

EACP Committee

From: Mikala Minn <mikala.minn@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 25, 2019 8:47 PM
To: EACP Committee
Subject: MISC Testimony

To the Committee,

First of all, I would like to express my support for MISC and MOMISC. Without their diligence in keeping invasive species at bay, Hāna would surely be inundated by the onslaught of invasive species that threaten our fragile ecosystems. There is no doubt that the inevitable culprit of the rapid and constant spread of pests, plants, and disease, is ourselves, our family, our friends, and everyone in between. The irony is that we are so eager to surround ourselves with the latest trends in fruit tree varieties, and ornamental flowers, and native plants that we can take pride in planting on our properties and farms, that we ignore the crucial stopgaps that ensure we don't spread invasives - such as to quarantine new plants by baiting for Fire Ants, before taking them home from Lowes, or the shipping docks. Or speaking with Department of Agriculture officials about how to mitigate the threat of spreading Banana Bunchy Top. I see sooooo many Malihini move to Hāna, buy up agricultural land, and immediately run to Home Depot to buy a \$80 banana in a pot to plant at their new house, where they need to "farm" in order to keep their tax break. If the State of Hawaii and County of Maui is so worried about spending so much money to stop the spread of invasive species, why doesn't the State restrict the sales of high risk plant species. Intelligent countries all over the world have no problem telling their citizens what they can and cannot plant. Meanwhile, small farms like ours, a 10-acre nonprofit community farm, who tries extremely hard not to import any non-sterile plants or soil product, is left to defend itself from ignorant landowners who lack the local resources, and resourcefulness, to make good choices. Again, ironic that our State's biggest selling point is its natural beauty, but we won't go the distance to protect it. Again, I support MISC in its efforts to garner more State and County funding, and I hope the State and County will find the bravery to take its governing powers to the next level, and restrict commerce dealing with high risk plant and soil products inter-island.

Mahalo for your time,

Mikala Minn
Born and Raised in Hāna
Lifelong Farmer and Educator
Father, Husband, Hawaiian