

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

2093

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 14, 2025

RE: S.C.R. No. 94
S.D. 1

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, to which was referred S.C.R. No. 94, S.D. 1, entitled:

"SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION URGING THE HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE OF THE COUNTY OF MAUI TO TAKE FURTHER MEANINGFUL ACTION TO ADDRESS THE AXIS DEER OVERPOPULATION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Urge the Hawaii Department of Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture of the County of Maui to take further meaningful action to address the axis deer overpopulation by implementing policies to make in-state inspectors certified by the United States Department of Agriculture, certified inspections, and certified processing more accessible, capable, and affordable for local hunters to utilize to sell or gift venison, and implementing policies to increase the amount of in-state certified United States Department of Agriculture meat inspectors for game mammals;
- (2) Urge the Hawaii Department of Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture of the County of Maui to convene a joint task force to oversee a County of Maui program

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that, in coordination with the United States Department of Agriculture certified processing facilities, would aim to investigate and develop plans to make affordable the processing of locally-hunted axis deer meat and the distribution of this venison to the community; and

- (3) Request the joint task force to submit a report of the program's accomplishments and barriers to the accomplishment of the program with its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than November 30, 2025.

Your Committee has received testimony in support of this measure from Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Hawaii Farm Bureau, and five individuals. Your Committee has received comments from the Department of Agriculture.

Your Committee finds that the overpopulation of axis deer on Maui has led to the overgrazing of native plants that would otherwise aid in mitigating erosion, wildfires, and flooding. However, axis deer are a plentiful source of high-quality protein that could benefit the local economy and the citizens of the State. Your Committee further finds that an increase of in-state United States Department of Agriculture-certified meat inspectors would lower the cost of inspections for local hunters, provide a benefit to the agricultural industry in the State, and make locally hunted venison more available and safer for the community to consume. This measure urges the State Department of Agriculture and the County of Maui Department of Agriculture to take further action to address axis deer overpopulation by implementing policies, convening a joint task force to develop an affordable venison processing and distribution program, and requiring the task force to submit a report to the Legislature by November 30, 2025.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems that is attached to this report, your Committee concurs with the intent and purpose of S.C.R. No. 94, S.D. 1, and recommends its adoption.



Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Agriculture & Food
Systems,


KIRSTIN KAHALOA, Chair



