

## **SPEAKING AGENDA**

**Hawaii Invasive Species Council Meeting – May 28, 2025**

**Public Comment | 2-Minute Verbal Testimony**

**Speaker: Kevin Andrews, Founder – CRB Research & Innovation Center**

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### **1. Acknowledgment & Introduction (15 sec)**

Aloha Chair Chang, Chair Hurd, Council Members, and Support Staff.

My name is Kevin Andrews, and I represent the team developing Hawaii's first dedicated **Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle Research & Innovation Center**.

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### **2. Problem Statement (30 sec)**

The CRB is an invasive species threat with global reach. In Hawaii, it's already devastated thousands of palms and continues to spread—affecting tourism, agriculture, and native ecosystems.

This beetle is not just a pest—it's a direct attack on our food security and cultural landscape.

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### **3. Our Response – A Global Hub Based in Hawaii (45 sec)**

We've developed a strategic response:

- A centralized data platform linking CRB outbreaks from the Pacific, Asia, and Africa
- AI-integrated trap systems for early detection and rapid deployment
- A global expert consortium headquartered right here in Hawaii
- A public-private partnership model designed to attract funding from USDA, DARPA, and global agriculture networks

Our CRB Center is shovel-ready and perfectly aligned with your FY26 funding priorities: **interagency cooperation, invasive species innovation, and long-term containment strategies**.

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### **4. Request to the Council (30 sec)**

We ask this Council to:

1. Recognize the CRB Center as a priority biosecurity project
  2. Include it in the FY26 funding discussions under Item 5b
  3. Consider forming a task group or subcommittee to further explore integrated invasive insect strategies—beginning with CRB
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### **5. Follow-Up and Materials (15 sec)**

We've submitted our full written testimony and PDF materials to Jack Reef in advance.

**Mahalo for your time and leadership. We are ready to partner in this effort.**