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# 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 the albizia tree is  
2 an invasive species that can grow up to one hundred fifty feet  
3 tall. The tree adapts to grow in nutrient deficient soils,  
4 produces large quantities of wind-dispersed seeds, and grows at  
5 a very rapid rate, gaining up to fifteen feet in height each  
6 year. It can very quickly disrupt and replace native ecosystems  
7 and can easily take over a cleared area in just a few years.  
8 The tree is currently widespread on Kauai, Oahu, Maui, and  
9 Hawaii Island, and is also established on Lanai.

10           The legislature further finds that albizia trees have very  
11 brittle trunks and limbs that are structurally weak and are  
12 prone to "sudden limb shear," a phenomenon in which live  
13 branches collapse without warning or apparent cause. These  
14 collapses can occur even if the tree appears to be healthy.  
15 This phenomenon, combined with the tree's large size and fast  
16 growth, gives the tree the potential to cause major damage to  
17 property, infrastructure, and even human lives.



1           The dangers posed by albizia trees were made clear in  
2 August 2014, when strong winds from tropical storm Iselle  
3 toppled thousands of albizia trees in Puna, blocking roads and  
4 disrupting power lines. This caused tens of thousands of people  
5 to be stranded in Puna for weeks without power and made it  
6 difficult for first responders to access people in need of  
7 emergency services. Surveys found that much of the storm  
8 damage, which was estimated to cost between \$148,000,000 and  
9 \$325,00,000, could be attributed to albizia trees.

10           The legislature finds that the State must make a long-term  
11 investment of resources now to prevent future natural disasters  
12 from being aggravated by albizia trees.

13           Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to appropriate  
14 funds for the removal of hazardous albizia trees that  
15 potentially threaten public and private land.

16           SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general  
17 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$                    or so  
18 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and  
19 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal  
20 year 2024-2025 to allow the division of forestry and wildlife to



1 coordinate the removal of hazardous albizia trees that  
2 potentially threaten public and private land.

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

5 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



**Report Title:**

DLNR; Division of Forestry and Wildlife; Albizia Trees; Invasive Species; Appropriation

**Description:**

Appropriates funds to allow the Division of Forestry and Wildlife of the Department of Land and Natural Resources to coordinate the removal of hazardous albizia trees that potentially threaten public and private land. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD1)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

