HB 180
RELATING TO AN ALIEN SPECIES COORDINATOR

House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection

Public Hearing - February 11, 1999
9:00 A.m., Room 312, State Capitol

by
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HB180 creates an alien species coordinator position within the department of land and natural resources.

Our statement on this measure does not constitute an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

Since alien species are by far the most significant threat to native organisms in Hawaii today, this is an extremely important position. It has been filled for a couple of years by an emergency hire, Fred Kraus, who has been constructively outspoken and effective. We consider this a very useful addition to the state's efforts to manage the establishment of alien species.

The state needs someone to help collate data and assess priorities for target species. There are also species like fountain grass on Oahu that with a little organizing could have committees that mobilize efforts to go after them. A coordinator would be a force multiplier and (based on our experience here) would attract funds and jobs for weed control.

We note that the position is only funded for two years. Recognizing that alien species management is a long-term prospect, we would recommend that, once established, the position of alien species coordinator should be included as a permanent position hereafter.