

**Statement of Chairwoman Madeleine Z. Bordallo
Legislative Hearing on H.R. 6311, the Nonnative Wildlife
Invasion Prevention Act
Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife and Oceans
Thursday, June 26, 2008**

The Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife and Oceans meets this morning to hear testimony regarding my bill, H.R. 6311, the Nonnative Wildlife Invasion Prevention Act.

Invasive, non-native species cause harm to the economy, human health, and the health of other animal species. The damages from these species are estimated to be \$123 billion annually. Some of these species are introduced unintentionally, as is the case with Guam's brown tree snake, a significant problem in my territory. However, intentional introduction is one of the primary pathways by which invasive species become established.

Currently, there is no law that requires species to be evaluated for risk before import. The Lacey Act allows species to be placed on an “injurious list”, but this can occur only after they have caused serious and widespread harm to the economy, environment, and to human and animal species’ health.

On average, however, it takes the Fish and Wildlife Service four years to list a species as injurious. In the meantime, the impacts caused by a particular species are often irreversible, thereby increasing taxpayers’ costs to mitigate what can be irremediable environmental damage.

My bill, H.R. 6311, would require species to be evaluated for these risks before importation. Using this approach, H.R. 6311 proposes a “white list” of species approved for import. This places the burden of proof on the importer to

demonstrate that the species will not cause harm to the environment or to society.

I am pleased to have three Subcommittee Members, Mr. Kildee, Mr. Abercrombie, and Mr. Kind, as original co-sponsors of this legislation and I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today about the need for this legislation to prevent the import of invasive, non-native wildlife species.