



MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

EDB-65

Invasive Species Proviso
Thursday, January 23, 2020

Dear Chair Rawlins-Fernandez, Vice-Chair King and
Members of the Economic Development and Budget Committee,

The Maui Chamber of Commerce supports EDB-65 to delete the proviso which reads "Provided, that \$400,000 shall be for the containment and removal of miconia and invasive species" for Office of Economic Development (OED) Funds. This proviso limits OED's options for addressing invasive species and the growing issue of axis deer management. We understand there is a separate proviso to cover little fire ants and that a good portion of the \$400,000 will still go towards miconia control. The challenge really comes from the language in this proviso that limits "other invasive species" to other invasive plant species. With a growing axis deer problem, that is hurting local farmers, affecting businesses, becoming an increasing nuisance to residents and impacting our environment and watersheds, we have to ramp up deer management efforts before the threat becomes unmanageable.

In Upcountry and open areas, down to Wailea and Makena, deer issues are escalating. As Mahi Pono installs more fences to protect its crops, deer will migrate elsewhere, meaning into residential areas, roadways, parks, resort properties, etc. There are many areas Upcountry where watching herds run through open fields is like watching a segment of The Lion King, with hoards of animals running through the tundra. Unlike other states that are used to deer, our residents and drivers are not prepared for and equipped to deal with this threat.

Therefore, we ask that you remove this proviso so that OED can use this funding for the highest priority areas in the Water and Environmental Resource Protection and Conservation grants.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

RECEIVED AT EDB MEETING ON 01-23-2020

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.