

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA 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 SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

**FEBRUARY 22, 2023
9:30 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 211**

**SENATE BILL NO. 1486 SD1
RELATING TO MEAT PROCESSING**

Chairperson Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

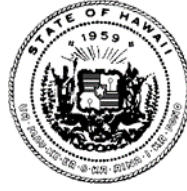
Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 1486 SD1. The bill requires the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness; Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife; and Department of Health, Food Safety Branch, in consultation with the County of Maui Axis Deer Task Force, to develop and implement a plan to expand the meat processing capacity in the State to allow for meat from axis deer and other wild game to be processed for distribution by nonprofit food distribution services by 7/1/2024. The bill also appropriates money. The Department supports the measure to promote the processing of meat in the state.

The Department notes that while it fully supports the goals of this measure, developing a plan and implementing a program of this nature by 7/1/2024 may be challenging due to the complexity of issues presented by the involvement of multiple agencies and regulations that may need changing.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



CATHY BETTS
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA
Office of the Director
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 21, 2023

TO: The Honorable Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways & Means

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: [SB 1486 SD1](#) – RELATING TO MEAT PROCESSING

Hearing: February 22, 2023, 9:30 a.m.
Conference Room 211 & Via Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the measure's intent and provides comments. DHS defers to the Departments of Agriculture, Land & Natural Resources, Health, the County of Maui, and the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness.

PURPOSE: The bill requires the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness; Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife; and Department of Health, Food Safety Branch, in consultation with the County of Maui Axis Deer Task Force, to develop and implement a plan to expand the meat processing capacity in the State to allow for meat from axis deer and other wild game to be processed for distribution by nonprofit food distribution services by 7/1/2024. Takes effect 7/1/2050. (SD1)

DHS appreciates the Legislature's innovative proposal to increase local food production, mitigate the deer population that impacts the environment, and create a distribution process for the meat to be delivered to under-resourced communities. With food prices in Hawaii

continuing to rise, Hawaii's low-income residents need access to affordable quality food. Recipients of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits can access more local produce through the "double bucks" program that increases the value of SNAP benefits. In addition, HB 1248 (companion SB1259 has yet to be heard) appropriates funds to the Department of Agriculture for the continued administration of the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program (HHFIP). Taken together, these measures will support low-income residents' food security.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

Council Chair
Alice L. Lee



Director of Council Services
Traci N. T. Fujita, Esq.

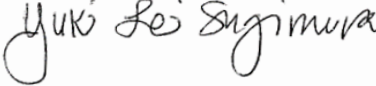
Councilmembers
Tom Cook
Gabe Johnson
Tasha Kama
Tamara Paltin
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez
Shane M. Sinenci
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura
Nohelani U'u-Hodgins

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

COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.MauiCounty.us

February 17, 2023

TO: Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Committee on Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Yuki Lei Sugimura 
Councilmember

DATE: February 17, 2023

SUBJECT: **SB 1486, RELATING TO MEAT PROCESSING**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in this important measure. The purpose of this measure is to require the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness; Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife; and Department of Health, Food Safety Branch, in consultation with the County of Maui Axis Deer Task Force, to develop and implement a plan to expand the meat processing capacity in the State to allow for meat from axis deer and other wild game to be processed for distribution by nonprofit food distribution services by 7/1/2024.

I SUPPORT this measure for the following reasons:

1. The explosion of the axis deer population in Maui County has devastated our crops and vegetation and threatens our environment. The need to mitigate the deer population has reached critical levels.
2. There is a tremendous need for expanded meat processing capacity in the state, especially in Maui County where the scarcity of processing facilities severely impacts the small ranchers and hunters.
3. The resulting plan allows for economic development, protection of our environment, and presents an opportunity to provide a viable food source to under-resourced communities.

For the foregoing reasons, **I SUPPORT this measure.**



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

February 22, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

TESTIMONY ON SB 1486, SD1
RELATING TO MEAT DONATIONS

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference
9:30 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran, 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 1486, SD1, which requires the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness; Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife; and Department of Health, Food Safety Branch, in consultation with the County of Maui Axis Deer Task Force, to develop and implement a plan to expand the meat processing capacity in the State to allow for meat from axis deer and other wild game to be processed for distribution by nonprofit food distribution services.

Across the State, various invasive species are creating havoc in agriculture as well as the ecosystems in which they exist. Maui County's Axis Deer population is a good example of nature getting out of control with populations exploding due to abundant forage following rainfall events. They continue to destroy crops and pasture lands by devouring any living vegetation as they continue to spread. Feral pigs damage crops by consuming them or by their rooting and trampling of crops. They will eat almost any crop. Feral pigs damage pasture grasses, killing desired plant species and often encouraging the growth of undesired weed species. They can also devastate orchards by consuming fruit, citrus, and nuts and their rooting can severely damage, or even kill saplings, shrubs, and vines directly or by facilitating the spread of soil-based fungal diseases. Feral pigs can also break irrigation lines, rip or tear nets, drying racks, and other agricultural structures and equipment.

These and other feral populations can pose a danger, especially as populations grow and their health is put into jeopardy due to inadequate food. Diseases that they normally tolerate will become serious debilitating illnesses that could put our domestic livestock

industry in jeopardy. Such fears are not unreasonable, as incidences such as bovine tuberculosis spread from feral pigs have been documented in Molokai.

Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers are working to provide Hawai'i with an increased level of self-sufficiency, but will not be able to do so if their products are consumed or damaged by feral animals. Axis Deer, feral pigs, and other invasive species can cause major damage to property, agriculture (crops and livestock), Hawai'i's native species and ecosystems, and Hawai'i's cultural and historic resources. They can also threaten the health of people, wildlife, pets, and other domestic animals. As Hawai'i's feral animal populations continue to expand, these damages, costs, and risks will only keep rising

Current state law specifically prohibits the inclusion of meats as a donation. Wild game can be a significant source of protein for Hawai'i's residents in need. Wild game can provide a beneficial outlet for meat harvested from invasive species and provide a tool for long-term sustainable invasive management for Axis Deer and Feral Pigs.

Several states have amended their Good Samaritan laws to use them as a tool for invasive white-tail deer management programs. Wild game meat donated under this provision does not need to undergo antemortem inspection requirements as long as stated conditions are met. Conditions for donations can be specified to allow the donation of this important protein source for our neighbors in need. Utah is the most recent state that passed such a measure and can be used as a model for Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

SB-1486-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 11:53:43 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Yoshito L'Hote | Testifying for Aina Ho'okupu o Kilauea | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

expanding meat processing in every fields is vital to address food security and also addresses irradiation of harmful game we need funding for those processors



MAUI COUNTY FARM BUREAU

PO Box 148, Kula, HI 96790
mauicountyfarmbureau.org

TESTIMONY

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

February 22, 2023
9:30 AM
Conference Room 211

SB 1486 SD1

RELATING TO MEAT PROCESSING

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

Maui County Farm Bureau (MCFB) appreciates this opportunity to testify on this important issue. MCFB is a general agriculture advocacy organization representing farm and ranch families and organizations on the island of Maui.

MCFB STRONGLY SUPPORTS SB1486 SD1, which requires the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness; Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife; and Department of Health, Food Safety Branch, in consultation with the County of Maui Axis Deer Task Force, to develop and implement a plan to expand the meat processing capacity in the State to allow for meat from axis deer and other wild game to be processed for distribution by nonprofit food distribution services.

Everyone recognizes that we have a axis deer overpopulation problem. In defense, fences are being erected to protect property. However, this does not address the need to reduce populations. Concurrently, there is a public desire to utilize the animals for beneficial use. Other states have developed programs such as "Farmers & Hunters Feeding the Hungry" <https://feedingthehungry.org/> that work and can be utilized as templates for a program for Hawaii.

These programs address the gap between the hunter and distribution to the needy. The process will require coordination as well as development of sustainable funding mechanisms. This proposal seeks to develop such a working group. A side benefit from this effort will be addressing the need for additional meat processing capacity in Hawaii, especially for multi species needs of our smaller farmers and ranchers. Cattle past their prime processing time loses value. Currently ranchers often suffer significant loss waiting for processing opportunity. Maui has a hog processing plant that will cease when the current operator retires due to conditions of the land use permit. Expansion of processing capacity will help address this problem.

Covid demonstrated the need for smaller plants. Federal funding is available for CIP needs while programs such as Feeding the Hungry provide templates for long term operation. Hawaii needs a long term strategy to manage feral wildlife populations. This is a step in that direction. MCFB respectfully requests your strong support of this measure and assistance in identifying workable strategies.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our opinion on this matter. Please contact Warren Watanabe at 8082819718 if there are any questions.



HAWAI'I FOREST INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION (HFIA)

P. O. Box 66 ❖ 'O'ōkala, HI
96774 Phone: 808-933-9411
Email: hfia@hawaiiiforest.org
Website: www.hawaiiiforest.org

Date: 02/10/2023

TO: WAM Chair Dela Cruz, WAM Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and WAM Committee Members

FROM: The Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA)

SUBJECT: In Support of SB1486 SD1 Relating to Meat Processing

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Committee Members,

On behalf of the Directors and members of the Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA), please support SB1486 SD1 Relating to Meat Processing.

Since 1989 HFIA has worked towards actualizing healthy and productive forests across the state of Hawaii. We believe that properly managing and utilizing game resources from forested lands plays a role in revitalizing Hawai'i's Forests.

Expanding the opportunities to process wild game meat, such as that of Maui axis deer, poses an opportunity to repair our ungulate burdened lands, all while feeding Hawaii's families and those in need.

Please support SB1486 SD1 to support Hawai'i's lands, Hawai'i's hunters, Hawai'i's retailers and Hawai'i's people.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Guy Cellier, Acting President

Hawaii Forest Industry Association

Established in 1989, HFIA's is a nonprofit organization founded by people committed to sustainable forest management. HFIA's mission is to promote healthy and productive forests and a sustainable forest industry through management, education, planning, information exchange, and advocacy. HFIA has over 130 members including woodworkers, landowners, sawyers, foundations, foresters, growers, educators, environmentalists, architects, millers, ranchers, and others interested in HFIA's mission and goals.

HFIA Board of Directors

Officers: Acting President/Vice-President Guy Cellier, Secretary Peter D. Simmons, Treasurer Wade Lee
Directors: Thomas Calhoun, Jeremy Campbell, Aaron Hammer, Nickolas Koch, Tai Lake, Michael Sowards, Irene Sprecher, Michael Tam, Jorma Winkler, Ron Wolfe, Aileen Yeh



Officers

Kaipo Kekona
State President

Anabella Bruch
Vice-President

Maureen Datta
Secretary

Reba Lopez
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Chapter Presidents

Madeline Ross
Kohala, Hawai'i

Odysseus Yacalis
East Hawai'i

Puna, Hawai'i

Andrea Drayer
Ka'u, Hawai'i

Chantal Chung
Kona, Hawai'i

Fawn Helekahi-Burns
Hana, Maui

Reba Lopez
Haleakala, Maui

Kaiea Medeiros
Mauna Kahalawai,
Maui

Kaipo Kekona
Lahaina, Maui

Rufina Kaauwai
Molokai

Negus Manna
Lāna'i

Brynn Foster
North Shore, O'ahu

Christian Zuckerman
Wai'anae, O'ahu

Ted Radovich
Waimanalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura
Honolulu, O'ahu

Ray Maki
Kauai

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee,

The Hawaii Farmers Union United (HFUU) is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFUU supports SB1486.**

We recognize the dire need for options to reduce reliance upon conventional protein sources, particularly in light of the climate emergency. Expanding and diversifying access to locally-sourced protein through initiatives like SB1486 are essential in order to build a more agriculturally-resilient and resource-secure food system.

The development and implementation of a plan to expand the meat processing capacity in the State to allow for meat from axis deer and other wild game to be processed for distribution by nonprofit food distribution services will advance the goals of sustainability and food security for Hawaii. Given the current circumstances, it is urgent that we act now to develop reliable, resilient, and secure sources of food. Furthermore, it will help to create job and training opportunities in rural communities and create economic opportunities in areas that have been disproportionately hard hit by the pandemic.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kaipo Kekona, President HFUU/HFUF



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

LATE

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

SB1486 SD1
RELATING TO MEAT PROCESSING

Wednesday, February 22, 2023, 9:30 AM
Conference Room 415 & Videoconference

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four county-level Cattlemen's Associations. Our member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of over 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB1486 SD1** which requires the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness; Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife; and Department of Health, Food Safety Branch, in consultation with the County of Maui Axis Deer Task Force, to develop and implement a plan to expand the meat processing capacity in the State to allow for meat from axis deer and other wild game to be processed for distribution by nonprofit food distribution services by 7/1/2024.

Expanding access to processing and allowing for the donation of wild game to under-resourced communities allows us to feed these communities high quality sources of protein, while also creating an outlet for efforts to remove invasive species such as deer, goat, and pigs from the environment. Unmanaged ungulates damage our ecosystems and cause detriment to farming and ranching operations. Expanding access to meat processing will help us to meet both environmental and social needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director



SB-1486-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2023 1:20:32 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Randy Cabral | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Strongly support

SB-1486-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/19/2023 1:57:32 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Marian Huff | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

February 22, 2023 – 9:30 a.m. – Via Videoconference

SB1486 SDI– SSCR302

EXPANSION OF MEAT PROCESSING CAPACITY

Aloha Chairs Lorraine R. Inouye and Mike Gabbard and Committee Members:

I add my support to those who have already sent in letters or given verbal testimony from the coalition of agencies that have formed with the purpose of taking an issue that is destroying our farms and ranches at a time when we need more local food and support for our farmers and ranchers than ever. Previous testimony is on the records.

Here is a story that gets to the core of it for those of us who live on maui...one of the farming families that is really close to me and is giving so much to the feeding of our keiki and support for our school food service personnel just lost a member who decided he couldn't make it anymore on maui because the axis deer were destroying the land on which they lived....it was the complete overnight devastation by axis deer of their entire corn crop that finally caused him to leave maui and move to montana. Years ago, my father would travel north with his friends from where we lived in minnesota and shoot deer during the open season so that we could fill our freezer for the winter and still eat fresh/frozen produce.

What has happened to us that we can't deal with this problem that we have had for a LONG TIME and then turn around and talk about feeding our low income folks including our kupuna and keiki? The food is there.....we just need to access it.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Marian Huff

SB-1486-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 12:43:10 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| John R. Gordines | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

February 22, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

TESTIMONY ON SB 1486, SD1

RELATING TO MEAT PROCESSING

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

9:30 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

I support HB 1486, SD1, which requires the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness; Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife; and Department of Health, Food Safety Branch, in consultation with the County of Maui Axis Deer Task Force, to develop and implement a plan to expand the meat processing capacity in the State to allow for meat from axis deer and other wild game to be processed for distribution by nonprofit food distribution services.

Across the State, various invasive species are creating havoc in agriculture as well as the ecosystems in which they exist. Maui County's Axis Deer population is a good example of nature getting out of control with populations exploding due to abundant forage following rainfall events. They continue to destroy crops and pasture lands by devouring living vegetation as they spread. Feral pigs damage crops by consuming them or their rooting and trampling. They will eat almost any crop. Feral pigs damage pasture grasses, killing desired plant species and often encouraging the growth of undesired weed species. They can also devastate orchards by consuming fruit, citrus, and nuts and their rooting can severely damage, or even kill saplings, shrubs, and vines directly or by facilitating the spread of soil-based fungal diseases. Feral pigs can also break irrigation lines, rip or tear nets, drying racks, and other agricultural structures and equipment.

These and other feral populations can pose a danger, especially as populations grow and their health is put into jeopardy due to inadequate food. Diseases they normally tolerate will become serious debilitating illnesses that could jeopardize our domestic livestock industry. Such fears are not unreasonable, as incidences such as bovine tuberculosis spread from feral pigs have been documented in Molokai.

Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers are working to provide Hawai'i with an increased level of self-sufficiency but will not be able to do so if their products are consumed or damaged by feral animals. Axis Deer, feral pigs, and other invasive species can cause major damage to property, agriculture (crops and livestock), Hawai'i's native species and ecosystems, and Hawai'i's cultural and historic resources. They can also threaten the health of people, wildlife, pets, and other domestic animals. As Hawai'i's feral animal populations continue to expand, these damages, costs, and risks will only keep rising

Current state law specifically prohibits the inclusion of meats as a donation. Wild game can be a significant source of protein for Hawai'i's residents in need. Wild game can provide a beneficial outlet for meat harvested from invasive species and provide a tool for long-term sustainable invasive management for Axis Deer and Feral Pigs.

Several states have amended their Good Samaritan laws to use them as a tool for invasive white-tail deer management programs. Wild game meat donated under this provision does not need to undergo antemortem inspection requirements as long as stated conditions are met. Conditions for donations can be specified to allow the donation of this important protein source for our neighbors in need. Utah is the most recent state that passed such a measure and can be used as a model for Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

SB-1486-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 2:36:43 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Jimmy Gomes | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I support SB1486 Per Hawaii Cattlemen's Council Testimony

SB-1486-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 5:17:14 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| James Crum | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

So, you may wonder why a (nearly) lifelong vegetarian is supporting this bill? It's because many of my friends and neighbors are in agriculture, and I farm, and I know the devastating impact of feral ungulates on ag production in Hawaii. However, what is even more frustrating for many of us on the islands is when we are trying to address those problems, and also make a living, but see that once an animal is killed, it can be nearly impossible to harvest and bring that animal to market because of the limited processing facilities on the islands. Let's find a way to eliminate the feral ungulates from places where they should not be and deliver them to places where they are welcomed, but in ways that are efficient, healthy, and legal. It's a win-win.

SB-1486-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2023 10:23:05 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Frederick M. Mencher | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

I support HB 1486, SD1, which requires the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with the Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness; Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife; and Department of Health, Food Safety Branch, in consultation with the County of Maui Axis Deer Task Force, to develop and implement a plan to expand the meat processing capacity in the State to allow for meat from axis deer and other wild game to be processed for distribution by nonprofit food distribution services.

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These and other feral populations can pose a danger, especially as populations grow and their health is put into jeopardy due to inadequate food. Diseases they normally tolerate will become serious debilitating illnesses that could jeopardize our domestic livestock industry. Such fears are not unreasonable, as incidences such as bovine tuberculosis spread from feral pigs have been documented in Molokai.

Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers are working to provide Hawai'i with an increased level of self-sufficiency but will not be able to do so if their products are consumed or damaged by feral animals. Axis Deer, feral pigs, and other invasive species can cause major damage to property, agriculture (crops and livestock), Hawai'i's native species and ecosystems, and Hawai'i's cultural and historic resources. They can also threaten the health of people, wildlife, pets, and other domestic animals. As Hawai'i's feral animal populations continue to expand, these damages, costs, and risks will only keep rising

Current state law specifically prohibits the inclusion of meats as a donation. Wild game can be a significant source of protein for Hawai'i's residents in need. Wild game can provide a beneficial outlet for meat harvested from invasive species and provide a tool for long-term sustainable invasive management for Axis Deer and Feral Pigs.

Several states have amended their Good Samaritan laws to use them as a tool for invasive white-tail deer management programs. Wild game meat donated under this provision does not need to undergo antemortem inspection requirements as long as stated conditions are met. Conditions for donations can be specified to allow the donation of this important protein source for our neighbors in need. Utah is the most recent state that passed such a measure and can be used as a model for Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Sincerely,

Frederick M. Mencher

SB-1486-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2023 8:13:40 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/22/2023 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| J Ashman | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I support this measure. Thank you.