

MAR 07 2025

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

MAUI AXIS DEER CONTROL AND VENISON INITIATIVE.

1 WHEREAS, eating locally grown food and meats are known to
2 provide a benefit to the local economy and to our citizens; and
3

4 WHEREAS, the people of the State deserve to have access to
5 the many local foods, including locally hunted meat, available
6 on the islands; and
7

8 WHEREAS, the overpopulation of axis deer has been a great
9 detriment to Maui by overgrazing native plants that would
10 otherwise aid in mitigating erosion and fire and flood effects;
11 and
12

13 WHEREAS, axis deer are a plentiful source of high-quality
14 delicious protein; and
15

16 WHEREAS, other states have successfully implemented
17 programs that process and distribute locally hunted meat to
18 their community, for example Pennsylvania's Hunters Sharing the
19 Harvest Program, which yearly donates over one hundred thousand
20 pounds of venison to over five thousand food banks; and
21

22 WHEREAS, the existing United States Department of
23 Agriculture requirements severely limit the financial and
24 practical feasibility of the State's local hunters to
25 successfully maintain a reasonably low population of axis deer
26 and to distribute venison to the community; and
27

28 WHEREAS, an increase of in-state United States Department
29 of Agriculture certified meat inspectors would lower the cost of
30 inspections for local hunters, provide a benefit to the
31 agricultural industry in the State and make locally hunted



1 venison more available and safer for the community to consume;
2 now, therefore,

3

4 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
5 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2025, the
6 House of Representatives concurring, that the State Department
7 of Agriculture and the County of Maui Department of Agriculture
8 are urged to take further meaningful action to address the axis
9 deer overpopulation, including:

10

11 (1) Implementing policies to make United States Department
12 of Agriculture-certified in-state inspectors,
13 certified inspections, and certified processing
14 facilities more accessible, capable, and affordable
15 for local hunters to utilize in order to sell or gift
16 venison; and

17

18 (2) Implementing policies to increase the amount of
19 certified United States Department of Agriculture in-
20 state meat inspectors for game mammals; and

21

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State Department of
23 Agriculture and County of Maui Department of Agriculture are
24 urged to convene a joint task force to oversee the County of
25 Maui program that, in coordination with the United States
26 Department of Agriculture certified processing facilities, would
27 aim to investigate and develop plans to make affordable the
28 processing of locally hunted axis deer meat and the distribution
29 of this venison to the community; and

30

31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the joint task force is
32 requested to submit a report of the program's accomplishments
33 and barriers to the accomplishment of the program with its
34 findings and recommendations, including any proposed
35 legislation, to the Legislature no later than November 30, 2025;
36 and

37

38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
39 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the United States
40 Secretary of Agriculture, Administrator of the United States
41 Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service,
42 Deputy Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service,



1 Governor, Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Chairperson
2 of the Board of Land and Natural Resources, Mayor of the County
3 of Maui, each member of the Maui County Council, and Director of
4 the County of Maui Department of Agriculture.

5
6
7

OFFERED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brent M. Roberts", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and includes a large flourish at the end.