

HFIA 2020 Public Relations and Advocacy

HFIA provides a voice in public forums promoting policies and actions that foster healthy and productive forests. The Legislative Committee tracks bills affecting forestry and agriculture and provided testimony. Public relations and advocacy efforts this year included:

- Submitted testimony in favor of SB 3042 relating to funding for research to control of the two-lined spittle bug and to give aid to the land it has demised.
- Submitted testimony in support of HB 2035 and HB 2812 to the Committee on Water, Land & Hawaiian Affairs. The bill requires DLNR to transfer to DOA specified non-agricultural park lands by a specified deadline. DLNR and DOA are to jointly report on the status of the land transfer and amend the definition of "agricultural activities" used in chapter 166E, HRS.
- Drafted testimony in support of HB1921, which requires any hunting guide or hunter to obtain and submit to the DLNR written permission from any private landowner upon which the hunting guide or hunter is engaged in guide or hunting activities. Requires DOFAW and DLNR to create and make available to the public a written permission form to be completed and filed by any hunting guide or hunter engaged in guide activities or hunting on private lands. Takes effect on 7/1/2050. (HD1)
- Submitted testimony in support of SB 2077, which seeks to establish the Hawaii Tree Planting Program to be administered by the Board of Land & Natural Resources to plant at least one million appropriate, non-invasive trees in the State per year. The bill passed the Water, Land & Hawaiian Affairs Committee.
- Signed on to a request to congress to include the hardwood industry in any Coronavirus Relief Packages.
- Submitted comment in support of the designation of a Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCP) Coral Reef Critical Conservation Area (CRCCA) for the Pacific Islands and Caribbean Areas. An RCP CRCCA would address water quality impairment of internationally significant waters, provide flood protection, protect and restore biologically important and diverse habitat for a wide array of marine species, support the food source and livelihood of historically underserved communities, and provide resources for the conservation work being done by the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force.
- Sent a letter to Members of Congress asking that they and Secretary of the Treasury Steve Mnuchin instruct the IRS to preserve tax deductions for any qualifying paycheck protection program (PPP) loans.
- Signed on to a letter that urges the Honorable Larry Kudlow, Director of the National Economic Council and the Honorable Jared Kushner, Senior Advisor to the President to exempt essential H-2B visa forestry workers from the pending Presidential Proclamation that will ban non-immigrant labor.
- Signed on to a letter to Peter DeFazio and Sam Graves, Members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, in support of including the Safe Routes Act (H.R. 2453) provisions in the Invest in America Act, which would improve safety and efficiency of hauling forest products from the woods to the mill.
- Submitted letter of support for the Golden Amendment 245 that includes provisions of the Safe Routes Act (H.R 2453) reauthorizing our nation's highway and other surface transportation programs. It would allow trucks hauling logs, chips or biomass that are travelling at the maximum gross vehicle weight on state roads to travel at that increased weight on the federal interstate system for a limited distance.
- Submitted a letter of support for Bill 178: An ordinance amending Chapter 19 of the Hawaii County Code 1983, relating to native forest dedications. This bill provided an incentive to landowners who are taking on the burden of managing and increasing forest cover. The Bill passed.
- Signed on to a letter urging Congress to include nonprofit policy priorities in COVID-19 legislation.
- Sent a letter to the PUC urging them to complete negotiations with Honua Ola and bring the power plant and family wage jobs on-line.