

**Representative Cliff Tsuji, Chair
Representative Jessica Wooley, Vice Chair
Committee on Agriculture**

**Representative Hermina Morita, Chair
Representative Denny Coffman, Vice Chair
Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection**

**February 5, 2009, 8:30 AM
Room 325
Support for HB 1684, Invasive Species; Penalties**

Aloha members of the Agriculture and Energy & Environmental Protection Committees:

I support the intent of HB 1684 to impose penalties for the intentional introduction and spread of invasive species.

Varroa Mites should be a high priority on the list of invasive species.

It is very very unfortunate that the varroa mite has made its way to the Big Island and has now spread causing all stakeholders there to be in a mode of "how to manage bees with the varroa mite" vs. containment and eradication.

It is only a matter of time before there is realization of the effects on pollination of crops, yields, and other domino effects on the balance of our natural environment which includes all plants, animals, insects and microbes. No doubt, there will also be an economic loss due to lower honey production as well as the loss of exporting Queen bees.

Now more than ever when our state and county policy makers are recognizing that we as an island state need to be less dependent on imports, please remember that the bees play a huge role in our ability to be self sustainable.

In order for this bill to be most effective, this information needs to be distributed to DOA, the Hawaii Invasive Species Committee and other State level agencies, USDA, Postal Services, all Airport and Harbor users as well as the general public.

We all need to work together proactively and diligently to ensure that Kauai, Maui, Molokai, Lanai, Niihau and Kahoolawe remain varroa mite free.

Mahalo for your support.

Chris Kobayashi
Kauai Bee Association, Board member