



Proclamation

In Recognition of

Spot the Ant, Stop the Ant Month

WHEREAS, Little Fire Ants (LFA), *Wasmannia auropunctata*, are devastating to the health and well-being of Hawai'i's people and visitors, its natural environment, agriculture industry, and economy, and are considered one of the world's 100 worst invasive species by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Invasive Species Specialist Group; and

WHEREAS, a recent University of Hawai'i study found that LFA could cause \$12.9 billion in economic damages and result in 3.4 billion stings to Hawai'i's people and visitors over the next 35 years on Hawai'i Island alone; and

WHEREAS, Pacific Island communities have been devastated where LFA have become established and in the State of Hawai'i, LFA have become established on Hawai'i Island and pose an extremely high risk of spreading statewide; and

WHEREAS, LFA threaten our ability to enjoy our homes, yards, parks, and forests, blind our pets and livestock, attack native wildlife including forest birds, ground nesting sea birds, and sea turtle hatchlings, and greatly inhibit agricultural field work; and

WHEREAS, LFA are a very small, red-orange, slow moving ant species that are significantly more damaging than any other species of ant currently known to be present in the State of Hawai'i; and

WHEREAS, LFA cannot always be easily seen and is spread through the movement of potted plants, fruits, cut flowers, and other materials from infested areas; and

WHEREAS, we can protect our children and our communities from LFA by always checking new plants and annually checking our yards and businesses for the presence of LFA, and submitting ant samples to the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture to detect, manage, and eradicate these harmful ants;

THEREFORE I, DAVID Y. IGE, Governor, and I, SHAN S. TSUTSUI, Lieutenant Governor of the State of Hawai'i, do hereby proclaim October as

"SPOT THE ANT, STOP THE ANT MONTH"

and ask that all citizens of the Aloha State join us in recognizing the importance of spotting invasive species, such as the Little Fire Ants, and stopping them by collecting samples on your property and submitting the samples to the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture for identification.

DONE at the State Capitol, in the Executive Chambers, in Honolulu, State of Hawai'i, on this twenty-sixth day of September 2017.

DAVID Y. IGE
Governor, State of Hawai'i

SHAN S. TSUTSUI
Lt. Governor, State of Hawai'i