

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
Governor

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
Lt. Governor



**SHARON HURD**  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

**DEAN M. MATSUKAWA**  
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
KA 'ŌIHANA MAHI'AI  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD**  
**CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

**FEBRUARY 20, 2025**  
**2:00 PM**  
**CONFERENCE ROOM 325**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1334 HD2**  
**RELATING TO MEAT DONATION**

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 1334 HD2. The bill amends Chapter 159, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) by adding a new section "§159- Further exemptions; food donations; wild game". HB1334 HD2 proposes to exempt meat from wild game, defined as species not indigenous to the state, from inspection if the meat is exclusively to be donated by a hunter for the use or distribution by a charitable, religious, or nonprofit organization to needy persons pursuant to chapter 145 (HRS).

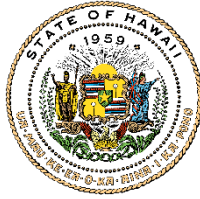
The Hawaii Department of Agriculture supports this measure and will defer to the Hawaii Department of Health as it relates to food.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAI'I | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE  
FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHANE  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES  
ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

Testimony of  
DAWN N.S. CHANG  
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on  
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Thursday, February 20, 2025  
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325, and Via Videoconference

In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 1334, HOUSE DRAFT 2  
RELATING TO MEAT DONATION

House Bill 1334, House Draft 2 proposes to exempt the donation of wild game meat, including axis deer, to a charitable, religious, or nonprofit organization to needy persons from specific laws regarding the inspection and transportation of meat. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this bill and offers the following comments.**

The disposition of game species as regulated by the Department's hunting rules, Hawai'i Administrative Rules Chapters 122 and 123, and the Hawai'i Revised Statutes, only restricts the sale or the offer for sale of any game animal or parts of the carcass of any game animal taken from any public hunting area. The Department supports allowing licensed public hunters the discretion to donate their quarry to charitable, religious, or nonprofit organizations.

While the Department regulates the taking of game animals, it does not oversee the processing or food safety aspects of meat donation. The Department defers health and safety requirements for donated wild game meat to the Department of Health.

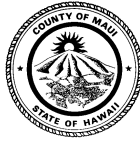
Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Council Chair  
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair  
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura

Presiding Officer Pro Tempore  
Tasha Kama

Councilmembers  
Tom Cook  
Gabe Johnson  
Tamara Paltin  
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez  
Shane M. Sinenci  
Nohelani U'u-Hodgins



Director of Council Services  
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

Deputy Director of Council Services  
Richelle K. Kawasaki, Esq.

**COUNTY COUNCIL**  
COUNTY OF MAUI  
200 S. HIGH STREET  
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793  
[www.MauiCounty.us](http://www.MauiCounty.us)

February 18, 2025

TO: Honorable David A. Tarnas, Chair  
House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: Yuki Lei Sugimura  
Councilmember

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Yuki Lei Sugimura".

DATE: February 18, 2025

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT FOR HB 1334, RELATING TO MEAT DONATION**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of this important measure. The purpose of this measure is to exempt the donation of wild game meat, including axis deer, to a charitable, religious, or nonprofit organization to needy persons from certain laws regarding the inspection and transportation of meat.

I SUPPORT this measure as it addresses several important issues, particularly for Maui County. Overpopulation of axis deer, and other wild game animals, in Maui County has resulted in severe damage to our watersheds, ecosystems, and agricultural industry. Additionally, food insecurity is a daily reality for many of our residents. By removing barriers and clarifying the process for meat donations, this bill can help to address both the overpopulation of axis deer and food insecurity in our communities.

While not the only solution to address the damage caused by axis deer, hunters do play an important role in controlling the population. These hunters utilize axis deer meat to feed their families and friends, and have long sought to also donate this lean and healthy source of protein to those in need through local food banks and other organizations.

I respectfully request your support in moving this bill forward. Thank you for this opportunity to provide my testimony on this important matter.

For the foregoing reasons, I SUPPORT this measure.



February 20, 2025

**RE: Support for HB 1334 HD2, Relating to Meat Donation**

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the committee,

On behalf of the Maui Food Bank, I express our strong support for HB 1334 HD2 Relating to Meat Donation which would exempt the donation of wild game meat or meat products, including axis deer, to a charitable, religious, or nonprofit organization to needy persons from certain laws regarding the inspection and transportation of meat.

For 30 years, Maui Food Bank has provided daily and emergency assistance to those facing food insecurity in Maui County. Maui Food Bank distributes food to families and individuals on Maui, Molokai and Lanai through direct service programs and through our network of 170 agency partners. Last year, we served an average of almost 45,000 people each month, distributing a total of 8.7 million pounds of nutritious food, including 2.3 million pounds of fresh produce.

HB 1334 HD2 removes unnecessary barriers that prevent charitable organizations from accepting and distributing wild game meat. By allowing for the donation of responsibly harvested game, we can increase food access for those in need, reducing dependency on imported proteins and strengthening local food security.

In addition to its benefits for food distribution, this bill directly supports environmental conservation efforts. The overpopulation of axis deer in Hawaii has led to significant ecological damage, including soil erosion, destruction of native plants, and agricultural losses. By allowing responsible harvesting and donation of these animals, we turn an environmental challenge into a community benefit, ensuring that excess game does not go to waste.

The Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA) exempts wild game meat, including venison, from mandatory federal inspection when donated to charitable organizations. Many states have successfully implemented similar donation programs, proving that wild game can be safely distributed to food banks without the same regulatory burdens as commercial meats. HB 1334 aligns Hawaii's policies with these federal exemptions, ensuring that valuable food resources are not discarded due to unnecessary bureaucratic restrictions.



**Maui Food Bank**  
Nourishing Lives, Feeding Futures

House Bill 1334 HD2 presents a unique and necessary opportunity to reduce food waste, fight hunger, and support conservation efforts all at once. I strongly urge the committee to support and pass this bill for the benefit of our environment and those who rely on food assistance programs across the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony,

Lisa H. Paulson  
CEO, Maui Food Bank



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759  
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921  
e-mail [info@hfbf.org](mailto:info@hfbf.org); [www.hfbf.org](http://www.hfbf.org)

February 20, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

**TESTIMONY ON HB 1334, HD2**  
**RELATING TO MEAT DONATION**

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference  
2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate, and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

**The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports HB 1334, HD2**, which provides an exemption under Chapter 159, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS), to facilitate the donation of wild game meat—such as axis deer—to charitable, religious, and nonprofit organizations serving those in need.

Across the state, invasive species are wreaking havoc on agriculture and ecosystems. Maui County's axis deer population has grown uncontrollably, fueled by abundant forage after rainfall events. These deer destroy crops and pastures, consuming any available vegetation. Similarly, feral pigs pose a serious threat—not only eating crops but also uprooting and trampling farmland, damaging pasture grasses, and promoting the spread of invasive weeds. They devastate orchards by consuming fruit, citrus, and nuts, while their rooting can kill young trees, shrubs, and vines or spread soil-based fungal diseases. Additionally, feral pigs break irrigation lines, tear agricultural nets, and damage other essential farming equipment.

Beyond agricultural destruction, unchecked feral animal populations create serious risks to livestock, public health, and the environment. As their numbers grow and food sources dwindle, malnutrition weakens them, making them more susceptible to disease. This raises concerns about the spread of livestock diseases, such as bovine tuberculosis, which has already been documented in Moloka'i due to feral pig transmission.

Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers are dedicated to increasing local food production and self-sufficiency, but they cannot succeed if feral animals continue to consume or destroy their

crops and livestock. These invasive species cause widespread economic, environmental, and public health damage—threatening native ecosystems, cultural and historic resources, and even the safety of people, pets, and wildlife. Without effective solutions, the costs and consequences will only escalate.

HRS §145D-2 (ACT 54, 2023) already establishes liability protections for individuals and entities donating food in good faith, including wild game meat, ensuring such donations can be made without fear of legal repercussions. However, despite these protections, existing meat inspection and transportation requirements under Chapter 159 have remained a significant barrier to the donation and distribution of wild game. HB 1334, HD2 resolves this issue by explicitly exempting the processing, transportation, and donation of wild game meat from these inspection requirements, provided the meat is not mixed with federally regulated meat products and is transported only between approved locations.

This bill increases access to high-quality protein sources for food-insecure individuals and families by enabling more wild game donations. Without this exemption, much of the wild game harvested by hunters goes to waste due to legal restrictions. HB 1334 allows this resource to be put to good use in feeding our community. While HRS §145D-2 provides liability protections, HB 1334, HD2 further clarifies the legal framework surrounding wild game donations, eliminating uncertainties that may currently discourage hunters and organizations from participating.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau urges support of HB 1334, HD2 to help mitigate the impact of invasive species while simultaneously addressing food insecurity.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.

**HB-1334-HD-2**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 8:41:05 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jackie Keefe	Maui Adaptation Project	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

## Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

My name is Jackie Keefe, and I am writing as an environmental advocate and the Founder & Chair of Maui Adaptation Project. We are a nonprofit that envisions a resilient Maui where ecosystems and communities thrive for generations to come. Our nonprofit began with the idea of planting native species and eradicating invasive species. As the mission developed, I learned more about the Axis Deer crisis in Maui Nui and realized what an important piece of the puzzle it is. This led to the shift from *eradication* to *management*. Eradication isn't the right mentality because Axis Deer are a renewable, sustainable food source. A good friend who runs a nonprofit focused on combatting food security and supporting circular economics introduced me to Robin Kean, who runs Maui Wild Game Management. He shared so much with me about his experience from working in that space for over a decade, and I realized that we needed to work on legislation. Everyone experiences the impacts of "deerosion," as the Maui Food & Technology Center calls it, from ranchers and farmers to our watersheds. Many folks don't realize that the Axis Deer have crossed the Pali – they are found along the slopes of Pu'u Kukui and in the gulches adjacent to Lahainaluna. We know the deer are making our food cost more and it is only a problem that we can solve together. They don't care about property lines and fences only do so much. If you ask any farmer what would help them, their first answer is that something needs to be done about the deer.

Robin and I have been having discussions with County and State officials, legislators, and advocates, and HB 1334 is a bill that was born of those discussions. He felt that if we were to pass one bill this session regarding Axis Deer, it should be this one. We need liability protections for hunters that allow for the donation of venison without the additional limitation of a USDA inspector. There is no doubt that we need more meat processing & slaughterhouse capacity, but Federal Law:

1. Dictates that Axis Deer are considered "non-amenable," meaning they are not required to be inspected by the USDA (but rather the FDA).
2. The Good Samaritan Food Donation Act of 1996 and Food Donation Improvement Act of 2023 both encourage the donation of food and grocery products to nonprofit organizations for distribution to needy individuals or for donation directly to needy individuals.

3. Recently updated guidelines by the USDA's FSIS facilitate food donation by promoting the message that food is generally able to be donated unless there is a specific safety concern.

Regardless of these federal regulations, the State of Hawai'i's DOH places extra regulations on donors. Over a decade ago, I believe in 2013 – when Robin was first starting Maui Wild Game Management - he wrote guidelines that he had approved by DOH. He quickly realized that they were limiting the work that nonprofits could do to donate meat, because the cost of bringing a meat inspector on hunts was a burden carried by the organization. He tried to request an update to these guidelines, but DOH said they wouldn't do so without legislation (even though it was not legislation that created the approved guidelines). The current State guidelines have a grey area as to whether hunters who donate meat are protected from liability. According to Federal Law, venison *does not* need to be inspected by the USDA. This is an additional barrier that has been placed on hunters in Hawai'i and it limits donation capabilities. Furthermore, the veterinarian that he brought with him found no diseases in the inspection of thousands of deer.

When you have “the axis deer conversation,” it ultimately always ends up with a discussion of meat for sale. Yes, we *absolutely* need to expand our meat processing capabilities, but that's not what this bill is about. We are strictly talking about meat donation. To address this crisis, we need a *kako'o* effort. Hunters must be granted the ability to donate meat without fear of liability. This will significantly improve the availability of fresh, local food to our communities – who are currently experiencing some of the worst food insecurity we have ever seen.

## **Environmental Benefits**

The overpopulation of axis deer is causing severe damage to Hawaii's ecosystems, including deforestation, soil erosion, and destruction of agricultural lands. Responsible harvesting of these animals helps restore ecological balance, and allowing donations ensures that this effort also benefits our communities. This is a common-sense solution that supports both conservation and food security. Local venison is in many ways more environmentally friendly than vegetarianism because it is not imported to the island.

## **Safe and Responsible Meat Donation**

Wild game meat donations have been successfully implemented in many other states, aligning with federal exemptions under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA), which does not require inspection for donated venison. HB 1334 follows proven models that allow for safe and regulated donation, ensuring that harvested meat is properly handled and distributed to those who need it most.

## **Conclusion**

House Bill 1334 represents a win-win solution for Hawaii, addressing both environmental and food insecurity challenges at no cost to taxpayers. **I urge the committee to support and pass this legislation to reduce waste, protect our environment, and provide essential food resources to our communities.**

If I have ONE comment on the bill, it's that I believe that it should be "axis deer" rather than "wild game," because axis deer do not carry the same diseases that other ungulates like boar, goats, and sheep and lumping them into one category could create a reason for DOH to implement extra regulations.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jackie Keefe

Lahaina, HI



1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 |

Honolulu, HI 96813

P: 808-533-1292 | e:

[info@hawaiiifood.com](mailto:info@hawaiiifood.com)

#### **Executive Officers**

**Maile Miyashiro**, C&S Wholesale Grocer, *Chair*

**Kit Okimoto**, Okimoto Corp., *Vice Chair*

**Jayson Watts**, Mahi Pono, *Secretary/Treasurer*

**Lauren Zirbel**, HFIA, *Executive Director*

**Paul Kosasa**, ABC Stores, *Advisor*

**Derek Kurisu**, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*

**Toby Taniguchi**, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*

**Joe Carter**, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, *Advisor*

**Eddie Asato**, Pint Size Hawaii, *Advisor*

**Gary Okimoto**, Safeway, *Immediate Past Chair*

TO: Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 20, 2025

TIME: 2pm

RE: HB1334 HD2 Relating to Meat Donation

Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, manufacturers and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

HFIA is in support of this measure. Axis deer are an invasive species and keeping the population under control is necessary in order to protect our agricultural lands and ecosystems. Axis deer can be a plentiful source of affordable locally sourced meat, which can help address food insecurity in our state. Right now there are some unnecessary impediments that prevent axis deer meat from being donated. This measure would help remove those roadblocks and allow for meat donation. We encourage the committee to pass this measure and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.



## **Testimony in Support of HB1334 – Game Meat Donation Program**

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs,

Hawaii Food+ Policy is writing in **strong support of HB1334**, which establishes a game meat donation program to increase access to locally sourced protein for food-insecure communities while supporting responsible wildlife management in Hawaii.

Hawaii faces **significant food insecurity**, with many families struggling to afford nutritious meals. At the same time, our islands are home to an **overabundance of invasive game** species, such as axis deer and wild boar, which threaten native ecosystems, agriculture, and watersheds. HB1334 offers a practical solution by creating a structured program to process and distribute wild game meat to those in need.

By passing this bill, the state will:

1. **Expand Food Access-** Wild game is a nutritious, high-protein food source that could supplement existing food donation programs, helping to feed families across Hawaii.
2. **Support Local Conservation Efforts-** Invasive species management is essential to maintaining the health of our environment. This program provides a sustainable use for animals that are culled to protect native ecosystems.
3. **Reduce Waste and Improve Efficiency-** Currently, much of the game harvested in Hawaii goes to waste due to a lack of processing infrastructure. This bill ensures that harvested meat is utilized to benefit the community.

Establishing a state-sanctioned game meat donation program aligns with Hawaii's commitment to food security, sustainability, and responsible land stewardship. I urge you to **support HB1334** and help create a system where conservation efforts directly contribute to feeding those in need.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Hawaii Food+ Policy Team

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**The Food+ Policy internship** develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2025, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students and young professionals working in the food system. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.



**COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

Thursday February 20, 2025, 2:00 P.M.

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

**HB 1334, HD2 RELATING TO MEAT DONATION**

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT**

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee:

Pūlama Lānaʻi is in **support of HB 1334, HD2**, the proposed draft legislation regarding the donation of wild game and the regulation of meat products derived from wild animals. This legislation is in alignment with our mission to build a sustainable future for Lānaʻi by preserving our culture, building economic opportunity, stewarding our lands and investing in people. It also directly supports our ongoing efforts in conservation, resource management, and community well-being.

**Pūlama Lānaʻi's Conservation Department and Game Management on Lānaʻi**

Our Conservation Department plays a vital role in ensuring the health and balance of Lānaʻi's ecosystems. One of the key responsibilities of this department is **game management**. Through active monitoring and regulation of wildlife populations, we strive to maintain sustainable game populations that contribute to both ecological balance and community benefit. Our game management practices involve a range of activities including:

- **Population Control:** Regular assessments and population control measures to ensure that game species, such as axis deer, do not negatively impact native vegetation, water resources, or other wildlife.
- **Invasive Species Management:** Addressing the impact of invasive species through targeted management programs to protect native species and preserve the integrity of Lānaʻi's natural habitats.
- **Community Engagement and Education:** Educating hunters about ethical hunting practices, conservation laws, and the importance of maintaining ecological balance through sustainable game management.

Through these efforts, we ensure that game populations are managed in a way that supports both conservation goals and the needs of the community. Our stewardship of Lānaʻi's lands and wildlife reflects our commitment to sustainable practices that benefit both residents and future generations.

**How this Legislation Supports Lānaʻi:**

- **Sustainable Resource Management:** This legislation supports responsible management of wild game by allowing hunters to donate meat to charitable organizations, under regulated conditions, while ensuring that the animals are harvested and processed in an ethical, environmentally responsible manner. This aligns directly with our conservation department's goal of managing wildlife populations in a sustainable way, while also promoting social responsibility.
- **Conservation and Community Benefits:** By facilitating the donation of wild game, the legislation strengthens our efforts to preserve Lānaʻi's fragile ecosystem while also benefiting our community. This approach to resource management provides a sustainable means to support those in need, reduces waste, and helps ensure that our island's resources are used wisely for the greater good.
- **Cultural Stewardship and Education:** This legislation reinforces our community's values by promoting ethical hunting practices and increasing awareness about wildlife management. Our education initiatives on game management and conservation directly support these values and ensure that future generations continue to honor the land.

**Long-Term Benefits:**

- **Enhanced Community Health and Sustainability:** This legislation further promotes a self-sustaining, vibrant island community where Lānaʻi residents and visitors can thrive. By enabling the donation of wild game, we foster a culture of sharing and resourcefulness, while also ensuring that the game populations are kept in balance with the island's natural environment.
- **Conservation Education:** As part of our Conservation Department, we strive to educate the public about the importance of maintaining healthy wildlife populations. The legislation provides an opportunity for greater awareness and understanding of responsible hunting and game management practices, encouraging more sustainable interactions with Lānaʻi's natural resources.

We support this draft legislation as it aligns with the objectives of our Conservation Department and our broader vision for Lānaʻi. By creating opportunities for responsible game donation while maintaining rigorous conservation and resource management practices, this legislation helps us protect and preserve Lānaʻi's unique environment, while fostering a thriving community.

Thank you for your consideration of our **testimony in support** of this important legislation. We look forward to working together to ensure a sustainable and prosperous future for Lānaʻi and beyond.



# MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS  
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 325  
Thursday, February 20, 2025 AT 2:00 P.M.

To The Honorable David A. Tarnas, Chair  
The Honorable Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

## **SUPPORT HB1334 HD2 RELATING TO MEAT DONATION**

The Maui Chamber of Commerce **SUPPORTS HB1334 HD2** which exempts the donation of wild game meat, including axis deer, to a charitable, religious, or nonprofit organization to needy persons from certain laws regarding the inspection and transportation of meat.

The Chamber would like to point out that axis deer, an invasive species that poses a continuing threat to Hawaii's environment, could provide significant quantities of meat as a protein source for nonprofit food distribution services, such as the State's network of food banks and Feed My Sheep, Inc. of Maui County. However, there is a gap between the hunters and the retailers and nonprofit services because the meat requires processing prior to distribution. For meat donation, other states such as Wisconsin and Michigan offer models that Hawaii can assess to develop processes for plan implementation and program funding, including licensing fees and other funding sources managed by wildlife agencies or nonprofits.

This bill will be one of a few major tools in controlling the over-population of Axis deer on all islands.

For these reasons we **SUPPORT HB1334 HD2** and respectfully request its passage.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap  
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.

**HB-1334-HD-2**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 1:48:47 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jared Joaquin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In Support of getting game meat to people who need!

**HB-1334-HD-2**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 2:47:25 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noel Badillo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of House Bill 1334 & Senate Bill 1230

Relating to Meat Donation

February 18,2025

To: Chair and Members of the House and Senate Committees on Agriculture

I am writing as a concerned citizen and supporter of sustainable food practices and environmental conservation to express my strong support for House Bill 1334 and Senate Bill 1230. These bills would allow for the donation of wild game meat, including axis deer, to charitable, religious, or nonprofit organizations by exempting it from certain inspection and transportation regulations.

Addressing Food Insecurity

Hawai‘i faces significant food insecurity, with many families, seniors, and individuals struggling to access high-quality protein. Wild game meat is a nutritious, lean, and locally sourced food that could provide a valuable protein source for food banks, shelters, and community programs. Instead of letting harvested game go to waste, HB 1334 and SB 1230 ensure that this resource can be used to help feed those in need.

Environmental Benefits

The overpopulation of axis deer is causing severe damage to Hawai‘i’s ecosystems, including:

- Deforestation and destruction of native plant life
- Soil erosion and damage to watersheds
- Devastating agricultural losses for local farmers

Responsible harvesting of these animals helps restore ecological balance, and allowing donations ensures that this effort also benefits our communities. These bills present a common-sense solution that supports both conservation and food security.

### Safe and Responsible Meat Donation

Wild game meat donations have been successfully implemented in many other states, aligning with federal exemptions under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA), which does not require inspection for donated venison. HB 1334 and SB 1230 follow proven models that allow for safe and regulated donation, ensuring that harvested meat is properly handled and distributed to those who need it most.

### Conclusion

House Bill 1334 and Senate Bill 1230 represent a win-win solution for Hawai‘i, addressing both environmental and food insecurity challenges at no cost to taxpayers. I urge the committee to support and pass these critical pieces of legislation to reduce waste, protect our environment, and provide essential food resources to our communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Noel Badillo

Testimony in Support of House Bill 1334 & Senate Bill 1230

Relating to Meat Donation

February 18, 2025

To: Chair and Members of the House and Senate Committees on Agriculture

I am writing as a concerned citizen and supporter of sustainable food practices and environmental conservation to express my strong support for House Bill 1334 and Senate Bill 1230. These bills would allow for the donation of wild game meat, including axis deer from Maui, to charitable, religious, or nonprofit organizations by exempting it from certain inspection and transportation regulations.

Axis Deer on Maui – A Growing Problem

The overpopulation of axis deer on Maui is a major ecological and agricultural crisis. Without natural predators, axis deer populations have expanded rapidly, causing severe damage to the environment and local farms. The unchecked growth of these herds results in:

- Deforestation and loss of native plant life
- Soil erosion and watershed contamination, impacting fresh water supplies
- Destruction of crops and agricultural lands, leading to financial hardship for local farmers

Hawai‘i must take immediate action to manage the axis deer population, and HB 1334 and SB 1230 provide a practical solution by allowing responsibly harvested game to be used for food donation rather than wasted.

### Addressing Food Insecurity

Hawai‘i faces significant food insecurity, with many families, seniors, and individuals struggling to access high-quality protein. Axis deer meat is nutritious, lean, and locally sourced, making it an excellent protein source for food banks, shelters, and community programs. Instead of disposing of harvested deer, these bills ensure that this resource can be used to help feed those in need.

### Deer Meat is Non-Amenable Under Federal Guidelines

It is important to note that under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA), venison is classified as a non-amenable species. This means that deer meat is not subject to mandatory federal inspection, unlike beef or pork. Many states have successfully implemented wild game donation programs that align with these federal exemptions, ensuring safe handling and distribution without unnecessary regulatory hurdles.

HB 1334 and SB 1230 would bring Hawai‘i’s policies in line with these federal guidelines, removing outdated barriers that prevent harvested axis deer from being donated to communities in need.

### Conclusion

House Bill 1334 and Senate Bill 1230 represent a win-win solution for Hawai‘i by addressing both environmental and food insecurity challenges at no cost to taxpayers. By enabling the responsible donation of axis deer meat, these bills will help protect our ecosystems, support local farmers, and provide essential food resources to those in need.

I urge the committee to support and pass these critical pieces of legislation to reduce waste, protect our environment, and strengthen food security in Hawai'i.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Noel Badillo

**HB-1334-HD-2**

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 6:18:21 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Todd Yukutake	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB1334

This is a win win bill where hunters can hunt, community benefits, and deer are better managed.

Mahalo

Todd Yukutake

toddyukutake@gmail.com

**HB-1334-HD-2**

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 1:17:04 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ruth Love	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you

Mrs Ruth Love