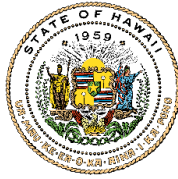


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



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

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Testimony of
DAWN N. S. CHANG
Chairperson

Before the Senate Committee on
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Wednesday, March 29, 2023

1:01 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 224

In consideration of
**SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 92/SENATE RESOLUTION 85
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, DEPARTMENT OF LAND
AND NATURAL RESOURCES, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, THE CITY AND
COUNTY OF HONOLULU, AND THE COUNTY OF HAWAII, TO COLLABORATE
TO ESTABLISH AND IMPLEMENT A FIVE-YEAR PILOT PROGRAM TO
MITIGATE AND CONTROL THE SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN THE POPULATION
OF FERAL CHICKENS, ROOSTERS, AND PIGS.**

Senate Concurrent Resolution 92/Senate Resolution 85 recognize that feral chickens, roosters, and pigs have become a nuisance in suburban and urban areas, and their populations and impacts are increasing. It requests the Department of Agriculture, Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department), Department of Health, the City and County of Honolulu, and the County of Hawaii to collaborate to establish and implement a five-year pilot program to mitigate and control feral chickens, roosters, and pigs. **The Department offers the following comments.**

The Department controls populations of feral chickens (including hens and roosters) and pigs on lands under its jurisdiction, with a heavy emphasis on fencing forested lands to prevent deforestation and the spread of invasive plant species and Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death (ROD) from pigs and other hoofed animals. However, the Department does not have the capacity to implement nuisance chicken and pig control on private and county lands. The Department believes efforts to suppress feral chicken and pig populations in suburban and urban areas are best led by the respective counties. The Department notes that rats, cats and mongooses pose an even larger threat to native and endangered forest birds, seabirds, shorebirds, and migratory birds as they eat adult

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FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

birds, chicks, and eggs, and their range is from the shoreline all the way up into the upland forests. There are examples of entire native bird colonies in Hawai'i being killed by a single cat.

Cats also pose a particular threat to native species in Hawai'i as their feces carries a parasite that carries the disease toxoplasmosis - a leading cause of death in the endangered Hawaiian monk seal. Toxoplasmosis quickly causes inflammation and organ failure in Hawaiian monk seals. When it rains, stormwater picks up toxoplasmosis from dissolved cat feces in yards, streets, sidewalks, drainage canals, and in nature and empties into the ocean waters surrounding the islands. Twenty percent (20%) of households in Hawai'i own cats, and half of those cat-owning households allow their cats outside, which means that their feces plus the feces of stray cats, is impacting the marine environment through rain runoff. Toxoplasmosis is in the water column and in Hawaiian monk seal prey (crab, shrimp, lobster, fish, squid, octopus). Toxoplasmosis has also been found to affect and harm Hawaiian spinner dolphins, and 'Alalā (Hawaiian crow) which prey on mice and smaller animals that have toxoplasmosis from eating cat feces or drinking affected water.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide comments on these measures.