ohia trees on a department of Hawaiian home lands parcel on the east side of Kauai.

The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to the department of land and natural resources for containment and prevention of the spread of pathogens causing rapid ohia death in Kauai county, including funds to be used in collaboration with the research corporation of the university of Hawaii and the Kauai invasive species council for:
(1) Employment of professionals dedicated to rapid ohia death sampling, tree felling, and tarp wrapping;

(2) Employment of professionals dedicated to outreach regarding rapid ohia death;

(3) Equipment for research, containment, and prevention, including:

(A) Drones with cameras and necessary peripheral gear;

(B) Portable sample testing kits;

(C) Helicopter time for the department of land and natural resources' division of forestry and wildlife and the Kauai invasive species committee;

(D) Sanitation equipment;

(E) Boot scrubber station materials;

(F) Field gear dedicated to crews combating rapid ohia death; and

(G) Signage, fliers, and other informational rapid ohia death materials;

(4) Lidar imagery for outbreak boundary delineation and for monitoring future spread of rapid ohia death; and
(5) Public service announcements and informational
advertisements.

SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of $602,500 or so much
thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2019-2020 and the
same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
2020-2021 for containment and prevention of the spread of
pathogens causing rapid ohia death in the county of Kauai
pursuant to section 1 of this Act.

The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
of land and natural resources for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2019.

INTRODUCED BY:

[Signature]

JAN 18 2019
Report Title:
DLNR; UH; RCUH; Kauai Invasive Species Council; Kauai County; Rapid Ohia Death; Appropriation

Description:
Appropriates funds to the Department of Land and Natural Resources for containment and prevention of the spread of pathogens causing rapid ohia death in Kauai county, including funds to be used in collaboration with the Research Corporation of the University of Hawaii and the Kauai Invasive Species Council.

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