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COUNTY COUNCIL
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November 26, 2018

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COUNTY CLERK

The Honorable Mike White
Council Chair
County of Maui
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

Dear Chair White:

SUBJECT: URGING THE HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO PROACTIVELY ASSESS AND DETER THE PRESENCE OF THE VARROA MITE ON MOLOKAI (PAF 18-288)

May I request the attached proposed resolution, entitled "URGING THE HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO PROACTIVELY ASSESS AND DETER THE PRESENCE OF THE VARROA MITE ON MOLOKAI," be placed on the next Council meeting agenda.

Sincerely,

STACY CRIVELLO
Councilmember

paf:mcc:18-288b

Attachment

Resolution

No. _____

URGING THE HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO PROACTIVELY ASSESS AND DETER THE PRESENCE OF THE VARROA MITE ON MOLOKAI

WHEREAS, the Legislature finds that the silent invasion of Hawaii by insects, disease-bearing organisms, snakes, weeds, and other pests is the single greatest threat to Hawaii's economy and natural environment and to the health and lifestyle of Hawaii's people; and

WHEREAS, the Hawaii Department of Agriculture ("Department") is a lead agency for invasive species control; and

WHEREAS, according to the Department, the non-native Varroa mite or *Varroa destructor*, an external parasite, is one of the most destructive pests of honey bees; and

WHEREAS, while the Varroa mite is widely dispersed throughout the world, the State of Hawaii was free of the mite prior to its detection on Oahu in 2007 and in Hilo, Hawaii, in 2008; and

WHEREAS, thus far, surveys by the Department on Maui, Kauai, and Molokai have not detected the devastating Varroa mite, but further field surveys are necessary to ensure the mite is not currently present on Molokai; and

WHEREAS, the Varroa mite can be spread through contact with infested bees, uninfested bees robbing honey from infested hives, by hitchhiking on other flower-visiting insects, and by the movement of infested managed hives or recently used beekeeping equipment; and

WHEREAS, the Varroa mite was likely introduced to Hawaii by hitchhiking on live bees that were transported to the State or in shipments of beekeeping equipment that had recently been used on infested hives; and

WHEREAS, according to the United States Department of Agriculture, the State of Hawaii is home to approximately 15,000 bee colonies, which support diverse ecosystems and offer unique economic opportunities; and

Resolution No. _____

WHEREAS, beekeeping operations across the State recognize the potential to expand operations to Molokai; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the County of Maui:

1. That it hereby urges the Department to proactively assess and deter the presence of the Varroa mite on Molokai; and
2. That it hereby urges the Department to conduct a baseline survey to ensure the Varroa mite is not currently present on Molokai; and
3. That it hereby urges the Department to strictly enforce regulations for the shipping of bees and interisland quarantine practices for bees and beekeeping equipment; and
4. That it hereby requests the Department update the Maui County Council on the status of the Varroa mite on Molokai and any risk of contamination from new beekeeping operations on the island; and
5. That copies of this resolution be transmitted to Scott Enright, Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, and Director, Department of Agriculture, State of Hawaii; Jonathan Ho, Acting Manager, Plant Quarantine Branch, Plant Industry Division, Department of Agriculture, State of Hawaii; Adam Radford, Manager, Maui Invasive Species Committee; Lori Buchanan, Chair, Molokai/Maui Invasive Species Committee; the Honorable Alan M. Arakawa, Mayor, County of Maui; and the Honorable David Y. Ige, Governor, State of Hawaii.

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY



Deputy Corporation Counsel
County of Maui