

would contend, by indirect and inconsistent means. Currently, Federal funding to fight the brown tree snake has remained stagnant over the past decade and has been realized, in addition to the contributions from the Office of Insular Affairs, through the efforts of a Senate Appropriations \$1 million annual earmark in the Department of Defense Operations and Maintenance account for the Defense Health Services. These funds have been the basis for the progress made to date, but these appropriations funds are not specifically authorized, which has caused difficulty in securing the appropriation each year. In addition, as an earmark, these efforts have been misinterpreted by interest groups opposed to such earmarks and has at times been characterized as "pork" spending.

If we do not adequately address these funding shortfalls, significant brown tree snake containment efforts may fail resulting in the spread of a very aggressive invasive species to other areas of the United States. The brown tree snake has caused severe environmental damage on Guam, and our experience has been that once introduced, this species is extremely difficult to eradicate. The environmental cost in protecting other species in other areas that may become endangered by this alien predator is enormous, thus making the prevention of the spread of the brown tree snake an economic issue. This is a clear example of a situation where an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

This bill is also notable for its emphasis on control and eradication. Guam has had the unfortunate experience of having the brown tree snake threaten the extinction of our own indigenous species of birds.

I look forward to moving this bill through the legislative process. I thank my colleagues from Hawaii, Mr. CASE and Mr. ABERCROMBIE, for their diligent work in crafting this legislation with me. I also wish to commend stakeholders in Guam and Hawaii, including the Government of Guam's Department of Agriculture, for their valuable input. I urge my colleagues to support the Brown Tree Snake Control and Eradication Act.

CONTROL AND ERADICATION ACT
OF 2003

HON. ED CASE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 7, 2003

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to join with my colleague from Guam, Congresswoman MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO, and Congressman NEIL ABERCROMBIE from Hawaii, to introduce the Brown Tree Snake Control and Eradication Act of 2003.

This legislation proposes a long-overdue comprehensive approach, through the Departments of Interior and Agriculture, to eradicate the brown tree snake in Guam and to prevent its introduction to affected jurisdictions in the Pacific, including my home state of Hawaii.

The devastating ecological, economic, and human health impacts of the brown tree snake have been long known among the affected jurisdictions in the Pacific and the federal, state, and territorial agencies charged with implementing brown tree snake preventative control programs.

However, it is clear that unless we address this challenge with a long-term, coordinated, and comprehensive approach, Guam will continue to struggle with the adverse impacts of the brown tree snake, and we in Hawaii will increasingly risk the introduction of the snake into our fragile environment. A total of eight brown tree snakes have been found live or dead in Hawaii since the mid-1980s. All have been associated with the movement of civilian and military vehicles or cargo from Guam.

As background, the brown tree snake was accidentally introduced into Guam in the late 1940s and 1950s, likely via U.S. military cargo, from an area in the Pacific where the snakes are native. Unfortunately, because Guam had no natural predator but abundant prey, the brown tree snake population spread throughout the island.

Because the brown tree snake's preferred prey is birds, it is directly responsible for the extinction of 9 of 13 native forest birds and 3 of 12 native lizards on Guam. Economically, the snakes have caused more than 1600 power outages over a 20-year period in Guam, costing the island \$4.5 million per year without considering their impact on transformers, and damages inside electrical substations. The disruptions affect all aspects of everyday life in homes and work, as well as for the government and the business community.

In Hawaii, the brown tree snake represents one of the greatest terrestrial ecological threats due to its potential impact on our endangered bird species, which are found nowhere else on earth. As a result of Hawaii's geographical isolation and lush environment, there were more than 140 endemic bird species in the islands prior to human contact. Today, among the remaining 71 endemic forms, 30 are federally listed as endangered, and fifteen of these are on the brink of extinction. Any negative impact on our native bird species in Hawaii will inevitably impact our native flora as well. Hawaii has the highest known number of endemic terrestrial plants of any major island group.

Economically, a University of Hawaii study estimates that the introduction of the brown tree snake to Hawaii will cause between \$28 million and \$450 million annually in electrical power outages. This does not include the potential devastation to our agriculture industry. In Guam, the brown tree snake has contributed to the decline in production of the island's agriculture industry, particularly the commercial poultry industry, because the snakes eat eggs and chicks. The snake has also impacted the growing of fruits and vegetables because insects that are no longer naturally controlled by birds and lizards inflict increased damage on crops.

To address the brown tree snake problem, a Brown Tree Snake Control Committee was established subsequent to provisions in the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990. A multi-agency Memorandum of Agreement on Brown Tree Snake Control was also signed in 1992 and renewed in 1999. However, it expires in March 2004.

The Brown Tree Snake Control and Eradication Act of 2003 will statutorily authorize the Brown Tree Snake Control and Eradication Committee to ensure the ongoing activities of federal agencies, enhance the effectiveness of the present Committee, provide the necessary

resources from agencies actually conducting the work, and strengthen the coordination between federal and regional stakeholders in Hawaii and the Pacific in a more systemic fashion.

Among the authorized activities is the expansion of science-based eradication and control programs in Guam; the expansion of inter-agency and intergovernmental rapid response teams in Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Hawaii; the expansion of science-based efforts to protect and restore native wildlife in Guam or elsewhere damaged by the brown tree snake; continuation and expansion of sustained research funding from the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services, and National Wildlife Research Center; and the expansion of long-term research into chemical and biological control techniques that could lead to large-scale reduction of brown tree snake populations in Guam.

This legislation is a product of collaboration between my office, the offices of Congresswoman BORDALLO and Congressman ABERCROMBIE, the Nature Conservancy in Hawaii, and other key federal, state, and territorial stakeholders in the region.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on this vital issue.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM DeMINT

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 7, 2003

Mr. DeMINT. Mr. Speaker, I was absent during rollcall votes 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, and 591. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 569 and 570. I would have voted "nay" on rollcall votes 571, 572, 573, and 591.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 7, 2003

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, due to a scheduling conflict, I was unable to be in Washington during rollcall votes 616–619. Had I been here I would have voted "no" for rollcall vote 616, "aye" for rollcall vote 617 and "no" for rollcall votes 618–619.

TRIBUTE TO SAGINAW VALLEY
STATE UNIVERSITY ON THE OC-
CASION OF ITS FORTIETH ANNI-
VERSARY

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 7, 2003

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the mission and accomplishments of Saginaw Valley State University in Saginaw County, Michigan as it celebrates forty years of educating students for a modern world.