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Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the House Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs Committee,

The Hawai'i Farmers Union is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFU offers comments on HB2152.**

HFU appreciates the inclusion of strict liability for twice the value of lost livestock. This financial deterrent is a major step toward protecting the livelihoods of local food producers. We also support the refinement in this draft that focuses on actual injury or destruction, ensuring that the legal protections for farmers are clear and balanced. These changes address the immediate need for owner accountability and encourage more responsible pet management in our rural communities.

However, we remain concerned that the current version is too dependent on a slow and expensive judicial process. Requiring a farmer to file a formal complaint in District Court creates a significant barrier to justice, as legal fees and time away from the farm can easily outweigh the value of the animals lost. We urge the Committee to simplify this by creating an administrative penalty track that allows for immediate restitution orders through animal control or state agencies, bypassing the need for a full court trial unless a dog owner chooses to appeal.

Finally, we ask the Committee to refine the "Habitual Perpetrator" framework and the Agricultural District limitation. Tying livestock protection to complex criminal statutes provides less relief to a farmer than a straightforward, enforceable fine system. Furthermore, the bill's protections should apply to any land where livestock are legally raised, regardless of zoning, to ensure that farmers in Rural or other districts are not left vulnerable. By making the restitution process faster and broader, this bill will provide the timely, practical relief our agricultural community needs to stay viable.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin
Advocacy Director
Hawai'i Farmers Union

HB-2152-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 10:34:06 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I support HB 2152.

Mahalo,

Theresa

HB-2152-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 8:38:33 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Roland Yartzoff	Hawai'i Sheep and Goat Association	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha JHA Committee:

I wish to make three points regarding HB2152 HD1.

First, the AGR Committee has voted to amend 142-74 (b)(1) by removing "persistently pursuing or harassing" from the text. I point out that ruminants can be killed by nothing more than persistent pursuit. The primary way ruminants regulate their body temperature is by panting. If they are chased around persistently, then they will eventually die. On a hot day, death could happen in less than ten minutes. Persistent pursuit is as life threatening as biting. I ask that "persistently pursuing or harassing" be restored to the text.

Second, the AGR Committee has added language which restricts applicability of the bill to the agricultural district classified pursuant to chapter 205. I submit that the bill should be applicable to any district in which keeping livestock is allowable. For example, it could be useful to use goats to remove vegetation in a conservation district. While they are in that district, their owner should have the recourse accorded by this bill.

Third, concern has been expressed regarding tort. 142-74 section 3 (g) is a verbatim replication of California law: Food and Agriculture Code Division 14, Article 1, Chapter 8, Section 31502. This statute has withstood rigorous scrutiny and critique.

I thank you for your attention to this matter.

Cordially,

Roland Yartzoff, board president

Hawai'i Sheep and Goat Association



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 24, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

TESTIMONY ON HB 2152, HD1
RELATING TO DOG ATTACKS

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Poepoe, 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 2152, HD1, which strengthens owner liability and enforcement mechanisms related to dog attacks on livestock within the agricultural district.

Livestock production is a critical contributor to Hawai'i's food security, rural economy, and land stewardship. Uncontrolled dogs continue to pose a serious and ongoing threat to livestock producers across the State. Attacks on cattle, sheep, goats, poultry, and other farm animals can result in devastating financial losses, operational disruption, and significant animal suffering. A single incident can impact years of breeding and herd management decisions.

HB 2152, HD1 appropriately narrows its application to land or premises within the agricultural district, ensuring that the measure is tailored to protect bona fide agricultural operations. The bill clarifies owner responsibility, strengthens deterrence, and provides livestock producers with clearer legal remedies when preventable harm occurs.

Importantly, HB 2152, HD1, incorporates a structured judicial process that requires court review and findings before the destruction of a dog in certain circumstances. This framework balances due process protections with the need to prevent repeated livestock losses.

Dog attacks on livestock are often preventable and place an unfair burden on farmers and ranchers who are already operating under tight margins and rising costs. Strengthening accountability promotes responsible pet ownership while reinforcing Hawai'i's commitment to supporting local food production.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.



Hawaiian Humane Society
People for animals. Animals for people.

Date: Feb. 23, 2026

To: Chair Rep. David Tarnas
Vice Chair Rep. Mahina Poepoe
and Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Submitted By: Stephanie Kendrick, Vice President of Community Engagement
Hawaiian Humane Society, 808-356-2217

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 2152, HD1: Relating to Dog Attacks
Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2025, 2 p.m., Room 325 & Videoconference

On behalf of the Hawaiian Humane Society, thank you for considering our support for House Bill 2152, HD1, which clarifies owner liability and increases penalties and enforcement mechanisms for dog attacks on livestock.

As the oldest and largest animal welfare nonprofit in the state of Hawai'i, the Hawaiian Humane Society advocates for the humane treatment of all animals. While our work has come to be most associated with pet animal protection, our earliest campaigns established ethical standards of treatment for working animals and livestock. We support this bill and its goal of protecting livestock.

We are grateful to the introducer, Rep. Matthias Kusch, as well as to Agriculture & Food Systems Chair Rep. Cory Chun, for working with us to remove language that may have allowed dogs to be destroyed erroneously and without recourse for their owners. We believe the HD1 being heard by this committee provides a much stronger tool for protecting animals.

There is a measure moving in the Senate that would further protect livestock by prohibiting the training of dogs to attack wild pigs. We are supporting the progress of SB3043 Relating to Hunting and we hope it will make it over for consideration by this committee.

We support the adoption of HB2152, HD1. Mahalo for your consideration.



February 23, 2026

To: Chair David A. Tarnas, Vice Chair Mahina Poepoe and the House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Subject: **HB2152 HD1**, Relating to Dog Attacks

Aloha,

I am writing to **support the intent of HB2152 HD1 with comments**. This measure clarifies owner liability and increases penalties and enforcement mechanisms for dog attacks on livestock.

Farmers who raise animals play an important role in addressing food security in Hawai'i and strengthening the economy. Damages caused by dog attacks can create economic loss and emotional stress on livestock farmers. If a dog attack takes place and a judge determines the loss was caused by a certain dog, this measure would say that the dog owner is "liable in damages to the person injured for twice the value of the property injured or destroyed." There needs to be accountability when dog attacks happen, and HB2152 would help to ensure that.

One change I would make to the bill is to the definition of "habitual agricultural crime perpetrator", which includes a person "who has been found liable four or more times under section 142-74" (HB2152, 2026). Being found liable three or more times is sufficient. Additionally, we have concerns about the bill allowing the destruction of dogs, without criminal penalty, if the dog were to be found in the act of injuring or destroying livestock on agricultural land. We support increasing protections for agricultural workers and their livestock however, have concerns that this could lead to inhumane treatment of dogs without sufficient cause.

I agree that dog owners need to be held liable for damages caused by their pets, but I also recognize that attacks from stray dogs are also the reason for loss of livestock, so perhaps more regulation around stray animals should be evaluated as well.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure and thank you for your consideration.

Mahalo,
Sydney Haas & the Food+ Policy Team
#fixourfoodsystem

The Food+ Policy internship develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2026, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students and young professionals working in the food system. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair

Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

HB2152 HD1

RELATING TO DOG ATTACKS.

Tuesday, February 24, 2026, 2:00 PM
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair , and Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports HB2152 HD1** which clarifies owner liability and increases penalties and enforcement mechanisms for dog attacks on livestock.

While we support HB2152, we have comments on the HD1 version of this bill. The proposed amended version deletes the original provision that a dog may be destroyed for "persistently pursuing or harassing livestock". Persistent pursuit of an animal does cause harm and leads to overheating and stress, which are all adverse impacts on livestock. As this law has been established in California where dog attacks are an issue, we support adopting this approach here in Hawaii where wild dogs are an increasing safety issue. We respectfully request that the language be reinstated to include language that would allow a dog to be destroyed if the dog is found in the act of persistently pursuing or harassing livestock.

Ranchers frequently deal with dogs harassing livestock. Such actions not only negatively impact the business of rancher but also poses a safety threat. Incidents have been reported in which wild dogs are aggressive to both humans and livestock. Wild dogs hunt in packs and have been known to kill dozens of animals in a single incident, not for food, but for sport.

Ranchers use low-stress animal handling for animal health and well-being, but the introduction of unmanaged dogs increases stress. Additionally, the loss of one animal equates to more than just one animal, as cows have the potential to produce calves for several years and those losses should be accounted for as part of the penalty.



Clarifying dog owner liability will motivate dog owners to take more initiative in securing their dogs and preventing damage, and will also allow livestock producers to dispatch wild dogs as a safety measure.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four county-level Cattlemen's Associations. Ranchers produce a high-quality protein and are the stewards of almost 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or nearly 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director

HB-2152-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 8:22:39 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erika Catanese	KiniKai Ranch LLC and Hawaii Sheep and Goat Association	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Sir or Madame,

I respectfully request returning to the original version of HB2152, as it is based on the science of livestock **physiology, animal behavior and the protection of Hawaiian livestock producers.**

I am a shepherd and have rescued many sheep following repeat dog attacks. We must have protections from repeat offenders, as once a dog or pack of dogs has found a herd, they will return, as it is in their natural behavior to do so.

The amendment (inserted below) states “*act of injuring or destroying livestock*”. Would *injuring* include the running of herds to exhaustion for which they perish after the dog has left the land? Would *injuring* include the abortion of fetuses from ewes who were overstressed and lose their fetuses in the days following their pursuit or harassment? Would *injuring* include lower productivity of the livestock over time due to stress? Will weights coming in lower at slaughter be the required evidence to prove injury?

The “*act of injuring*” is ambiguous and can lead to litigation time and costs when every livestock manager is already working overtime and with little income in return. They simply can’t afford litigation due to ambiguity in the statute. This amendment as written is problematic.

In addition, I am concerned about the amendment of “*on land or premises in the agricultural district classified pursuant to chapter 205*”. There is a growing trend in having livestock graze non-agricultural land for fire management practices or underneath solar array installations. This reduces the carbon footprint of installations and reduces fire risk where lands cannot be mowed. These livestock producers also need protections from repeat pursuits or harassments.

The proposed amended version is:

142-74 (b)

Any person may destroy any dog in cases where the dog is found in the act of injuring or destroying livestock on land or premises in the agricultural district classified pursuant to chapter 205 not owned or possessed by the owner of the dog.

No civil or criminal action shall be maintained for destroying any dog pursuant to this subsection.

It is my hope that you will reconsider using the original version (included below) of HB2152, 142-74 (b), as it is inclusive of the science of animal physiology and canine behavior.

The original version is:

142-74 (b)

Any person may destroy any dog in any of the following cases:

- (1) The dog is found in the act of injuring, destroying, or persistently pursuing or harassing livestock on land or premises not owned or possessed by the owner of the dog; or
- (2) The person has proof that conclusively shows that the dog has been recently engaged in injuring or killing livestock on land or premises not owned or possessed by the owner of the dog.

No civil or criminal action shall be maintained for destroying any dog pursuant to this subsection.

As a dog and sheep rescuer, animal welfare is of utmost importance to me, while also maintaining protections for Hawaiian ranchers livelihoods.

Sincerely,

Erika Catanese

KiniKai Ranch LLC

HSGA Board Secretary

HB-2152-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/20/2026 6:53:21 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support

2152 HB RELATING TO DOG ATTACKS.

If this what it takes to hold dog/pet owners accountable and responsible for any liability. Killing "pet pigs" and such for prize monies?

HB-2152-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2026 4:12:17 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STRONG SUPPORT!!!

HB-2152-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 9:51:28 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kealii Pang, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Dr. Keali'i Pang, and I am the Board President of Ka'ala Farm, Inc., a Native Hawaiian-serving nonprofit in Wai'anae. We have served our community for over 50 years with a focus on food security and restoration. I am writing in STRONG SUPPORT of HB2152, HD1.

The Reality of the Risk: The February 8th Massacre

On February 8, 2026, Ka'ala Farm suffered a devastating loss when an unrestrained dog entered our agricultural-zoned property and destroyed our entire flock of sheep. Eleven animals were killed. For a farm like ours, these animals are not "pets"; they are livestock partners essential to our land stewardship. They graze invasive fuels to prevent wildfires that threaten the entire Wai'anae hillside. Their loss is a setback for community safety and our agricultural mission. While we accepted the owner's apology, the current laws do not reflect the gravity of this disruption to our food system and land management.

Technical Alignment with HD1

HB2152 HD1 provides the necessary legal teeth to protect agricultural operations. I specifically support the following amendments to HRS §142-74:

- **Strict Liability and Double Damages (Subsection a):** By requiring owners to pay twice the value of the property destroyed, the bill acknowledges the "hidden costs" of losing livestock—the loss of future breeding, the loss of ecosystem services (like fire grazing), and the cost of disposal and emotional trauma.
- **Protection During an Active Attack (Subsection b):** During our incident, our staff had to intervene to stop the massacre. This bill provides clear legal immunity for those forced to neutralize a dog found in the act of destroying livestock. This is a common-sense protection for farmers and their staff.
- **Expedited Judicial Response (Subsections e & f):** Currently, dangerous dogs can remain a threat to neighbors for months during a legal battle. The HD1 language requiring a summons return date within two to six days ensures that a judge can act quickly to order the destruction of a proven dangerous animal before it strikes again.

- Joint and Several Liability (Subsection g): Attacks often involve multiple dogs from different owners. Holding all owners jointly and severally liable ensures that the victim is made whole regardless of which dog bit which animal.
- Defining Livestock (Subsection i): Explicitly including "sheep" and "animals raised for agricultural production or value" ensures that multi-purpose animals—like our fire-grazing sheep—are fully protected under the law.

Conclusion

Livestock production is a pillar of Hawai‘i’s food security and land stewardship. We cannot ask our farmers to invest in the *‘āina* if we do not provide them with a secure legal environment to protect their animals from uncontrolled predators.

I respectfully urge the Committee to PASS HB2152 HD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share our story and support this vital measure.

Respectfully submitted,

Keali‘i Pang, Ph.D. Board President, Ka‘ala Farm, Inc.

I own over 150 sheep in Hawaii County and have grazed them at various locations, including Kona, to mitigate fire hazards near Hualalai Elderly, University of the Nations, Coconut Grove, and Pottery Terrace. The current language in HB2152 HD1, particularly the amendment stating, “(a) If any dog, while on [private property] land or premises in the agricultural district classified pursuant to chapter 205 without the consent of the owner or person in possession of that [property,] land or premises, injures or destroys any...,” does not adequately protect small ruminants on these grazing lands.

Key Points to Consider

a) Clarification on Grazing Areas: Unlike other grazing services that move small ruminants into fire mitigation zones, my sheep remain in one location for fire hazard reduction, which is unlikely to fit the wording in HB2152 HD1. Because these areas may not be adequately protected, it is crucial that they remain classified under the broader definition of "private property."

b) Risk of Non-visible Injuries: Even if dogs do not visibly injure sheep, prolonged chasing can cause significant stress and casualties among the flock, particularly among pregnant ewes and does. This stress can result in losses to mothers and their unborn babies. The fact that injuries may be unobservable does not diminish their impact on small ruminants and their well-being.





This is my story:

A sheep attack occurred on agricultural land in the Honokaa area on July 28, 2021. The police report number is 21-061831.

Upon examination by an animal control officer, this dog had one of my sheep's ear tags in its belly.

The dog was shot and killed by the witness to the sheep attack.

When I asked for the police report, they had approached the "former" owner of the dog, who claimed it was no longer his dog. The owner's name was redacted from the police report, and all witnesses later declined to provide me with the "former"

owner's name.

As a result of this attack, some were killed outright, others were euthanized, and others later succumbed to their injuries. This resulted in 16 deaths.

The veterinarian was unable to address the medical needs of the remaining sheep, accepting only the four most critical cases. Over the next three weeks, I made several trips, each an hour each way, to administer antibiotic injections and apply ointment to more than 20 other injured sheep.

This is the bill for two sheep.

The total loss I incurred from my time, veterinary expenses, and animal losses amounts to \$25,000. This figure includes lambs from a full-blooded Dorper sheep that were killed in a

separate attack in the Puna area. The sire, imported from California, had the potential to establish a foundational line of purebred Dorper sheep, making this loss particularly significant.

Veterinary Associates Inc.
P.O. Box 839
Kamuela, HI 96743
808-885-7941

INVOICE

FOR: Thema Black
75-5851 Kuakini Hwy 165
Kailua-Kona, HI 96740
(541) 401-8797

Printed: 07-29-21 at 9:53a
Date: 07-29-21
Account: 15359
Invoice: 162021

Date	For	Qty	Description	Net Price	
07-28-21	Sheep (NO LEFT)	1	Urgent Care*	99.00	
07-28-21		1	QOL Exam + Service*	86.00	
07-28-21		1	Tranquilization / Sedation*	32.00	
07-28-21		1	Goat Mix: Ket/Ace/Torb per ml	13.05	
07-28-21		10	Beuthanasia-D Solution Per cc*	22.10	
07-28-21		1	Invoice Complete*	0.00	
07-28-21	Sheep (small ca)	1	Urgent Care*	99.00	
07-28-21		1	Examination*	65.00	
07-28-21		40	Laceration-Suture/Min.*	256.00	
07-28-21		1	Antibiotic Injection-IM/SUB-Q*	12.90	
07-28-21		1	STEROID/ Anti-inflammatory Inj - IV*	22.90	
07-28-21		2	Caprine Clostridial Cd/Tetanus*	41.20	
07-28-21		0.50	Banamine(Flunixin)50 Mg/ml Inj. Per cc*	10.82	
07-28-21		0.60	Goat Mix: Ket/Ace/Torb per ml	11.83	
07-28-21		1	Tranquilization / Sedation*	32.00	
07-28-21		1	Polyflex (250 Mg/ml) Per cc*	10.45	
07-28-21		0.60	Excede per cc*	6.84	
07-28-21		1	Penrose Drain 1/4**	6.47	
07-28-21		1	Hospitalization: MEDICAL/SURGICAL*	67.00	
07-28-21		1	DRAIN REMOVAL 8/2/2021 @ 930 AM*	0.00	
07-28-21		1	SUTURE/STAPLE REMOVAL 8/11/2021 @ 900 AM*	0.00	
07-29-21			Discover payment	-935.54	
	Old balance	Charges	Tax	Payments	New balance
	0.00	894.56	*40.98	935.54	0.00

Next appointment for **Sheep (small carrier)** Qty
08-02-21 At: 9:30a With: SR. Tech.

HB-2152-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 1:56:10 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shannon Matson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

My father was killed by dogs in Ocean View in August of 2023. Two and a half years later our family has still not seen any accountability of consequences for the dog owners. I am in strong support of any and all laws that can be enacted to make our community safer from dog attacks. Dogs that attack and harm livestock also can and do attack humans. Please continue to seek out ways to improve, clarify, and strengthen our laws on this important public safety issue.

Also please remember, in these sorts of cases while the dogs probably DO need to be put down, it's ultimately the dog OWNERS who should be held responsible and must face appropriate consequences or they will just end up owning more dogs and letting them stray and harm other animals and people in the future.

Mahalo,

Shannon Matson

Hawai'i Island Resident