



The Molokai Farm Bureau serves as Molokai's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic and educational interest of our diverse agricultural community. We are also an arm of the Hawaii Farm Bureau Federation, organized in 1948 and comprised of 1800 farm families statewide.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND BIOSECURITY (BAB) MEETING
Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity Plant Quarantine Branch
1849 Auiki Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96819
Email: DAB.BOARD.TESTIMONY@HAWAII.GOV

Public Hearing
September 23, 2025 @ 9:00am
Testimony on Agenda item C.1

Request for Review and Adoption of an Interim Rule Pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes §150A-9.5, to Restrict the Transportation of Plants, Soil, Gravel, and Other Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle (CRB) Host Material Including Decomposing Plant Material Such as Compost, Wood or Tree Chips, and Mulch, Plant Propagation Media and Other Items Comprised of Decomposing Organic Plant Material Such as Landscaping Material or Erosion Control Socks, to the Island of Molokai From Any Other Area in the State to Prevent the Spread of CRB.

September 22, 2025

Aloha Chair Hurd and Honorable Board Members,

As farmers and ranchers on the island of Molokai representing the Molokai Farm Bureau, we have tangible experience regarding the serious impacts an invasive species can have on both our livelihood and our communities, and we are confident the Board of Agriculture is aware of those challenges.

What we find compelling and concerning about this proposed interim rule change:

- The SENSE OF URGENCY surrounding this. We now own the opportunity to possibly stop or stall the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle (CRB) invasion on the last island in the state and attempt to preserve the cultural, agricultural and historical meanings that make up the essence of Molokai and its community.
- There are ANCILLARY CONSEQUENCES of an interim ban. Of the items on the "high priority" list that Molokai does not manufacture or produce, the community will shoulder a total ban and forego any access to these products during the entire duration of the ban, which is yet to be determined.
- MULTIPLE PATHWAYS. We recognize the multiple vulnerabilities we face – air travelers, air and ocean freight, as well as commercial and non-commercial boats traveling inter-island into Molokai, transporting resident and visitor goods that may include flora and fauna and high priority products – which all pose a very real and looming possibility of bringing CRBs to Molokai.

- **CULTURAL & COMMUNITY IMPACTS.** We also understand CRBs pose very real impacts to our island's culture and important historical sites, putting at risk the natural beauty of our island and what the coconut palm and other vulnerable plants represent to so many in our community.
- **IMPACTS TO LOCAL BUSINESSES.** We also recognize the temporary ban will impact businesses that both serve and employ our community as well as private and/or government projects that could have been scheduled during the proposed interim ban – all could cause our community consequential economic disruptions.
- **PROVEN VECTORS.** We encourage the interim ban to only include common sense, proven vectors that are known to carry CRBs, and not allow this interim ban to be used for other abject purposes (i.e., efforts that are separate from the goal of CRB prevention).

Whether it be efforts to prevent or postpone CRB's arrival on Molokai, both are extremely worthy and deserve simultaneous pursuit. Moving forward we also suggest that Molokai mutually shares in any future actions needed to advance the state in gaining successful control or eradication of the CRB threats on a statewide level.

We believe the Board of Agriculture is the most qualified to rule on this proposed interim rule change. The Board is in possession of the greatest volume of accurate information from objective facts, various viewpoints, community perspectives, cultural sensitivities, invasive pathways, economic impacts, and the possibilities of future solutions.

For these reasons we appreciate the position the Board of Agriculture is in, and the consequential decision it must make while carefully balancing protecting the natural environment from CRBs and causing the least amount of economic and operational harm to Molokai's people.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

With Warmest Aloha,

Dawn Bicoy

Dawn Bicoy, Secretary
Molokai Farm Bureau
PO Box 544
Kaunakakai, HI 96748

[EXTERNAL] Agenda IV.C.1-CRB Molokai

From barbara nickou <baznickou@gmail.com>

Date Mon 9/22/2025 3:36 PM

To DAB.BOARD.TESTIMONY <dab.board.testimony@hawaii.gov>

Aloha,

My name is Barbara Nickou.

I have been a Molokai Resident since 1976.

Please adopt the strongest interim protections against the potential introduction of CRB on Molokai.

The problems of invasive destructive species in Hawaii is devastating.

It's better to prohibit unnecessary plant materials and mulch, potting soil, from being shipped to Moloka'i.

Nurseries are high risk for invasive species.

Hawaii needs greater TSA inspections for every flight and passenger coming into Hawaii. Outbound flights from Hawaii to the mainland have mandatory Agriculture Inspections however we need the same Inspections and Safeguards on all passengers on all flights coming into Hawaii.

Please Vote to protect Molokai from the invasive and destructive CRB.

Mahalo,

Barbara Nickou

[EXTERNAL] BAB Sept 23, 2025 Public Hearing / Agenda Item C.1. / Testimony from MKK Farm Bureau

From Dawn Bicoy <dawn.bicoy@bayer.com>

Date Mon 9/22/2025 8:55 PM

To DAB.BOARD.TESTIMONY <dab.board.testimony@hawaii.gov>

 1 attachment (241 KB)

2025_MKK CRB Interim Ban_MKKFB_FINAL_Submitted 09.22.25.pdf;

Attached is the Molokai Farm Bureau Testimony for:

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND BIOSECURITY (BAB) MEETING

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With Warmest Aloha,

Dawn Bicoy

Secretary, Molokai Farm Bureau

PO Box 544

Kaunakakai, HI 96748

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[EXTERNAL] I Edlynn Kaanoi-Espiritu resident of Molokai. Petition to halt all materials that could spread CRB on our island.

From Edlynn Kaanoi-Espiritu <ekaanoi808@gmail.com>

Date Mon 9/22/2025 7:39 PM

To DAB.BOARD.TESTIMONY <dab.board.testimony@hawaii.gov>

Mahalo,
Edlynn Kaanoi-Espiritu

[EXTERNAL] Agenda IV.C.1 - Adoption of Interim Rule to Restrict the Transportation of Material that May Introduce the CRB to the Island of Moloka'i

From Liz Wiggans <elizabethmwiggans@gmail.com>

Date Tue 9/23/2025 5:22 AM

To DAB.BOARD.TESTIMONY <dab.board.testimony@hawaii.gov>

Aloha e Chair Hurd and Members of the Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity,

My name is Liz Wiggans, former teacher and union representative in Kealahou, HI, and I am urging you to adopt the **strongest interim protections** against the introduction and potentially devastating establishment of coconut rhinoceros beetles (CRB) on Moloka'i, **as reflected in the petition put forward by 'Anakala Kunani and 'Anakē Ipo Nihipali.**

Mahalo nui for your past vote in support of the Moloka'i community, as they sought your help in protecting their island from the potentially devastating impacts of the CRB. Like you, the Advisory Committee on Plants and Animals has now unanimously agreed that this situation is an emergency, requiring the strongest possible interim protections against the introduction of CRB on Moloka'i, while a longer-term solution is developed and implemented.

Please, continue to support the Moloka'i community by voting in support of the strongest protections against the import of CRB host material to the island. **Do not let short-term industry interests or speculation about "unintended consequences" lead to a watered down, overcomplicated, and unenforceable alternative version of the rule, as was put forward by the Plant Quarantine Branch at the Advisory Committee's meeting.** The Advisory Committee on Plants and Animals wisely chose to support the temporary, total ban of all CRB host material as originally submitted and supported by the Moloka'i community - please follow their expertise-driven lead, and do the same.

One way or another, your decision will be historic. Your decision may mark a moment where the government and community finally came together, to draw a bold but necessary line in the sand against the destruction of the niu, cultural practices, native species, local agriculture, and local economy of Moloka'i, and the cultural heritage of Hawai'i as a whole. Or, your decision may be a moment where the government once again lets down a community that is doing all that it can to protect its future, and the 'āina that it loves from this terrible pest - with catastrophic, generations-long consequences. Please make the right choice, in support of the Moloka'i community.

Mahalo nui for your consideration of this testimony.

Liz Wiggans

[EXTERNAL] Testimony_Agenda IV.C.1 Adoption of Interim Rule to Restrict the Transportation of Material that May Introduce the CRB to Moloka'i

From pennysfh@hawaii.rr.com <pennysfh@hawaii.rr.com>

Date Mon 9/22/2025 4:59 PM

To DAB.BOARD.TESTIMONY <dab.board.testimony@hawaii.gov>

Aloha Chair Hurd and Members of the Board of Agriculture and Biosecurity,

Kapuāiwa, the sacred grove of Kamehameha V planted in the 1860s on Molokai is one of Hawai'i's few remaining ulu niu (coconut groves) planted by the ali'i. While it has struggled to thrive in the last few decades, in recent years there have been efforts to revive the grove. If coconut rhinoceros beetle (CRB) were to reach Molokai it would destroy this living piece of history and by extension the work of Lota Kapuāiwa Kalanimakua Ali'iōlani Kalanikupuapa'ikalaninu. The ulu nui of 'Ili'ili'ōpae heiau would also be at risk, along with any nui planted by Molokai families for market, subsistence and cultural use. Niu is the house that shades us. It provides building material and household implements, cover for shelter and plants shades, water when no potable water is available, medicine, sugar, apu and wai for 'awa at home and in ceremony. It is a living form of Lono.

If our islands, and especially Molokai, lose the battle against CRB, we will lose not just a culturally important tree/crop but also part of our identity and resilience as islands in the Pacific.

I urge you to adopt the strongest interim protections against the introduction and potentially devastating establishment of CRB on Moloka'i, as reflected in the petition put forward by 'Anakala Kunani and 'Anakē Ipo Nihipali. Like you, in your past vote, the Advisory Committee on Plants and Animals has now unanimously agreed that this situation is an emergency, requiring the strongest possible interim protections against the introduction of CRB on Moloka'i, while a longer-term solution is developed and implemented.

The Advisory Committee on Plants and Animals wisely chose to support the temporary, total ban of all CRB host material as originally submitted and supported by the Moloka'i community.

Please follow their expertise-driven lead, and do the same. Please, continue to support the Moloka'i community by voting in support of the strongest protections against the import of CRB host material to the island.

No bandaid or satisficing approach will prevent the damage this pest will cause to Molokai's survival. Together, government and community need to draw a bold but necessary line in the sand against the destruction of our niu, and all that it encompasses. Please make the right choice, in support of the Moloka'i community.

Mahalo for your consideration,
Penny Levin