

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

March 28, 2023

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

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: [HB 606 HD1](#) – RELATING TO MEAT PROCESSING.

Hearing: March 30, 2023, 10:05 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 other state agencies, to develop and implement a plan by 7/1/2025 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 non-profit food distribution services. Appropriates funds. Effective 6/30/3000.
(HD1)

The HD1 amended the measure by:

- (1) Postponing the date by which the Department of Agriculture must develop and implement the plan from July 1, 2024, to July 1, 2025;
- (2) Changing its effective date to June 30, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

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 HD1 (currently referred to WAM) 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.

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

MARCH 30, 2023
10:05 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 211

HOUSE BILL NO. 606, HD1
RELATING TO MEAT PROCESING

Chairperson Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 606 HD1. 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 7/1/2025. The bill also appropriates funds. The Department supports the measure to promote processing and donation of meat in the state.

The Department appreciates that the implementation date of the measure was amended from the initial 7/1/2024 to 7/1/2025 because implementing a plan by 7/1/2024 may be challenging due to the multiple agencies and regulations involved. The department is hopeful this new timeline is achievable however, the department cautions it has recently taken two years to restore a state meat inspection program in another state. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

KEKUHAUPIO R. AKANA
Managing Director



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 SOUTH HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.mauicounty.gov

March 28, 2023

TO: Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Richard T. Bissen, Jr., Mayor
Rogerene K.M. Arce, Director of Agriculture

DATE: March 28, 2023

SUBJECT: SUPPORT OF HB 606, HD1, RELATING TO MEAT PROCESSING

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of this important measure. The purpose of this bill is to develop and appropriate funds for the expansion of the State's meat processing capacity to allow for meat from axis deer and other wild game to be distributed by non-profit food distribution services.

Our administration **SUPPORTS** this measure for the following reasons:

1. Axis deer is an invasive species that poses a continuing threat to Maui County, and despite a current ongoing effort to control the growing deer population, there are an estimate of 60,000 deer roaming Maui County. Axis deer mitigation is a serious concern in Maui County because they eat cattle food sources and farmer's crops, cause soil erosion from over grazing, and threaten native species.
2. This measure supports Hawai'i's need to expand meat processing facilities and to accommodate wild game and axis deer meat distribution.
3. This measure would support the use of axis deer and other wild game to be distributed by non-profits for food distribution, which would support fighting hunger in Maui County.

For the foregoing reasons, we offer our **SUPPORT** of this measure.

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2023 2:48:49 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Choon James	Testifying for CountryTalkStory.com	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT

HB 606, HD1 (SSCR1151)

This is more profitable and sensible direction to take in containing the over-population from axis deer, pigs, and so on.

Please expand from just axis deer and other wild game to be processed for distribution by non-profit food distribution services.

Venison jerky and other added values can further be packaged and sold for profit. This could provide a new cottage industry and provide gainful employment from the natural resources of Hawaii.

It's much better than using DLNR resources to poison the axis deer on ground or shooting them from helicopters.

Choon James

ChoonJamesHawaii@gmail.com

CountryTalkStory.com



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: 03/28/2023

TO: WAM Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante and WAM Committee Members

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

SUBJECT: In Support of HB606 HD1 Relating to Meat Processing

Dear Chair Inouye and Committee Members,

On behalf of the Directors and members of the Hawai'i Forest Industry Association (HFIA), please support HB606 HD1 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 an important role in revitalizing Hawai'i's Forests.

Expanding the opportunities to harvest, process and distribute wild game meat poses an opportunity to remove some of the burden ungulates have on our forest lands, all while feeding Hawai'i's families and those in need.

Please support HB606 HD1.

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



MAUI COUNTY FARM BUREAU

PO Box 148, Kula, HI 96790
mauicountyfarmbureau.org

TESTIMONY

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

March 30, 2023
10:05 AM
Conference Room 211

HB 606 HD1

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 HB 606 HD1, requiring the Department of Agriculture, in collaboration with other state agencies 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 7/1/2025.

Everyone recognizes that we have an 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.

HB 606 HD1 includes a very important aspect in addressing the problem which is development of grassroots support. The measure defines the process by which the program is to be developed, recognizing the role of the various parties. It additionally addresses funding needs.

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



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

March 30, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

TESTIMONY ON HB 606, HD1
RELATING TO MEAT PROCESSING

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference
10:05 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 606, HD1, which requires the department of agriculture, in collaboration with other state agencies, 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 non-profit food distribution services by 7/1/2025.

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.



Officers

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Maui

Kaipo Kekona
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Rufina Kaauwai
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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 HB606.**

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 HB606 are essential in order to build a more agriculturally-resilient and resource-secure food system.

Expanding the meat processing capacity in the State to allow for meat from axis deer and other wild game to be processed for distribution by non-profit food distribution services is essential to the success and vitality of both the agriculture industry and the non-profit food distribution services. With increased and improved processing options, our farmers, ranchers, and local communities have the opportunity to access and benefit from local meat.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kaipo Kekona, President HFUU/HFUF



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

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

HB606 HD1
RELATING TO MEAT PROCESSING

Thursday, March 30, 2023, 10:05 AM
Conference Room 211 & 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 HB606 HD1** which requires the department of agriculture, in collaboration with other state agencies, 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 non-profit food distribution services.

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, sheep, 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



LATE



MAUI
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
VOICE OF BUSINESS

**HEARING BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM 211
THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 2023 AT 10:05 A.M.**

To The Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
The Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair
Members of the committee on Ways and Means

SUPPORT FOR HB606 HD1 RELATING TO MEAT PROCESSING

The Maui Chamber of Commerce **supports HB606 HD1** which requires the department of agriculture, in collaboration with other state agencies, 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 non-profit food distribution services by 7/1/2024.

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.

For these reasons, we **support HB606 HD1**.

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-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2023 12:08:39 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carolyn Auwelo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha my name is Carolyn Auwelo and I am a Range Conservationist with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. I am testifying as a private individual. I strongly support this bill.

Wildlife overpopulation does severe damage to our islands agricultural lands and ecosystems by overgrazing and causing severe soil erosion, less water infiltration and loss of the land's productive capacity as grazing land. Hawaiian society values the meat resource these animals are seen as. This bill will help support solutions that are more socially acceptable to our communities.

Thank you for supporting this bill.

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2023 2:36:12 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Theresa M Thompson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB606.

Mahalo,

Theresa Thompson

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2023 3:54:41 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jill Coombs	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, and thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure. This bill would support our local economy by expanding meat processing facilities and also allow for better utilization of the axis deer population. **I support HB 606, HD1**

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2023 9:12:26 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

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

Comments:

Strong support

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2023 11:00:39 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 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 606 HD1, which requires the department of agriculture, in collaboration with other state agencies, 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 non-profit food distribution services by 7/1/2025.

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 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

LATE

HB-606-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/29/2023 1:21:06 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/30/2023 10:05:00 AM

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

Comments:

I am in support for bill HB606