

MAR 07 2025

SENATE 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
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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
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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
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13 WHEREAS, axis deer are a plentiful source of high-quality
14 delicious protein; and
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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
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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
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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
32 venison more available and safer for the community to consume;
33 now, therefore,
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1 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-third
2 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2025,
3 that the State Department of Agriculture and the County of Maui
4 Department of Agriculture are urged to take further meaningful
5 action to address the axis deer overpopulation, including:

6
7 (1) Implementing policies to make United States Department
8 of Agriculture-certified in-state inspectors,
9 certified inspections, and certified processing
10 facilities more accessible, capable, and affordable
11 for local hunters to utilize in order to sell or gift
12 venison; and
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14 (2) Implementing policies to increase the amount of
15 certified United States Department of Agriculture in-
16 state meat inspectors for game mammals; and
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18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State Department of
19 Agriculture and County of Maui Department of Agriculture are
20 urged to convene a joint task force to oversee the County of
21 Maui program that, in coordination with the United States
22 Department of Agriculture certified processing facilities, would
23 aim to investigate and develop plans to make affordable the
24 processing of locally hunted axis deer meat and the distribution
25 of this venison to the community; and
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27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the joint task force is
28 requested to submit a report of the program's accomplishments
29 and barriers to the accomplishment of the program with its
30 findings and recommendations, including any proposed
31 legislation, to the Legislature no later than November 30, 2025;
32 and
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34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
35 Resolution be transmitted to the United States Secretary of
36 Agriculture, Administrator of the United States Department of
37 Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service, Deputy Director
38 of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Governor,
39 Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Chairperson of the
40 Board of Land and Natural Resources, Mayor of the County of
41 Maui, each member of the Maui County Council, and Director of
42 the County of Maui Department of Agriculture.



S.R. NO. 77

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OFFERED BY:

Herbert W. Reardon

