



## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

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In regards to Jerry Burris' column today, "Saddle up for a ride to fiscal rescue," I agree that legislators are facing a tough session with the \$1.2 billion shortfall and little fat to cut. However, he misses the utility of special funds and states that converting these funds to general funds will "mortally offend all kinds of special interests." Maybe I'm one of those "special interests," but I'd like to see the fee collected on incoming cargo continue to be used to inspect incoming cargo for invasive species (the fee goes into a special fund for this purpose), instead of it being lost. I'd also like to see the conveyance tax (paid into a special fund when real estate changes hands) continue to support rental housing for less fortunate families and environmental protection where Hawai'i's native species live, and not be spent elsewhere. Special funds were set up so that important programs such as these could weather tough times.

(END)

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*Christy Martin is the Public Information Officer for the statewide Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS), a public-private partnership working to protect Hawaii from invasive species.*