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February 12, 2016

Testimony of Bill Lucey – Manager - Kauai Invasive Species Committee  
SB 2450  
Hearing: Friday, February 12, 2016  
2:00 pm  
Conference Room 414

Testimony in **SUPPORT**

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Wakai, Vice Chairs Nishihara and Slom and committee members, the Kauai Invasive Species Committee enthusiastically supports SB2450.

Our organization is primarily focused on incipient invasive species; however we have been working diligently with the County of Kauai to help create an ordinance that would reduce the number of feral cats occupying the landscape.

It is imperative that the state passes this amendment in order to create consistent policy with our efforts at the local level on Kauai. The extremist animal rights groups opposed to this amendment have initiated smear campaigns against those working towards solutions and posted violent online threats based on false statements. They will leverage any method of deceit to continue using public land for their own benefit at the cost of society and the environment.

Toxoplasmosis can only exist where cats are present. Cat ownership and feral populations are skyrocketing. Between 1989 and 2006 cat ownership increased 50% in the United States. Globally, every year there is an estimated 200,000 cases where Toxo is passed from mothers to the fetus causing a variety of birth defects. Johns Hopkins Medical Institute researchers say there is evidence that this parasite is becoming a significant health hazard especially in children's sand boxes and gardens where cats defecate. In Hawaii numerous cat colonies are located on public land along coastal beaches exposing millions of people to potential infection, possibly threatening the tourist industry and contaminating marine waters and fish. Cats should stay on their owner's property or be under direct control just as dog owners must do.

Toxo has killed numerous marine mammals including, a porpoise, seals and sea otters. Our state bird, the Nene, also dies from Toxo. Cattle ingest the parasite while grazing which could pose a threat to the future export of Hawaiian beef. Finally, cats kill several endangered species which the public is tasked with recovering creating a burden to both the tax payer and society that needs to comply with endangered species regulation. Please pass SB2450

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Sincerely,

Bill Lucey  
Project Manager  
Kauai Invasive Species Committee  
University of Hawaii