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COUNTY COUNCIL

COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.MauiCounty.us

March 20, 2017

TO: The Honorable Chris Lee, Chair
House Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection

FROM: Mike White
Council Chair 

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF MARCH 21, 2017; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 637,
SD 2 RELATING TO COUNTY ACCESS TO PRIVATE PROPERTY**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of this measure. The purpose of this measure is to authorize counties to enter private property to control or eradicate invasive species and pests.

The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I **support** this measure for the following reasons:

1. The eradication of invasive species must be considered with a sense of urgency. Damage in property, our natural environment and other irreversible effects of mitigation delays would increase our costs. Reasonable proper notice must be provided to individuals in case access to their private property is required. However, a process too cumbersome may impede agencies from doing their job in a timely manner, and utilizing the court system to secure warrants to gain property access are costly and burdensome options.
2. Environmental protection through the eradication of invasive species is a statewide and intergovernmental effort. The County of Maui understands this partnership and works closely with agencies such as the Maui Invasive Species Committee (MISC) in the fight against invasive threats to our endangered species, native plants, fragile ecosystems and overall quality of life.
3. Currently, MISC's ability to implement its programs are hampered by their inability to access private property where invasive species are reported. This measure would solve this ongoing issue by allowing counties and its authorized agents, following necessary notice requirements, to enter private property for eradication efforts.

Mahalo for your consideration. For the foregoing reasons, I **support** this measure.