

JAN 25 2023

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO INVASIVE SPECIES.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that little fire ants are
2 an invasive species that are spreading rapidly throughout the
3 State. Little fire ants have a painful sting that can cause
4 long-lasting itchy rashes or welts and also irritate, and
5 sometimes blind, household pets. Additionally, these pests
6 cause significant disruption and economic damage to Hawaii.
7 The legislature further finds that the Hawaii ant lab was
8 established in 2009 to address the overwhelming need for
9 research, advice, and technical assistance to address and
10 eradicate rapidly spreading little fire ant infestations. The
11 Hawaii invasive species council and Hawaii department of
12 agriculture provided the majority of funding for the Hawaii ant
13 lab. However, that funding ceased due to budget cuts and the
14 repeal of the agricultural development and food security special
15 fund. The reduction in funding has led to staff having to
16 reduce working hours for parts of 2021 and 2022. While the
17 legislature made a one-time appropriation of \$500,000 in 2022 to



1 address the funding shortfall and help the Hawaii ant lab retain
2 its staff, the funding for the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 fiscal
3 years is uncertain.

4 The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to support
5 the Hawaii ant lab in mitigating the effects of little fire ants
6 in the State.

7 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general
8 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$550,000 or so much
9 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and the
10 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
11 2024-2025 for LNR402, native resources and fire protection
12 program, to support the Hawaii ant lab in mitigating the effects
13 of little fire ants in the State.

14 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the University
15 of Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

16 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.

17

INTRODUCED BY:



S.B. NO. 1552

Report Title:

University of Hawaii; Hawaii Ant Lab; Little Fire Ant;
Appropriation

Description:

Appropriates funds to support the Hawaii ant lab in mitigating
the effects of little fire ants in the State.

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