



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before The
Senate Committee on Water, Land, and Agriculture
And

Senate Committee on Economic Development, Environment, and Technology
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By

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HB 2596 – RELATING TO THE MACADAMIA FELTED COCCID

Chairs Gabbard and Wakai, Vice Chairs Nishihara and Slom, and members of the Senate Committee on Water, Land, and Agriculture and Senate Committee on Economic Development, Environment, and Technology, thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of HB 2596 which appropriates funds to the department of agriculture to collaborate with the University of Hawai'i to research and develop methods for the prevention and treatment of macadamia felted coccid.

Hawai'i is the third largest producer of macadamia nuts in the world, with approximately 15,000 acres harvested on the Island of Hawai'i and a \$38.2 million farm-gate value (NASS 2012). Macadamia felted coccid is a severe pest of macadamia. This scale insect was found in south Kona in February 2005, and is now distributed throughout the Island of Hawai'i. Development of new control methods and appropriate management recommendations are essential for Hawai'i's producers to stop this invasive pest. Horticultural and harvest methods used in Hawai'i and the large size of trees in our well-established orchards contribute to great difficulties in achieving effective control.

In FY 2014, the legislature appropriated funds to initiate collaboration by the Department of Agriculture and CTAHR to address this serious invasive pest problem, augmented by funds committed by industry. With this support, CTAHR has worked in collaboration with the department to research the impact of canopy management, to identify key predators of the coccid and to augment their populations by planting refuge plants in orchards, and to evaluate other new control options.

This is not a simple problem, and a multi-year effort is required. HB 2596 requests appropriation of funds to continue this research effort to the department of agriculture, in order to identify and import effective biological control agents, find ways to further increase the populations of natural enemies of this insect pest, develop better insecticide application technologies, and ultimately develop an effective macadamia felted coccid management plan for Hawai'i macadamia orchards.