

DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMER SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA LAWELAWE KUPA
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

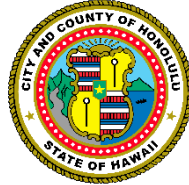
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March 17, 2026

The Honorable Chris Lee, Chair
The Honorable Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair
and Members of the Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts

The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair
The Honorable Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair
and Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

State Capitol, Conference Room 224
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Lee, Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Richards,
Members of the Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts, and Members
of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment:

SUBJECT: H.B. No. 2561, H.D. 2 - Relating To Feral Animals
HEARING: Friday, March 20, 2026, 1:03 p.m.

The City and County of Honolulu, Department of Customer Services (CSD),
appreciates the opportunity to testify in **support** of H.B. No. 2561, H.D. 2, which would
add a new chapter to the Hawaii Revised Statutes regarding feral chickens.

In addition to administering the City's feral chicken mitigation contracts that
support humane capture and disposal services, CSD's Customer Care section serves
as the primary point of contact for public complaints related to feral chickens. These
complaints frequently involve excessive noise, sanitation issues, attraction of other
pests, and impacts to public facilities and neighborhood quality of life.

H.B. No. 2561, H.D. 2 provides important statutory clarity by designating feral
chickens on public lands as a controllable pest for purposes of public health and

Testimony for H.B. No. 2561, H.D. 2
March 17, 2026
Page 2

nuisance prevention. The measure strengthens existing local rules by prohibiting the feeding, abandonment, or intentional support of feral chickens on public lands or private property, including feeding or placing chickens in such areas, and establishing clear enforcement authority and civil penalties. The bill complements existing county practices and does not expand enforcement beyond current roles.

While the measure does not include an appropriation, the clear standards and enforcement tools established by H.B. No. 2561, H.D. 2 support more consistent, coordinated, and humane management of feral chickens on public lands and private property.

For these reasons, CSD **supports** H.B. No. 2561, H.D. 2 and appreciates the Legislature's consideration of this practical and targeted approach to addressing an ongoing public nuisance issue.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on H.B. No. 2561, H.D. 2.

Sincerely,

/s/ Kimberly M. Hashiro
Director



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 20, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS

**TESTIMONY ON HB 2561, HD2
RELATING TO FERAL ANIMALS**

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
1:03 PM

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Lee, Vice-Chairs Richards and Inouye, and Members of the Committees:

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 2561, HD2, which establishes a framework to address feral chicken populations on public lands in cities with a population of three hundred thousand or more.

Feral chickens remain a persistent issue across the state, particularly in agricultural areas, where they damage crops, spread weeds, attract pests, and pose public health and safety concerns. HFB has consistently supported reasonable and practical efforts to manage feral chicken populations in ways that protect agriculture, communities, and the environment.

HB 2561, HD2 appropriately focuses on public lands and complements existing county ordinances. The measure designates feral chickens on public lands as a public nuisance and controllable pest, while prohibiting actions that contribute to population growth, such as feeding or abandoning chickens.

We support this targeted approach. Activities such as feeding, dumping, or relocating chickens often exacerbate feral populations and shift impacts onto neighboring agricultural lands and communities. Addressing these behaviors is a practical and necessary step toward better management.

We also appreciate that the measure establishes enforcement mechanisms and graduated penalties, while allowing coordination between state and county agencies and partners. Additionally, the appropriation to support the humane handling and disposition of captured chickens is an important component to ensure effective, responsible implementation.

As this measure moves forward, HFB encourages continued emphasis on practical implementation. Long-term success will depend not only on enforcement, but also on public education, consistent application of rules, and adequate resources for agencies responsible for managing feral populations.

Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers are working to increase local food production and self-sufficiency, but these efforts are undermined when feral animal populations continue to damage crops, infrastructure, and ecosystems. Addressing feral chickens is important for protecting agriculture, public health, and the environment.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

STRONG OPPOSITION TO H.B. 2561 H.D.2
Submitted by Brian Burns
President and Founder, Trooper's Chicken Rescue

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is **Brian Burns**, and I am the **President and Founder of Trooper's Chicken Rescue**, a veteran-led 501(c)(3) nonprofit based on O'ahu dedicated to humane chicken rescue, rehabilitation, and long-term solutions to feral chicken overpopulation. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong opposition** to **H.B. 2561 H.D.2**.

I respectfully urge this Committee to reject this measure because it focuses on the most visible symptoms of the problem while failing to address its most serious root causes. As drafted, this bill emphasizes restriction, punishment, and post-capture response, yet it does not create the kind of humane, preventive, and coordinated framework necessary to reduce feral chicken populations in any lasting way. The measure prohibits feeding on public lands, imposes escalating civil penalties, and requires prior state or county approval for certain rescue-related acts. In practice, this approach risks penalizing compassionate intervention while leaving the real drivers of the problem insufficiently addressed.

One of the most serious root causes this bill does not meaningfully confront is **cockfighting and the broader cruelty pipeline surrounding it**. Cockfighting is not separate from the feral chicken issue. It contributes directly to the breeding, exploitation, dumping, abandonment, and disposability of birds. Chickens are intentionally bred, selected, conditioned, transported, injured, discarded, and too often released or abandoned when no longer considered useful. This cycle contributes to continued overpopulation while also normalizing serious cruelty toward animals.

The harm caused by cockfighting goes beyond the individual birds involved. It creates a culture in which animals are treated as disposable, where violence toward animals is normalized, and where the public is left to deal with the downstream consequences. Rescuers and community members encounter injured, abandoned, traumatized, or neglected birds that have clearly suffered from abuse, neglect, or exploitation. These are not abstract concerns. They are real-world consequences seen on the ground by those engaged in humane rescue efforts every day.

There is also a broader community harm when cruelty is left inadequately addressed. When animal abuse, organized fighting activity, and related neglect are visible or weakly enforced, it sends the wrong message to our communities and especially to youth. It undermines compassion, accountability, and respect for life. If the State is serious about reducing the feral chicken population, then it must prioritize enforcement against illegal breeding, organized cockfighting, abandonment, and cruelty. H.B. 2561 H.D.2 does not do that in any meaningful way.

Instead, this bill places greater burden on the people trying to help humanely. Punishing feeding on public lands through escalating fines is wrong. In many real-life rescue situations, feeding is not reckless support of overpopulation. It is a humane tool used to gain the trust of frightened, injured, abandoned, or vulnerable birds so they can be safely contained and rescued. A blanket

punitive approach fails to account for the realities of humane intervention and risks discouraging the very actions that often prevent suffering.

The bill also requires rescuers to have prior approval from the State or county before certain rescue-related acts may occur. That requirement may appear orderly on paper, but it does not reflect how emergencies actually happen. Rescue work does not occur on a government timetable. Animals in distress cannot wait for administrative approval, especially after hours, on weekends, or in immediate danger. A rescuer responding to an injured bird in crisis should not be forced to choose between delaying aid and risking violation of the law. In real-world emergency situations, this framework is unworkable.

I also want the Committee to know that I have personally reached out to every member of the House Agriculture Committee in an effort to help solve this problem properly, collaboratively, and humanely. I did not receive any responses. Trooper's Chicken Rescue and our army of volunteers are not standing on the sidelines. We are pleading with the State to partner with us and with the broader rescue community to build humane, practical, and lasting solutions. Those of us doing this work on the ground should be viewed as partners in problem-solving, not as obstacles or afterthoughts.

A real solution must address root causes. That means prioritizing enforcement against cockfighting, cruelty, illegal breeding, and abandonment. It means supporting humane rescue infrastructure, coordinated intervention, sanctuary capacity, and partnerships with nonprofits and volunteers already doing the work. It means creating pathways for collaboration rather than imposing policies that may criminalize compassion and delay rescue. It means building a strategy centered on prevention, humane management, and long-term population reduction rather than relying primarily on fines and control measures after the fact.

Hawai'i can and should do better than legislation that punishes feeding, burdens rescuers, and sidesteps the deeper systems fueling this crisis. This is not just a nuisance issue. It is an animal welfare issue, a community values issue, and a public policy issue that requires a serious and humane response.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to **oppose H.B. 2561 H.D.2** and instead work with rescues, volunteers, nonprofits, and community stakeholders to develop a comprehensive plan that addresses the true root causes of feral chicken overpopulation: **cockfighting, abandonment, cruelty, unmanaged breeding, and lack of humane rescue capacity.**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,
Brian Burns
President and Founder
Trooper's Chicken Rescue

Officers

Kaipo Kekona
State President



Christian Zuckerman
Vice-President

Maureen Datta
Secretary

Reba Lopez
Treasurer

Chapter Presidents

Kelii Gannet
Kohala, Hawai'i

East Hawai'i

Puna, Hawai'i

Ka'u, Hawai'i

Maureen Datta
Kona, Hawai'i

Gina Lind
Hāna, Maui

Mason Scharer
Haleakalā, Maui

Kaiea Medeiros
Mauna Kahālāwai,
Maui

Kaipo Kekona
Lahaina, Maui

Kilia Avelino-Purdy
Moloka'i

Negus Manna
Lāna'i

India Clark
North Shore, O'ahu

Christian Zuckerman
Wai'anae, O'ahu

Rachel LaDrig
Waimānalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura
Honolulu, O'ahu

Natalie Urminska
Kaua'i

Aloha Chairs Lee & Gabbard, Vice Chairs Inouye & Richards, and Committee Members,

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 supports HB2561.**

Feral chickens have long been a source of frustration and detriment to farmers and residents. They damage crops and contribute to noise pollution, affecting the livelihood of Hawaii's farmers and quality of life for urban residents. By designating feral chickens as a controllable pest and prohibiting their intentional support or release on public lands, this bill acknowledges the adverse impacts of feral chickens and takes substantial measures to mitigate these effects. The establishment of fines and authorized enforcement agencies will ensure that these regulations are effectively upheld and that the necessary actions are taken to control the feral chicken population.

Establishing clear guidelines and penalties for abandonment and support of feral chickens represents a pragmatic approach to lessen their impact while promoting effective management practices. Supporting HB2561 aligns with the goals of preserving Hawaii's agricultural resources and maintaining the well-being of its communities, ensuring a harmonious coexistence between public spaces, urban living, and farming activities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin
Advocacy Director
Hawai'i Farmers Union

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 2:15:27 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Natalie Pornngam	Testifying for Kaimuki Business Owners	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representative Sayama

I am writing to express my deep outrage and opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561, including the proposal to classify chickens on public land as pests.

These bills promote violence and cruelty as public policy. That is not who we are as Hawai'i.

Our 'āina is not something to dominate or destroy. It is a living system that deserves respect, care, and compassion. All living beings who share this land are worthy of humane treatment.

Killing is not the approach we want from our leadership. It does not reflect our culture, our values, or the meaning of aloha. Violence carried out in the name of the government is still violence, and it teaches the wrong lesson to our keiki and our communities.

Hawai'i should be leading with compassion, innovation, and mālama 'āina, not bloodshed. These bills move us in the opposite direction and damage trust between the people and those elected to serve them.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 and to support humane, nonviolent, community based solutions instead.

Our islands deserve better.

With respect and aloha,

Natalie Pornngam(Kaimuki 21)

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 6:14:12 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cathy Goeggel	Testifying for Animal Rights Hawai'i	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The language of HB2561 would, if it becomes law, allow widespread uncontrolled slaughter of chickens. There is no way of enforcing it adequately.

If you are serious about controlling the large numbers of feral chickens , consider making cockfighting a felony and put the chicken fighters out of business permanently.

For far too long, this body has ignored the seriousness of the derbies and the attendant activities - gambling, prostitution, cruelty to animals, and inuring children to thinking that it's okay to break the law.

Mahalo.



Soup and Friends Animal Rescue opposes HB2561 HD2.

Soup and Friends Animal Rescue (“SFAR”) is a grassroots group focused on the rescue and rehabilitation of abused and abandoned animals in Honolulu. SFAR has saved countless animals over the past several years, including, but not limited to dogs, cats, chickens, birds, caterpillars, and snails—two dogs, three cats, and one hen of which are kept forever in the rescuers’ household. SFAR also dedicates its work toward the Trap-Neuter-Return-Manage practice of a multi-generational cat colony in the neighborhood. As a rough estimate over the past year, SFAR has spent over \$10,000 of volunteer money on rescue operations of feral and stray animals, most recently focusing on chickens in need. Rescuers and community members previously submitted testimony in opposition to HB2561 in its various iterations, with HB2561 HD2 seeing over 110 pieces of oppositional testimony compared to approximately 10 in support when it reached the House Finance Committee. Despite the overwhelming opposition to the bill and while noting the numerous specific issues community members had with the bill, House Finance passed it without any substantive amendments. We are concerned that this Legislature **does not** consider or evaluate the opinions of the community in the committees’ decision making process. What justification could any committee possibly have to pass a bill essentially with a 10:1 ratio of opposition to support other than the chair, vice chair, and members predetermined their position without any attention to what their constituents actually want? We urge this Senate to truly listen to community members’ testimonies and our proposed solutions, because we actually have them developed for long-term reprieve.

Chickens are prolific breeders. Unlike cats, which may be spayed or neutered by cat colony leaders (another effort that requires time, labor, and money), chicken rescuers do not have any method of sterilizing the birds. According to One Living Sanctuary¹, wild hens can lay around 10-15 eggs per year. Although feral chicks are usually culled by cars, cats, and other predators, the population of feral chickens will naturally grow on its own, not because of feeders or rescuers providing them with food. Researching and developing sterilization techniques and strategies to deploy is a worthwhile use of this Legislature’s resources to enact a similar program as the cat-specific TNR practice.

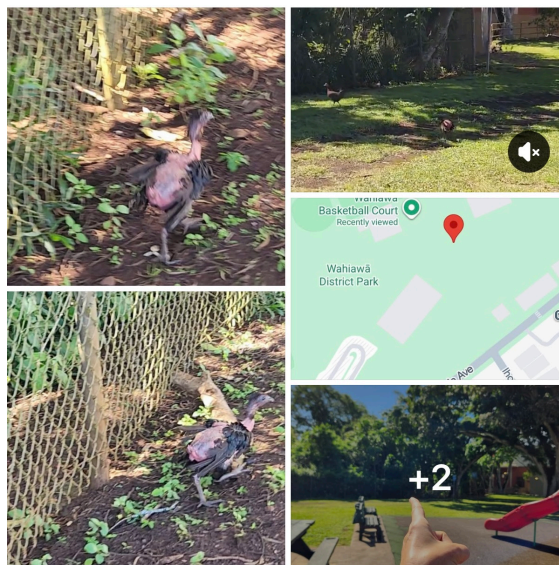
To catch a chicken for rehabilitation or rehoming purposes, rescuers must gain the chicken’s trust. Trust is built on consistent feeding and presence in the chicken’s environment. In the event a chicken is particularly injured or requires quick removal due to bad weather, dangerous environmental conditions, or human or animal predators in the area, at least two rescuers are needed to conduct safe and successful trapping. Chickens, even injured or compromised ones, are extremely fast, running 9 mph on average and pivoting directions with ease. They are also acutely aware of sudden movements, which makes trapping them with nets or cages particularly difficult. However, when a rescuer gains a chicken’s trust after constant feeding and care, the chicken is more likely to let its guard down and be trappable. Feeding on a consistent basis is key: rarely any stray or feral animal will come to a rescuer without trusting food or resources are within reach. HB2561 HD2 also requires previous approval by an unidentified State or

¹ <https://onelivingsanctuary.org/egg-facts>

County agency to provide rescue resources to chickens. However, even after testifiers requested clarification on what the approval process or oversight agencies would be, previous committees did not offer any further information. At the very least if this step is required, rescuers must be given blanket approval to conduct their efforts. When a chicken is in desperate need of assistance, there is no time to fill out paperwork, wait for lengthy or slow government processes to provide an approval or denial, and actually conduct the rescue operation. This process must be clarified and detailed if it is included in the bill's language.

Chicken abuse is on the rise throughout the State—a disturbing increase prolifically noted on Facebook groups and Instagram pages. SFAR has led or assisted with some of the worst cases of violence toward chickens we've seen. For example, SFAR has been rehabilitating a severely abused hen named Plucky for the past few weeks. A Facebook user discovered Plucky running through Wahiawā District Park with a broken foot, bloody and gaping wound on her back, and 80% of her feathers manually plucked from her body. She was bloody, bright red, and terrified. SFAR found Plucky, watched and fed her for over one hour, and gained her trust enough to capture her and immediately take her to Feather and Fur Animal Hospital. Plucky was put on multiple antibiotics and pain killers and is still being treated by these medications along with wound care every day. For three visits to Feather and Fur, SFAR has paid over \$1,500, and spends hours every day and night cleaning her wound and giving her medicines. At first, Plucky was extremely difficult to look at as we cannot imagine the brutal violence she suffered at a community member or members' hands. The people who torture and antagonize chickens are our neighbors, coworkers, students, and your constituents. We are terrified to imagine what Hawai'i will look like in 5-10 years as these levels of violence continue and increase with younger children now engaging in this distressing abuse of animals. As dedicated animal rescuers, we believe the rising violence toward chickens from children engaging in street torture and chicken fighting and organized cockfighting by their family members is the true issue this Senate should focus on, **NOT** those of us who rescue chickens' mangled, bleeding, and broken bodies after they're dumped by the aforementioned community members.

Is there anyone near Wahiawā district park who can catch & care for this severely abused chicken? Appears to have a foot/leg injury causing it to limp in addition to having had more than half its feathers yanked out and wounds I can't really assess as it won't let me get close! I am not able to catch or care for it due to owning multiple dogs which will likely kill it. Chick kept running behind fence near playground where finger is pointing in 5th pic. Photos taken 2/25/26 at 10:30am





Plucky, our rescue hen

Prohibiting feeding and supporting feral chickens will not cull chicken populations, and will instead make removing and rehoming chickens to safer locations impossible. Everyone is impacted by feral rooster crowing, and yet rescuers attempt to help while others complain and don't want to assist with solving the problem. If this Senate truly wants to solve the "overpopulation" of feral chickens, we believe solutions must be developed in a group setting. While there are many generous and caring community members who accept and rehabilitate chickens on their private properties, we are running out of space to treat and home feral chickens in need. We suggest the Legislature convene a group of organized rescuers along with other agencies and organizations to brainstorm and establish true solutions such as a sanctuary for feral chickens instead of slapping a band-aid like this bill on the overpopulation issue. A dedicated sanctuary is the only real solution to the noise problem while maintaining a humane environment for these animals that are essential to the culture and history of Hawai'i. At the very least, a working group of

rescuers and other relevant stakeholders must be convened to evaluate indefinite, real solutions like a sanctuary that address all concerns.

Soup and Friends Animal Rescue again opposes HB2561 HD2.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 8:46:00 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Valéry Atkinson	Testifying for Rubber Boots Rescue	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TO: Chair Gabbard, Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committees **FROM:** Valéry Atkinson, Founder of Rubber Boots Rescue **MEASURE:** HB2561, HD2 **POSITION:** STRONGLY OPPOSE **HEARING:** Wednesday, 02-25-26, 2:00 PM (Room 308)

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Inouye, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Valéry Atkinson and I am the founder of Rubber Boots Rescue. I am writing to urge these committees to **hold** HB2561, HD2. While this bill is presented as a solution for land management, it is an inefficient strategy that ignores the root of the problem and encourages a cycle of abuse.

A Flawed Land Management Strategy Declaring chickens as a controllable pest in Section 3 does nothing to manage the population on our lands. In my neighborhood, I witness chicken-fighting on a near daily basis. This is not just an animal issue; it is a community issue where adults are teaching children that this violence is normal. Catching birds that have already been dumped is a circular expense that fails to address the human activity causing the overpopulation. I have personally rescued countless birds after they have been dumped on the side of the road once they are no longer useful for fighting.

By labeling these birds as pests, the State is only justifying this continued cruelty and encouraging the next generation to treat living beings as disposable trash, while not solving the land management issue, and in fact exasperating it by justifying the continued practice of abuse and abandon.

The Rescue Trap and Resource Management Rescuers are not the problem; we are the ones cleaning up the results of this abandonment. Section 4d requires rescuers to get prior approval from the State to save an animal, yet there is no state infrastructure or budget to manage this process. This creates a bureaucratic trap that effectively bans the free labor of independent rescuers who manage this crisis at zero cost to the taxpayer.

Conclusion We should be investing in the enforcement of existing animal cruelty laws to stop the fighting and dumping at the source. Creating a new pest designation only penalizes compassion and ignores the daily reality of organized abuse in our communities.

I respectfully urge you to hold HB2561, HD2.

Mahalo, Valéry Atkinson

Animal Law Section
A Section of the Hawai'i State Bar Association



Chair: Savannah Sherman, Esq.
hsbaanimallaw@gmail.com

Aloha Chairs Lee and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Inouye and Richards,

The Animal Law Section respectfully **opposes** HB2561 HD2. This bill creates more danger to our community than it solves. It increases the risk of violence against animals and humans, takes crucial police resources, and presents new sanitation concerns. Further, promoting animal cruelty goes against our state's cherished cultural value of respect for all beings.

The bill's designation of chickens as "controllable pests" provides ambiguous language that may be used to authorize the killing of feral chickens by private citizens. On its face, this seems to imply that citizens may take actions they deem reasonable to control chickens, including lethal measures. If true, this would impact not just chickens, but our children and the community as a whole. Children who witness violence towards animals are shown to have adverse social impacts and a heightened risk for future violent behavior.¹ While wild chickens may cause issues, allowing people to freely kill them opens the door for increased violence and harm to the overall community.

Further, creating a prohibition on the feeding of wild chickens will likely result in increased calls to law enforcement with reports of citizens feeding chickens. This will consume police time and resources that could have been spent attending to more pressing matters.

Finally, this bill presents a risk to sanitation and public health. If citizens take the controlling of feral chickens into their own hands, we will have the new issue of the disposal of chicken carcasses. People will also likely be handling chickens and carcasses more frequently than before, which is especially concerning in areas of dense human population. When chickens die naturally, they tend to isolate themselves from others beforehand.² Allowing the killing of chickens will likely result in more carcasses out in the open around areas of human activity.

This testimony represents the views of the Animal Law Section only and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Hawaii State Bar Association as a whole.

Respectfully,

Savannah Sherman, Esq.
Animal Law Section Chair

¹ See Roshni Trehan Ladny, et al., *Traumatized Witnesses: Review of Childhood Exposure to Animal Cruelty*, Journal of Child & Adolescent Trauma, Vol. 13, Issue 4, Pg. 527-37 (Jul. 2019).

² See Ashlyn Snyder, et al., *Sickness Behavior in Chickens*, University of Maryland Extension FS-1178 at 4 (Sept. 2021), [https://extension.umd.edu/sites/extension.umd.edu/files/publications/89.%20Sickness Behavior in Chickens Extension FS1178.pdf](https://extension.umd.edu/sites/extension.umd.edu/files/publications/89.%20Sickness%20Behavior%20in%20Chickens%20Extension%20FS1178.pdf).

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 11:44:51 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Bellisle	Testifying for Aloha Bird Rescue	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB2561 and urge you to reject this measure.

While I understand the concerns surrounding the growing population of feral chickens, this bill takes a misguided approach that risks promoting inhumane treatment rather than responsible, compassionate solutions. By labeling chickens as “pests” and focusing on enforcement and penalties, HB2561 opens the door to actions that may lead to unnecessary suffering and cruelty.

Animals, even those considered nuisances, deserve humane treatment. This bill does not establish clear, enforceable standards to ensure that any population control methods are carried out ethically. Without strong safeguards, there is a real risk that individuals may take matters into their own hands in ways that cause harm and violate the spirit of existing animal cruelty protections.

Additionally, feral chickens are part of Hawai‘i’s unique cultural and environmental landscape. Many residents and visitors value their presence, and any management approach should reflect a balance between community concerns and humane stewardship.

Instead of punitive measures, I encourage the legislature to invest in proven, humane alternatives such as:

- Managed feeding restrictions combined with public education
- Humane trapping and relocation programs
- Partnerships with animal welfare organizations
- Long-term population control strategies that do not rely on lethal methods

HB2561, as written, prioritizes enforcement over compassion and fails to provide a responsible, humane framework for addressing this issue. We can and should do better.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask you to vote NO on HB2561.

Thank you for your consideration.

Good afternoon, my name is Amber Canavan, representing People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals and our more than 23,000 members and supporters in Hawaii. I am writing in opposition of House Bill 2561 HD2, which would classify chickens as pests on public land.

House Bill 2561 will not fix the overpopulation or abandonment of chickens and will not provide them with the care or help they need. Instead, it will prolong their suffering while they continue to reproduce with one another, creating an endless cycle with no real solution in place. There are reputable sanctuaries in Hawaii that can properly care for the chickens and provide guidance to help manage free-roaming chicken populations.

Killing chickens by gassing them with CO2 gas causes a prolonged, painful death as the gas slowly suffocates them, and they desperately try to escape. Chickens feel pain, fear, and joy just like the dogs and cats we share our homes with. They enjoy companionship, defend their young from predators, can recognize more than 100 different faces, and use more than 30 types of vocalizations to communicate with other chickens.

Please vote no on this bill and work with reputable animal sanctuaries to develop an effective and humane management plan for free-roaming chickens.

Sincerely,

Amber Canavan
Associate Director of Vegan Campaigns
PETA

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 11:54:43 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Celeste Walker	Testifying for Troopers Chicken Rescue	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I deeply oppose this inhumane and cruel bill. Allowing citizens to kill innocent and vulnerable animals is diabolical. Chickens and Roosters are a part of the aina. A part of our Hawaiian culture. They are not an inconvenience to be killed. This bill indicates that rehabbers such as myself will no longer be able to rescue, feed and heal injured chickens and roosters. That's not right. It's just unconscionable to tell caring bird rehabbers that they cannot help an innocent and vulnerable animal. Again I strongly and whole heartedly oppose this bill.



Aloha Animal Sanctuary
P.O. Box 4030
Kaneohe, HI 96744
info@alohasanctuary.org

To: Senate Committees on Agriculture and Environment (AEN) and Water and Land (WTL)

March 19, 2026

Aloha Chairs and Members,

I am writing on behalf of our diverse community of more than 100 volunteers, leaders, and directors who are deeply committed to animal welfare and promoting a sustainable and compassionate approach in Hawai'i. We respectfully oppose HB2561 HD2, which would classify feral chickens on public land as a pest, prohibit feeding them, and establish fines for violations. The bill also requires prior approval for certain activities involving these animals, including rescue efforts.

Our Sanctuary is dedicated to fostering compassion for all animals through a sustainable, love-based approach. In our seven years of operation, we have witnessed firsthand the power of compassion in strengthening community, serving the 'āina, and nourishing the hearts and minds of Hawai'i's keiki. We firmly believe in compassion-centered education grounded in respect for the land and the animals who inhabit it.

We recognize the challenges of managing the wild chicken population within our unique ecosystem. However, we urge lawmakers to consider non-lethal, humane approaches. Requiring prior authorization for rescue activities would create practical challenges for community members and organizations who provide care, rehabilitation, or other humane interventions. Nonviolence, respect, compassion, and sustainability should remain the foundation upon which public policy decisions are made.

We respectfully ask whether the State has the infrastructure to respond to potentially hundreds of daily calls regarding chickens in need of rescue or humane euthanasia. Wildlife rehabilitators care for the sickest and most vulnerable birds—those who have been abused, neglected, or are disabled and unable to survive on their own. Animal rescuers are not the source of this problem.

With respect, this bill is shortsighted and risks promoting a culture that disregards our natural environment and the animals within it. It is estimated that tens of thousands of chickens are bred annually in Hawai'i for cockfighting. Focusing legislative efforts on penalizing rescuers and compassionate community members, rather than addressing the root causes of overpopulation and illegal breeding, raises serious concerns about policy priorities.

The proposed fines—up to \$250 for a first violation of feeding a wild chicken, \$500 for a second violation within one year, and \$1,000 for a third or subsequent violation—are comparable to penalties under Honolulu's ordinance addressing cockfighting and related equipment, which carries fines of \$250 to \$1,000 or imprisonment of up to 30 days. Penalizing acts such as feeding a chicken at a similar level to cockfighting is deeply troubling.



Aloha Animal Sanctuary
P.O. Box 4030
Kaneohe, HI 96744
info@alohasanctuary.org

We acknowledge that sanitation, noise, and overpopulation present legitimate concerns. However, rather than addressing the symptoms, we urge the Legislature to focus on the root causes, including the uncontrolled breeding and importation of thousands of chickens associated with cockfighting activities.

Penalizing acts of compassion—such as humane rescue, rehabilitation, or feeding hungry animals—does not advance the well-being of our society. We ask lawmakers to consider the broader and long-term impacts this legislation may have on our community, ethical standards, and cultural values. Complex challenges require thoughtful, comprehensive solutions. Simplistic approaches risk creating unintended and more serious consequences.

We are here to be part of a constructive solution— one that protects our ecosystem while also upholding the moral and social health of our communities.

Mahalo nui loa,

Aloha Animal Sanctuary Board of Directors

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 11:06:49 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathy Custer	Testifying for Aloha Sitters & On-Call Kupuna Care	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing on behalf of hundreds of care providers working with Aloha Sitters & On-Call Kupuna Care on the island of Oahu.

We believe in fixing problems with empathy, kindness, community involvement, the Aloha spirit. We believe in the Hawaiian way, of respecting the aina. There are real solutions that do not involve cruelty. The bird caretaking community is already established on Oahu & motivated to help. Please work together. The benefits far outway the drawbacks.

With aloha,
Kathy Custer

Owner of Aloha Sitters & On-Call Kupuna Care
Kaneohe District

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:10:50 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Xavier Burns	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

Dear Members of the Senate,

I respectfully urge you to oppose HB2561 HD2.

This bill is not a solution. It is a cruel and destructive shortcut.

It proposes taking lives for the sake of expediency and convenience rather than addressing the root causes of the issue in a way that reflects Hawai‘i’s values, culture, reutation, economy, ecosystems, and long term interests.

Hawai‘i is not just any place. What happens here sets a tone far beyond our islands. Right now, we are at risk of becoming known for indiscriminate responses to complex problems rather than thoughtful, balanced leadership.

HB2561 HD2 frames chickens as a nuisance to be removed instead of recognizing the broader system in which they exist. It prioritizes capture and killing over coordination, prevention, and humane management. It places barriers on rescue while funding cruel removal. It punishes compassionate solutions instead of partnering with it.

That is not how lasting solutions or our state's reputation should be built.

Chickens are part of a larger environmental and human system. They intersect with agriculture, food systems, invasive species management, tourism perception, and community life. They are part of our economy, the music of our islands and the humanity of our people. Addressing their presence requires a coordinated approach that includes:

- Humane population/relocation management
- Support for rescue and rehabilitation efforts
- Community education and responsible practices
- Partnership with local organizations already doing the work
- Consideration of ecological roles, including their impact on invasive species

Instead, this bill risks normalizing widespread killing as a first response, which carries broader social consequences. Research continues to show that desensitization to animal killing and suffering erodes community standards and increase tolerance for violence overall.

Equally concerning, this bill places restrictions on rescue efforts that could make it significantly harder for individuals and organizations to step in and help. Requiring prior approval to conduct rescue operations introduces delays and barriers where urgency is often critical. In practice, this could mean fewer animals saved and more suffering, not less.

We all agree that there are real concerns that need to be addressed. But Hawai'i has an opportunity to lead with innovation, compassion, and collaboration. We can build solutions that are effective, humane, and reflective of our unique cultural and environmental landscape.

We can choose to work with partners rather than against them.

We can choose long term solutions over short term optics.

We can choose to set an example for the rest of the nation that Hawai'i solves complex challenges without resorting to indiscriminate killing.

I urge you to reject HB2561 HD2 and instead convene stakeholders across animal welfare, agriculture, environmental science, and local communities to develop a comprehensive and humane approach.

This is a moment to lead. Let us do it right. Let's do it as Ohana.

Patricia Xavier-Burns

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 9:11:05 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kuuleilani Zalopany	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

Aloha and to qhom it may concern,

I opposed this bill because the chickens are not a nuisance, their pest controllers, they eat, grubs, coconut beetle, cockroaches, centipedes, and any other insect that it's overwhelming our environment. The chickens are keys for pest control and are natures way eradicating these Insects. The insects are killing our plants and our Trees fast. The chickens contribute to less bugs and so our plants can heal grow healthy and not be infected with real pests. Not only do these chicken eradicate the bugs but these chickens are natures Fertilizers for the plants.

Eradicating these chickens would mean more coconut beetle, more cockroaches, and more bugs. The insects doing more damage to our environment than these chickens. If we are going to get rid of chickens creates more bugs, like coconut beetles. Which is has changed our island and killed so many trees or gave disease to the trees where they had to be removed. These insects are the real nuisance, not the chickens. Dont create a bigger problem With the devastation of more coconut beetles and less healthy plants from riding the enviornment from natures helpers (chickens)to combat the real nuisances(invasive insects). Thank you Kuuleilani Zalopany

Jon N. Ikenaga, Esq.
1564 Magazine Street, Apt. F
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822

February 25, 2026

HB2561 HD2: RELATING TO FERAL ANIMALS¹

***** Please note that the House itself has noted that there are significant issues with this bill. At the last hearing before the House Finance Committee there were approximately 115 testimonies submitted in opposition to this bill and only six in support. The Committee Report issued after that hearing (Stand. Com. Rep. No. 788-26) recognized that there were significant issues raised regarding humane treatment, cultural sensitivity and the capacity of agencies and community partners to implement the proposed requirements. The Committee on Finance itself noted that “questions remain regarding enforcement practicality, the need for comprehensive and coordinated population management strategies, and the potential for unintended consequences such as increased safety risks and community conflict.” In fact, the “no” vote at the hearing was cast by Representative Alcos, who was one of the introducers of this bill.***

Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye and Members of the Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts:

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment:

I oppose HB2561 HD2 for the following reasons.

BULLET POINTS:

- 1) HB2561 is incomplete and flawed.**
- 2) The majority of the public do not support the killing of feral chickens.**
- 3) HB2561 HD2 is legally inconsistent with the cruelty to animals provisions in Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) § 711-1109.**
- 4) HB2561 HD2 disregards the importance of moa in Native Hawaiian Culture.**

¹ ***I would like to clarify that I am writing this comment as a private citizen and not in my position as Public Defender for the State of Hawai'i.***

- 5) **HB2561 HD2 would adversely affect public safety by requiring already understaffed and underfunded police departments to issue citations instead of focusing their limited resources on cases that affect public safety.**
- 6) **HB2561 HD2 diverts limited public funds from more significant and important items.**
- 7) **Feral chickens have become a symbol of modern day Hawai'i and efforts to exterminate them have generated negative publicity for Hawai'i.**
- 8) **HB2561 HD2 disregards efforts made by animal rescue operations whose collaboration is essential to address the feral chicken issue.**

DISCUSSION:

1) HB2561 HD2 is incomplete and flawed.

On its face, HB2561 is incomplete and flawed.

§ -1: States that HB2561 HD2 only applies to “cities with a population of three hundred thousand or more” meaning it is not a statewide solution and only applies to the city of Honolulu.

§-2: Defines “chicken” as the species *Gallus gallus domesticus* but fails to recognize that it is almost impossible to distinguish between this species which is generally a hybrid of the native Red Jungle Fowl and domestic species and *Gallus gallus* which is the culturally significant Red Jungle Fowl which was brought to Hawai'i by Polynesian voyagers.

§ -3: Subsection (b)² states that the designation of chickens as “a public nuisance and controllable pest” is to “support coordinated control and nuisance abatement” but fails to provide specific guidelines for how “animal welfare partners”, “public health partners” and “authorized enforcing agencies” are to collaborate and coordinate.

§ -4: Subsection (c) states that it is “in addition to any other applicable state law prohibiting animal desertion or cruelty” but HB2561 HD2, is actually inconsistent with 711-1109 (cruelty to animals in the second degree) and needs to be re-written to achieve the desired consistency.

§-5: Subsections (a)(1) and (2) state that the DLNR and HPD are designated as the enforcing agencies on state and county land, respectively, but both agencies have consistently complained about lack of personnel and funding. There is no indication that either agency

² There also appears to be a typo, “certain birds may be treated as pets for pest-control purposes” (emphasis added) should probably read “pests for pest-control purposes.”

agreed or approved of this designation and it's unlikely that the public would want to divert these resources from important situations that involve public safety to enforcing chicken feeding citations.

PART II, SECTION 3: This section allocates an unspecified amount of money to the City and County of Honolulu. Given the dire financial situation of the State, the Legislature should allocate funding to agencies for important issues such as education, public benefits and housing and public safety, not a bill that will not achieve its stated objective.

2) HB2561 HD2 does not have public support.

Testimony submitted on this bill by members of the public at House hearings on this bill has been significantly in opposition. In fact, at the last hearing the vote count was 115 in opposition to only 6 in support.

Informal polling based on comments to the various news stories on the Legislature's current attempts to sanction the "humane control" of feral chickens confirms that HB2561 HD2 and other pending bills do not have public support. In fact, the majority of the comments support leaving feral chickens alone. The people who complain about feral chickens are a vocal minority who are often not from Hawai'i.

Hawai'i Public Radio Facebook Post: "Sick of early crowing? Residents could be allowed to kill wild chickens" 22 comments – 10 posters pro-chicken, 4 anti-chicken (one anti-chicken poster is from Oregon)

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/18CXPnEcms/>

KHON2 News Facebook Post: "'It starts at 1 a.m.' Feral chickens spark push for legislative fix" 1,200 comments – the vast majority of the comments are pro chicken

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=khon2%20news%20chickens>



3) HB2561 HD2 is legally inconsistent with the cruelty to animals provisions in Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) § 711-1109.

HB2561 § -3 declares feral chickens on public lands as a “public nuisance and controllable pest.” HRS § 711-1109(1)(c), Cruelty to Animals in the Second Degree, prohibits the mutilation, poisoning or killing without need of “any animal” but specifically excludes “pests.” While that section states that extermination of pests must be in accordance with “standard and acceptable pest control practices and all applicable laws and regulations,” the statute provides no guidance for what the “applicable laws and regulations” are for ordinary people. Essentially HB2561 HD2 could be read to remove feral chickens, as pests, from any of the provisions of HRS § 711-1109, which would then allow acts of cruelty to be perpetrated on them, even outside of extermination, with no recourse.

4) HB2561 HD2 disregards the significance of moa in Native Hawaiian culture.

I have attached testimony in opposition to HB2561 HD2 by **Kealoha Pisciotta, a Native Hawaiian cultural practitioner** for over two decades. Kealoha is a public policy advocate for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs and she has been a participant in and drafter of state, federal and international laws regarding human rights, environmental protection, and Native Hawaiian culture. She has presented before United Nations councils and commissions on behalf of Native Hawaiian civil and human rights, including the Hawaiian right to self-

determination. She also presented before the UN Human Rights Commission and helped to draft the international legal standards for the UN's Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Kealoha is president of Mauna Kea Anaina Hou and founder of the marine protection group Kai Palaoa. Kealoha strongly opposes HB2561 HD2 as it fails to take into account any cultural considerations and because it was drafted "without consultation with Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners and the many cultural communities who call these islands home.

HB2561 HD2 does not take into account the Native Hawaiian cultural significance of the moa (Red Jungle Fowl) which was brought to the Hawaiian islands by early Polynesian voyagers.

HB2561 HD2 defines "chicken" as the specific species *Gallus gallus domesticus*. However, it does nothing to clarify how a layperson or even an untrained exterminator or government employee can distinguish between a "feral chicken" which is covered under this bill and other species of fowl that resemble "chickens" but are not subject to be "humanely controlled" under this bill.

For example:



One of these photos is of *Gallus gallus domesticus* the specific species that is covered under HB2561 HD2. The other is *Gallus gallus*, the Red Junglefowl, the moa of Hawaiian cultural significance, that is not covered under this bill. How would anyone other than a trained biologist be expected to make this distinction?³

The failure to distinguish between domestic chicken hybrids and the moa has distinct cultural implications. Feral chickens in Hawai'i are either a type of Red Junglefowl (*Gallus gallus*) or "moa" which were brought to the Hawaiian islands by Polynesians around 1200 AD, or a hybridization of the Junglefowl with modern domestic breeds of chickens brought to

³ The left photo is of *Gallus gallus domesticus* and the right photo is of *Gallus gallus*.

Hawai'i by European and Western settlers in the late 18th century.⁴ The generally-accepted explanation for the proliferation of chickens in the community is the release of chickens due to the destruction caused by Hurricane Iwa (1982) and Hurricane Iniki (1992). These chickens, many of which were domestic birds, mixed again with the feral population. Although many of the “feral chickens” that are the subject of this bill are these hybrids, the bill does not distinguish between the hybrid stock and the descendants of the moa that were brought to Hawai'i by Polynesians in 1200 AD.

The moa have a place in Hawaiian history and mythology. The land on which the Royal Hawaiian Shopping Center in Waikiki is built was known as Helumoa or “chicken scratch.” Helumoa was “once the seat of Hawaiian nobility, a thriving community famed for its abundance and beauty.”⁵

One story of how Helumoa came upon its name involves Kākuhihewa, ruling chief of O'ahu from 1640 to 1660. It is said that the supernatural chicken, Ka'auhele-moa, one day flew down from his home in Ka'au Crater, in Pālolo, and landed at Helumoa. The rooster scratched the dirt at Kākuhihewa's feet, then disappeared as suddenly and mysteriously as he had appeared. Kākuhihewa immediately ordered his people to plant a coconut tree at the exact site upon which Ka'auhele-moa had kicked up the dirt. This tree, which grew to be the tallest in the area, is said to be the parent of what would become an entire grove of coconut trees, and the land became known as Helumoa, 'chicken scratch' [3]. This is the same coconut grove that would later be called the King's Grove, or the Royal Grove, and would be cited in numerous historical accounts for its pleasantness and lush surroundings.[⁶]

The provisions of HB2561 HD2 give no clear and objective means by which laypersons or non-experts can distinguish between “feral chickens” which may be “humanely controlled” and the moa which are a part of Hawaiian cultural and history and are not subject to being “humanely controlled” or which should not be designated as “controllable pests.” Simply put, this bill is culturally offensive.

⁴ “Why Are There So Many Wild Chickens in Hawaii?” Scienceinsights (<https://scienceinsights.org/why-are-there-so-many-wild-chickens-in-hawaii/>)

⁵ Groves, M., “Kamehameha Schools Revitalizes One of Waikiki's Landmarks” Ka'awakiloumoku Pacific Indigenous Institute, Kamehameha Schools (<https://kaiwakiloumoku.ksbe.edu/article/essays-kamehameha-schools-revitalizes-one-of-waikikiis-landmarks>)

⁶ Id.

5) **HB2561 HD2 would adversely affect public safety by requiring already understaffed and underfunded police departments to issue citations instead of focusing their limited resources on cases that affect public safety.**

HB2561 HD 2 assigns the DLNR and police departments to enforce its “prohibited acts on public land.” Police departments are already understaffed and officers are overworked handling matters of public safety. Citations require officers to divert to the scene of an offense, conduct an investigation, including interviewing witnesses, write up reports and then appear in court if the citation is contested. It is a waste of limited police resources and a detriment to public safety to divert officers from critical functions that require police assistance such as investigating serious crimes, enforcing traffic laws that protect drivers and pedestrians, or assisting in emergency situations, to issue a \$250 citation to a senior citizen who is feeding feral chickens at the park.

6) **HB2561 HD2 diverts limited public funds from more significant and important items.**

HB2561 HD2 allocates an unspecified amount of funds to the City and County of Honolulu for feral chicken receipt, handling and humane disposition. For all the reasons stated in this testimony, HB2561 HD2 does not achieve its stated objective. Limited state funds should be allocated to projects or agencies that serve education, public benefits and housing and public safety rather than a bill that does not achieve its stated objective.

7) **Feral chickens have become a symbol of modern day Hawai‘i and efforts to exterminate them have generated negative publicity for Hawai‘i.**

Residents and visitors have begun to associate feral chickens and Hawai‘i in a positive way.⁷ Feral chickens have been described as a “memorable cultural symbol” and part of Hawai‘i’s living cultural landscape.⁸ The unchecked and cruel killing of feral chickens could lead to negative publicity for the State and be offensive to residents and visitors. Even a cursory review of the comments on Facebook posts and news articles on the current legislation

⁷ <https://www.honolulumagazine.com/afterthoughts-chickens-are-taking-over-hawaii/>

⁸ <https://nszipline.com/blog/hawaii-chickens/>; <https://www.oreateai.com/blog/the-curious-case-of-hawaiis-chickens-a-feathered-legacy/2462bd1f9ca6bb51b875b95615b4b27a>; <https://www.islands.com/1902188/hawaiian-island-stunning-views-chicken-population-outnumbers-residents-kaui/>

reveals that local people view feral chickens as a part of ancient and/or modern Hawaiian culture.

8) HB2561 HD2 disregards efforts made by animal rescue operations whose collaboration is essential to address the feral chicken issue.

Chicken rescue operations such as Trooper’s Chicken Rescue and the Facebook group Hawaiian Chicken Rescue have members who are qualified and willing to work with the State on solutions to the feral chicken population that do not involve the indiscriminate killing of feral chickens. Killing of feral chickens is not the preferred method for population control and can actually increase public health risks. For example, in testimony in opposition to HB980 (2025 session), the Hawaiian Humane Society noted that allowing the killing of feral chickens “contradict[ed] the bill’s concern about biosecurity which would be compromised by close contact with chickens ... [and could] increase potential H[5]N1 threats.”⁹ Another testifier noted that “[t]he CDC and World Health Organizations recommend biosecurity measures and monitoring, not mass culling, as the primary approach to preventing avian influenza spread in wild bird populations.” There are alternatives other than euthanasia which are available to control chicken populations such as containment, relocation, or birth control.¹⁰

Under HB2561 HD2, “prohibited acts on public land” include feeding or placing food or other attractants on public land. The measure contains an exemption for “research or rescue purpose” but does not specify which state or city agency would give such exemption or the process by which this exemption could be secured. Rescues often occur at the spur of the moment, after working hours or on weekends or holidays. It would significantly hamper rescue efforts if rescuers were required to obtain government approval prior to taking action. In addition, there is no process outlined by which such approval can be obtained. I would suggest the following further amendment:

(d) Any act described in subsection (a) that is performed for research or rescue purposes shall be exempt from the prohibitions in subsection (a)[.]; ~~provided that the act was approved by the State or city before it was performed.~~

⁹ While the H5N1 concern is consistently brought up in testimony, no agency or individual has cited any study which confirms that feral chickens have been infected with the disease.

¹⁰ OvoControl was developed to control pigeon populations but is being used by some homeowners or condominium owner associations on feral chickens with good results. <https://www.ovocontrol.com/?srsltid=AfmBOorvtE-zbQUN4kGluLCIBJMMhAieEr2E4lu2fvloGDm7SWd1or1M>

If the approval provision is not deleted from HB2561 HD2, then there should be a specific procedure by which rescue or research organizations or persons engaged in rescue or research can receive pre-approval for acts performed in for rescue or research, rather than requiring approval for each individual act. To reiterate, this approval process is not preferable as it would hamper or limit individuals or organizations from performing rescues or research pending approval.

Conclusion

As evidenced by the overwhelming testimony in opposition to HB2561 on February 6, the complaints about feral chickens come from a vocal minority. If the goal of the Legislature is to involve the public in addressing this issue and to come up with a community-supported, effective solution it must take into account the number of people who do not believe that feral chickens are an issue. This is not to say that the State should not take action to assist in addressing this issue. However, due to the complexity of this issue, the more prudent, careful, measured and informed path is to see an **effective long-term solution** to this issue rather than an **ineffective quick fix** to appease the vocal minority. The Legislature should encourage and support community members and groups, such as Hawaii Bird Rescue, Hawaii Chicken Rescue, Hina's Legacy and Trooper's Chicken Rescue that are willing to assist and collaborate with the State in effective solutions that do not involve cruelty, indiscriminate killing or dismissing feral chickens as pests.

The Legislature should form a working group consisting of members of the community, members of chicken rescue/rehabilitation organizations, representatives from the humane societies of each island, animal welfare groups, veterinarians, and DLNR and law enforcement members to discuss this issue and come up with a well-thought-out effective approach to this issue in a report to the Legislature. In recent years this Legislature has made efforts to stop cruelty to animals, even the federal government has joined in this endeavor.¹¹ I am urging the Legislature to support a collaborative, well-reasoned, culturally-appropriate and humane and effective solution to the feral chicken population.

I oppose HB2561 HD2. Thank you for your consideration.

Jon N. Ikenaga, Esq.

¹¹ <https://www.npr.org/2019/11/25/782842651/trump-signs-law-making-cruelty-to-animals-a-federal-crime>

TESTIMONY OF
KEALOHA PISCIOTTA
NATIVE HAWAIIAN CULTURAL PRACTITIONER
in opposition to HB2561 HD2

Draft re: HB2561 HD2

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

My name is Kealoha Pisciotta, and I am a Native Hawaiian cultural practitioner. I submit this testimony in strong opposition to this measure that would allow the killing of wild chickens in Hawai'i without consultation with Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners and the many cultural communities who call these islands home.

For Native Hawaiians, the chickens seen across our islands today are not merely a nuisance species to be eliminated. The traditional chicken, the moa, was brought to Hawai'i by our voyaging ancestors who crossed the vast Pacific thousands of years ago, guided by the stars and their deep knowledge of the natural world. Many of these ancestral lineages of moa continue to live in the wild today.

In our traditions, the moa holds cultural and spiritual significance. They were revered and protected by the Akua and Ali'i and therefore respected by our people on many levels, including as messengers and, in some families, as aumakua (ancestral guardians who guide and protect their families). In the Native Hawaiian worldview, animals are not separate from us; they are part of our extended 'ohana within the living system of the 'aina.

Our voyaging ancestors practiced a form of stewardship that modern scholars now describe as biocultural stewardship—an understanding that the health of our ecosystems, our cultural practices, and our communities are inseparable and must be cared for together.

Because of this relationship, decisions about the treatment of these animals cannot be reduced to convenience or nuisance management. They require cultural understanding, consultation, and respect.

Furthermore, Hawai'i is home to many cultures that have lived here for generations. Many of these communities also hold deep respect for the moa and for the living environment of these islands. Policies that affect life on this land should reflect the collective values of the people who live here, not unilateral decisions that exclude the voices of those with longstanding cultural ties to the 'aina.

This bill is also troubling from a legal and governance standpoint.

Hawai'i law requires that government decisions reflect the values of aloha, mutual respect, and responsibility. The Aloha Spirit Law (HRS §5-7.5) calls upon state officials to contemplate and reside with the life force of aloha in their decision-making. Policies that authorize the killing of animals connected to cultural traditions without consultation with Native Hawaiians fall short of that mandate.

Additionally, under Hawai'i law and jurisprudence, agencies and decision-makers must evaluate impacts to Native Hawaiian rights. The Kapa'akai Analysis requires decision-makers to identify traditional and customary practices, assess how those practices may be affected, and determine how they will be protected. Moving forward with legislation that directly affects a culturally significant species without such analysis is inconsistent with these established principles.

If there are legitimate concerns regarding population management, public health, or agriculture, those issues should be addressed through thoughtful, community-based solutions that include Native Hawaiian practitioners, farmers, animal welfare experts, and cultural leaders from across Hawai'i.

The people of these islands have long understood that true stewardship requires balance, respect, and kuleana.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee not only to reject this bill, but also to recognize that policies affecting the living environment of Hawai'i must be developed in genuine partnership with Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners and the communities who malama this 'aina. The choices made today will shape the relationship between people, culture, and the natural world in these islands for generations to come. Let those choices reflect the values of aloha, responsibility, and respect for all life that have guided Hawai'i for centuries.

Ma halo nui loa for the opportunity to speak on this critical issue,

In Aloha,

Kealoha Pisciotta

President, Mauna Kea Anaina Hou and Founder, Kai Palaoa

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 9:38:28 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laakea Gage	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

Aloha to those it may bring attention to these chickens have been a foundation of life for this island they provide us with pest control for non native bugs mind you aswell not harmful to our environment they protect our native bugs and plants. They give us a great full of nutrients food with themselves or there eggs theirs greater things to worry then chickens that provide stability on our island.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 9:41:15 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sam Selvaggio	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

The chickens need to live freely, just like any other bird. There is no chicken problem, and there never has been. They really need to worry about something else the chickens have always been here and always will be.

COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS

Senator Chris Lee, Chair

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair

Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair

TESTIMONY IN **SUPPORT** OF HB 2561, HD2 - RELATING TO FERAL ANIMALS.

Aloha Chair Lee, Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Richards, Senator DeCoite of Maui, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Christine Andrews, and I am a long-term resident of Wailuku, Maui, and an attorney licensed in the state of Hawai'i for over 25 years. I write to you today in **strong support of HB 2561, HD2**, with comments, which declares feral chickens on public lands as a public nuisance and controllable pest in a city with a population of three hundred thousand or more; prohibits supporting feral chickens on public lands, including by feeding chickens; prohibits the abandonment of chickens on public lands or on private property without consent; establishes fines and authorized enforcing agencies; and appropriates funds for the receipt, handling, and humane disposition of feral chickens that have already been caught.

I request that the bill be amended to include the neighbor islands, not just cities over 300,000. On Maui, the State Office Building, the Wailuku Community Health Center, `Iao Valley State Park, and other County Parks host flocks of feral chickens. The State and Counties should make efforts to remove the feral chickens on their properties on neighbor islands. **I also request that the bill be amended to provide alternatives for people like me to be able to humanely dispose of feral chickens we trap on our properties.**

Please help me. When I first moved to Wailuku, Maui from Honolulu in 1997, the disruption caused by the presence of feral chickens near where I was living in Wailuku Town was so severe that I had to change housing. In 2013, my family lived briefly back in Wailuku Town when a chicken roosting in a neighbor's tree **pooped** on my daughter's head while we walked on the sidewalk beneath the tree. When I looked up into the tree there must have been ten or more. After checking with my neighbor, I put out three traps and spent several weeks trapping chickens and taking them to the Maui Humane Society. I trapped over twenty over the course of three weeks. Ultimately, due to the disruption caused by the feral chickens, crowing night and day and digging up our yard, we changed housing.

I currently live in Wailuku Heights, a neighborhood about one mile uphill from Wailuku Town, on the hillside of the West Maui Mountains. The Community Covenants and Restrictions in this neighborhood forbid livestock, including poultry. Over the 23 years I have lived in Wailuku Heights, we had never had feral chickens up here. A couple of years ago, I noticed that feral chickens were now in my neighborhood in Wailuku Heights. I talked to my neighbors and they, too, were upset by the feral chickens, and told me that one neighbor had brought some feral chickens into the neighborhood in violation of association rules and released them into a gulch one house away from me. They complained that another neighbor was feeding them.

I complained to the Wailuku Height Community Association Board, and they wrote the offending neighbors Letters of Violation, but the women keep feeding the chickens unabated to this day. I wish there was a criminal offense to make them stop doing what they are doing, feeding a flock of feral chickens that invades

the properties of others who bought homes in this neighborhood because livestock and chickens are prohibited.

In January of last year, feral chickens were digging up my yard and waking me up at 3 am every day. Several times I have been in a Zoom meeting and other participants have commented on the noise of roosters crowing in the background. I spent a full day in January, 2025 calling around trying to figure out solutions to get rid of the feral chickens entering my yard. Maui Humane Society no longer accepts feral chickens. The Maui Police Department and Hawaii State Department of Health had no solutions. I called around pest control services. They could not help either.

Finally, in June, 2025, a friend Upcountry posted about hiring a new company to remove feral chickens on her property. I hired this company, at my own expense, to lay traps on public property in the gulch to trap the chickens. In the first week, at a cost of \$500, over 20 chickens were trapped. But not all of them, because the neighbor feeding them gave the feral chickens little incentive to go into the gulch. Overall, **I spent \$1,500 to pay a professional to trap and dispose lawfully of feral chickens.** Over 30 chickens were trapped. It has helped the problem, but that was a very expensive undertaking for me to remedy the situation of a neighbor violating our Association rules and creating a nuisance by feeding chickens.

I strongly support any legislation that helps people like me not have to live with the destruction, droppings and nuisance of feral chickens. I request that the bill be amended to include the neighbor islands, not just cities over 300,000. On Maui, the State Office Building, the Wailuku Community Health Center, `Iao Valley State Park, and other County Parks are full of feral chickens. The State and County should make efforts to remove the feral chickens on their properties on neighbor islands.

I also request that the bill be amended to provide alternatives for people like me to be able to humanely dispose of feral chickens we trap on our properties. If I want to remove feral chickens on my property, I have nowhere to take them and no legal means of disposing of them. The trapper I hired to trap chickens offered to take any I trapped for \$100 per bird! I am grateful for this new business on Maui where the trapper comes and removes chickens, but I have spent an unreasonable amount of my own funds to try to remedy a problem caused by the careless and disrespectful behavior of my neighbors. The pest removal company has been hired by local businesses and it has really helped to mitigate the feral chicken problem in Wailuku Town and Kahului.

I strongly support the intent of HB 2561, HD2, with the urgent request that it be extended to encompass the neighbor islands and not just the City and County of Honolulu, and that it make provision for the lawful disposal of feral chickens I trap on my own property.

Thank you SO MUCH for hearing this bill and working towards a solution for our feral chicken problem.

Mahalo,

Christine Andrews
Wailuku, Maui

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB2561 HD2

**Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts (WLA)
&
Committee on Agriculture and Environment (AEN)**

DATE: Friday, March 20, 2026
TIME: 1:03 PM
**PLACE: Conference Room 224
& VIDEOCONFERENCE
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street**

From: Gregory Misakian (as an individual)

Submitted: 3/20/26

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the WLA & AEN Committees,

I am in strong opposition to HB2561 HD2, as are the chickens of Hawaii.

My Background

I currently serve as:

- ❖ President, Kokua Council
- ❖ Vice President, Hawaii Alliance for Retired Americans (HARA)
- ❖ Director, Keoni Ana AOA
- ❖ Member, Good Government Caucus
- ❖ Member, Kupuna Caucus

I previously served on the Waikiki Neighborhood Board from Jan. 2023 to June 2025 and was also a volunteer with the Hawaiian Humane Society.

Today I am speaking as an advocate for the chickens, and I hope that this committee will please read on and hopefully do the right thing.

My Previous Testimony on HB2561 HD1

While I understand the intent of HB2561 HD1, as I personally have been impacted by roosters waking me up since I moved to Hawaii, this bill is very concerning to me (and clearly to the many opposing it).

First and foremost, I and many others have a great love of animals, as I'm sure those on this committee do and many legislators do. With this in mind, please know that HB2561 HD1 will result in the deaths of many chickens and roosters, often by euthanization in a gas chamber.

I have also seen the cruelty that some exhibit, when I was called to help a rooster lying in a parking lot behind my building, apparently shot with a pellet gun (which I later learned was reported to have been from my building). X-rays confirmed the rooster was shot with pellets, and thanks to Aloha Bird Rescue who took the injured rooster and paid for his surgery to remove the pellets, he survived. Aloha Bird Rescue also rehabbed and took care of him, and the last report I had was that he was hanging out with a hen he seemed fond of.

The most amazing part of turning one act of cruelty into a good story where many came together to help, is the look the rooster gave me when he was injured and knew I was there to help him. His aloha was clear and strong. I ask all on this committee to please show aloha to the chickens, and if you need to enact a bill to mitigate the population, please do so with aloha and ensure that the chickens are placed into a sanctuary or private farms, where they will not be killed.

My Additional Testimony For HB2561 HD2

As I mentioned, the rooster in my previous testimony above was reported to have been shot by someone in my condominium building from their lanai, which faced the parking lot where the rooster was seen injured. I am also aware from reports by two individuals, that the Board President at my condominium association had said to the Resident Manager, "can't you just pour gasoline on the roosters and light them on fire."

While this rooster lay on the ground suffering and I couldn't get to him (as it was private property with a locked fence), I knew that I had to do something and spent time calling the property manager and the contractor building the new Denny's. The contractor arrived and allowed me to take the injured rooster. The Hawaiian Humane Society, where I was a volunteer at the time, said they would be able to X-ray him if I brought him in. When I arrived at the Hawaiian Humane Society veterinary office I waited a very long time. The veterinarian on duty decided to not assist and refused to take an X-ray.

I was told I could surrender the rooster or take him to a private veterinarian. I asked what would happen if I surrendered him, and I was told he would be euthanized.

What I also did not report in my earlier testimony is that the veterinary clinic where he was operated on was managed by the wife of the legislator that introduced HB2561 (who I highly respect), and the veterinarian that performed the operation was previously my veterinarian for a rescue cat that I rescued from the street. As we know it's a small island, and the chickens know this too.

I ask all on the this committee to please remember:

- 1) The cultural significance of chickens in Hawaii.
- 2) The ancestral and spiritual ties, from the time the early Polynesians settled in Hawaii and brought chickens to the islands.
- 3) That some in Hawaii regard chickens as "aumakua" (family guardians).
- 4) Moana - do you not recall the chicken in Moana, and now you are telling the keiki of Hawaii it's OK to kill them when you see them.

I am requesting that all members of the WLA & AEN Committees vote with Aloha, vote with compassion, and vote with the understanding of the cultural importance of chickens in Hawaii. Unless this bill is amended to protect the chickens from harm, and the residents from steep fines for feeding them, I would ask that you vote no on HB2561 HD2.

Mahalo i nā hana a ke akua
(Respect God's creations.)

Respectfully,

Gregory Misakian

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 2:37:49 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lauren Smith	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To: Chair and Members of the Committee

Re: Opposition to HB2561

Hearing Date: March 20, 2026

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong opposition to HB2561.

This bill takes an overly broad and punitive approach to addressing the issue of feral chickens on public lands. By designating these animals as controllable pests and tying enforcement mechanisms to their presence, the measure creates the risk of vague interpretation and inconsistent application. Laws that lack precise definitions and clear enforcement boundaries can lead to unintended consequences, confusion among residents, and uneven enforcement practices.

Additionally, the bill does not provide sufficient safeguards to ensure humane treatment. Classifying animals in this manner without clear standards or oversight may inadvertently encourage harmful actions and create ethical concerns regarding how enforcement is carried out. Public policy should reflect both community well-being and responsible stewardship.

The approach outlined in HB2561 also prioritizes penalties and enforcement without adequately demonstrating that such measures are the most effective or balanced solution. Enforcement-heavy strategies can strain agency resources and divert attention from other pressing public health, environmental, and safety concerns facing the State of Hawai‘i.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to reject HB2561.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Smith

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 10:40:58 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charles Lee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am strongly in opposition of this bill Primarily because of its ineffectiveness.

Appropriating funds to facilitate the removal of feral chickens is treating the symptom rather than the cause of the illness, as these chickens originally had to come from somewhere, namely as escapes, or releases from farms and breeders. Unless penalties are going to be imposed and enforced on these actions, they will always be more feral chickens running loose.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 9:08:22 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tim Streitz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support anything that can be done to address the feral chicken infestation that has occurred across the islands, and this bill allows us to take one more step forward. But the bill should reinsert the language from the original version to also allow for private individuals to efficiently control for feral chickens on their property. You need to take bold action if you want to address the problem. Blanket protections and legal uncertainties perpetuate the problem through inaction.

As for the bill objectives, the problem with the current feral chicken programs on Oahu is that funding has not been allocated to allow 100% free drop-off of caught chickens to be handled by a company, like Humane Society did many years ago. The only way to get this problem under control is to help enable residents to do it themselves without fear of any legal problems, and then also have a proper place to dispose of the chickens. The funding for these purposes is an excellent addition to the current draft.

City and State programs alone can't eradicate this problem, and people doing it themselves for free are not likely to want to pay to drop off their caught chickens, which is why they dump them anywhere else away from their house. This is all wasted energy, because it then requires someone else to go after the same chicken, rather than resulting in a net decrease of the chicken population.

I encourage you to go further in this bill to enable do-it-yourselfers to contribute to eradicating the feral chicken infestations that physically and mentally affect your constituents. For example, authorize anyone to go onto public property to catch feral chickens, and expand the allowable uses of catching chickens on both public and private property (passive trapping is least effective). Strict penalties need to be applied to anyone who interferes with chicken trapping, such as damaging traps. Another key consideration would be for urban areas where chickens cross multiple property lines. Similar to how police can cross over properties in pursuit of a suspect, the same should be authorized for at least pest control companies to make their job more efficient and enable them to focus on active trapping, rather than just passive cage trapping.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 4:44:03 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melissa McKinney	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

I oppose HB2561. Labeling chickens as pests, restricting humane care, and removing protections against killing them conflicts with our values of compassion and mālama ‘āina. These measures would make Hawai‘i appear hypocritical about aloha and animal welfare, and they risk promoting cruelty rather than responsible, humane solutions. It will be an embarrassment to the reputation of Hawaii and make us look barbaric and cruel.

Please vote no.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Dr. Melissa McKinney

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 8:14:32 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mikayla AhSam	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee,

I oppose HB2561 HD2.

I am testifying on behalf of the thousands of island residents who rescue, rehabilitate, and provide lifelong care to chickens, wild birds, and native and non native species across Hawai‘i.

This is not a fringe community. It is a deeply rooted network of caregivers who have built close knit support systems, small businesses, and local economies around humane animal care. Especially in rural communities, people spend thousands of dollars of their own money on feed, veterinary care, habitat maintenance, transportation, education and supplies. This work supports local stores, farmers, veterinarians, our keiki and service providers.

HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 ignore this reality and threaten to dismantle years of responsible, community driven solutions. There are organizations ready and willing to help manage populations humanely, without poisoning our land with pesticides, harming non-targeted animals, executing innocent chickens or empowering violent vigilantes.

Choosing the easy way out through killing and pest control contracts is not leadership. It is a failure of those who lead from behind.

Support and work directly with the organizations that care for the lives of these chickens and for our ‘āina. Reject policies that normalize cruelty, contaminate our environment, and divide our communities into us versus them. If these bills move forward, many of us will remember this choice at the ballot box.

We vote. We organize. And we expect better.

Once again, I oppose HB2561 HD2.

Mikayla

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 8:57:07 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kylie Yamauchi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee,

I oppose HB2561 HD2.

I am testifying on behalf of the thousands of island residents who rescue, rehabilitate, and provide lifelong care to chickens, wild birds, and native and non native species across Hawai‘i.

This is not a fringe community. It is a deeply rooted network of caregivers who have built close knit support systems, small businesses, and local economies around humane animal care. Especially in rural communities, people spend thousands of dollars of their own money on feed, veterinary care, habitat maintenance, transportation, education and supplies. This work supports local stores, farmers, veterinarians, our keiki and service providers.

HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 ignore this reality and threaten to dismantle years of responsible, community driven solutions. There are organizations ready and willing to help manage populations humanely, without poisoning our land with pesticides, harming non-targeted animals, executing innocent chickens or empowering violent vigilantes.

Choosing the easy way out through killing and pest control contracts is not leadership. It is a failure of those who lead from behind.

Support and work directly with the organizations that care for the lives of these chickens and for our ‘āina. Reject policies that normalize cruelty, contaminate our environment, and divide our communities into us versus them. If these bills move forward, many of us will remember this choice at the ballot box.

We vote. We organize. And we expect better.

Once again, I oppose HB2561 HD2.

Best,

Kylie

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:09:27 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Stewart	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senator or Representative,

I am writing in strong opposition to HB1852, a bill that would make it legal to kill feral chickens on the island of Hawai‘i.

Chickens are observant, socially aware, and far more emotionally complex than they are often given credit for. When their intelligence and capacity for awareness are misunderstood or dismissed, it becomes far too easy to justify policies that treat them as disposable rather than as living beings deserving of humane consideration.

Scientific research has increasingly shown that chickens are not simple or unintelligent animals. In the article “The Startling Intelligence of the Common Chicken” by Carolynn “K-lynn” L. Smith and Sarah L. Zielinski, published in Scientific American, the authors highlight how chickens demonstrate complex communication within their flocks, possess problem-solving abilities, and make decisions based on past experiences. These are not traits of a mindless animal, but of one capable of awareness, learning, and social connection.

Similarly, in “Thinking Chickens: A Review of Cognition, Emotion, and Behavior in the Domestic Chicken,” Lori Marino examines how public perception has long underestimated chickens. This perception has shaped how they are treated, despite clear scientific evidence showing that chickens possess cognitive and emotional capacities comparable to many animals we traditionally view as more deserving of protection.

Policies like HB1852 risk reinforcing this outdated and inaccurate view. Legalizing the killing of feral chickens does not address the root of the issue, nor does it reflect a humane or forward-thinking approach. Instead, it promotes lethal control of animals who are capable of experiencing fear, forming social bonds, and navigating their environments with intelligence.

I urge you to consider humane, non-lethal alternatives that reflect both current scientific understanding and a more compassionate approach to animal management. You have an opportunity to lead with empathy and responsibility rather than defaulting to eradication.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask that you oppose HB1852.

- Jessica Stewart
- Resident of California

References:

The Startling Intelligence of the Common Chicken” by Carolynn “K-lynn” L. Smith and Sarah L. Zielinski - <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-startling-intelligence-of-the-common-chicken1/>

Thinking Chickens: A Review of Cognition, Emotion, and Behavior in the Domestic Chicken,” Lori Marino - https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC5306232/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMtAAAR2fCmubo9cWniGPrIsd6-mKCjkDYByNqUjLVDw_SG8NcbKNSzvTj-b2s0A_aem_OTOmIRmTyDbXeSMVWI9Emw

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:14:20 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hunter Kerrigan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Hunter Kerrigan, and I am submitting this testimony in strong opposition to H.B. 2561, which would designate feral chickens on public lands as a “controllable pest” and restrict activities such as feeding, maintaining, or supporting them.

While this bill is framed as a public health and nuisance response, the language in its current form raises serious concerns for animal welfare and community values. Classifying feral chickens as pests devalues living animals and could lead to methods of “control” that are inhumane, including shooting or other harmful actions carried out with minimal oversight. This also risks normalizing cruelty toward animals in our communities.

Further, simply prohibiting people from feeding or supporting feral chickens on public lands does not address the root causes of the issue, such as abandonment of domestic birds or ongoing illegal breeding associated with practices like cockfighting. Criminalizing compassionate actions without providing clear, effective, and humane alternatives will likely increase suffering without reducing the population in a meaningful way.

Humane population-management strategies — like humane trapping and relocation, egg management (collecting or adding eggs responsibly), and partnerships with animal rescues — have proven effective in other island communities and should be prioritized. These approaches respect life, reflect Hawaii’s cultural values, and provide real solutions instead of punitive measures. For example, in Key West, Florida, feral chickens are legally protected, and abuse is prohibited while animal welfare organizations support humane management.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to oppose H.B. 2561 in its current form and work with stakeholders to develop humane, effective solutions that protect animals, respect cultural values, and genuinely improve public health and safety.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration.

Hunter Kerrigan

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:18:38 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Justina Arvanitakis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Justina Arvanitakis, and I am writing in opposition to H.B. 2561.

I am not only concerned about the policy implications of this bill, but also about the emotional toll this issue has already taken on my young children. Through no fault of their own, they have witnessed acts of cruelty toward feral chickens in our community. These were not lessons any child should have to learn firsthand.

What they saw caused real fear, anxiety, and confusion. They were shaken by it. As a parent, trying to explain why someone would intentionally harm an animal has been heartbreaking. Children should feel safe in their neighborhoods. They should not have to process scenes of violence or cruelty as part of their everyday environment.

My concern is that by loosening classifications and creating broader allowances for “control,” this bill increases the likelihood that such cruelty will happen more openly and more frequently. When standards are weakened, it becomes harder to distinguish humane management from abuse. That ambiguity creates more opportunities for harm — and more chances for children like mine to witness it.

Exposure to violence, even toward animals, has a real impact on young minds. It normalizes behavior that should never be normalized. It creates fear in spaces that should feel safe.

We can address community concerns without lowering humane protections. We can pursue structured, regulated, and truly humane solutions that do not risk increasing cruelty or exposing more children to traumatic experiences.

For the sake of our communities — and especially our children — I respectfully urge you to oppose H.B. 2561 in its current form.

Mahalo for your time and thoughtful consideration.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:21:04 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bianca Isaki	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Legislators,

Please HOLD HB2561. This bill will allow needless animal cruelty against chickens and peafowl. These creatures are useful for controlling insect pests and also serve as companions for humans.

Yours,

Bianca Isaki

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:50:23 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bonnie Gollero	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I adamantly OPPOSE this bill for many reasons, but these are the major four:

1) A DLNR law that prohibits the relocating, or so called "dumping of chickens", already exists. It is simply ignored by cock fighters because of the lack of police enforcement. This bill is not only redundant, but has already proven itself sorely ineffective for this reason.

Without a task force to shut down cock fights and dismantle farms where hundreds of roosters are confined in the most deplorable conditions, cock fighting will continue to increase - and concomitantly, the dumping and use of public land for breeding roosters will not stop.

2) Labeling chickens as controllable pests is not only misdirected and unjust, but wholly unnecessary. Writers of this bill can still achieve their means without the devaluing and labeling, which serves no purpose other than to legally condone and encourage continued violence of illegal animal cruelty, which still violates Federal animal cruelty laws.

3) It is deceptive on one hand to say this bill is intended to protect the public health from avian flu, etc., and then limit its scope to only Honolulu. The outer islands, Kauai and Hawai'i especially, have more of a chicken infestation and cock fighting problem that places the entire state at risk. Therefore, this bill needs to include the entire state.

4) Rescuers must be able to carry out their mission by deleting the condition that each rescue must be approved first by the city or state. Such a condition is contrary to an immediate intervention that is necessary when a chicken, or the public, is in imminent danger. In cases where vehicle traffic is obstructed, which is a common occurrence, public safety is also at risk. Any individual or rescuer interceding to assist should not have to fear a \$250 fine. Government offices are also closed after hours and weekends, and most likely do not have the staff to accommodate the public. Any other animal rescue is not burdened by such an imposition. This unnecessary and impossible condition should be deleted.

Lastly, if you need evidence of the actual work rescuers do, google Troopers Chicken Rescue, select 'Stories' on the drop down menu to see before-and-after photos of tortured chickens by cockfighters fighters that were rescued near death, then rehabilitated over months by these dedicated individuals.

Produce instead a bill for a task force to end cock fighting,
Bonnie Gollero

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 11:38:36 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ashley Silver	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senator Richards,

I am writing on behalf of the thousands of island residents who rescue, rehabilitate, and provide lifelong care to chickens, wild birds, and native and non native species across Hawai'i.

This is not a fringe community. It is a deeply rooted network of caregivers who have built close knit support systems, small businesses, and local economies around humane animal care. Especially in rural communities, people spend thousands of dollars of their own money on feed, veterinary care, habitat maintenance, transportation, education and supplies. This work supports local stores, farmers, veterinarians, our keiki and service providers.

HB 1852 and HB 2561 ignore this reality and threaten to dismantle years of responsible, community driven solutions. There are organizations ready and willing to help manage populations humanely, without poisoning our land with pesticides, harming non-targeted animals, executing innocent chickens or empowering violent vigilantes.

Choosing the easy way out through killing and pest control contracts is not leadership. It is a failure of those who lead from behind.

Support and work directly with the organizations that care for the lives of these chickens and for our 'āina. Reject policies that normalize cruelty, contaminate our environment, and divide our communities into us versus them. If these bills move forward, many of us will remember this choice at the ballot box.

We vote. We organize. And we expect better.

With aloha and determination,
Ashley Silver
District 4

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 11:50:43 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kilohana Moa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I as a resident vehemently oppose this as it is cruel and inhumane.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 11:47:03 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
April Matsuura	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

I am writing in strong opposition to HB 2561 HD2.

Chickens are social, intelligent animals who form emotional attachments to humans and to each other. They are already among the most abused animals in Hawai‘i due to widespread cockfighting and neglect. To respond by labeling them as pests and authorizing killing only deepens the harm.

If our representatives truly want to change the narrative that Hawai‘i is serious about preventing animal abuse, we cannot commit this level of abuse ourselves.

Across our islands we have recently seen feral cats shot, dogs on video being violently mistreated by young people, farms attacked to steal and kill animals and their caregivers, tourists harming sea creatures, and an ongoing cockfighting crisis. Study after study shows that animal abuse is often the first step toward broader violent crime. Violence begets violence.

By passing bills that normalize cruelty, the Legislature opens a Pandora’s box. These policies send a message that harming animals is acceptable, even encouraged. That is a dangerous message with real consequences for public safety and community wellbeing.

Hawai‘i should be reducing violence, not modeling it. I urge you to reject these bills and instead invest in humane, preventative, and educational solutions that reflect our shared values.

Please do not make animal cruelty the law of our land.

**Respectfully,
April Matsuura**

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 11:53:07 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brandy Hikalea-Kanae	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose to this bill as it is cruel and inhumane! Find a better sollution!

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 11:57:10 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janet Martinez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

I am writing in strong opposition to HB 2561 HD2.

Chickens are social, intelligent animals who form emotional attachments to humans and to each other. They are already among the most abused animals in Hawai‘i due to widespread cockfighting and neglect. To respond by labeling them as pests and authorizing killing only deepens the harm.

If our representatives truly want to change the narrative that Hawai‘i is serious about preventing animal abuse, we cannot commit this level of abuse ourselves.

Across our islands we have recently seen feral cats shot, dogs on video being violently mistreated by young people, farms attacked to steal and kill animals and their caregivers, tourists harming sea creatures, and an ongoing cockfighting crisis. Study after study shows that animal abuse is often the first step toward broader violent crime. Violence begets violence.

By passing bills that normalize cruelty, the Legislature opens a Pandora’s box. These policies send a message that harming animals is acceptable, even encouraged. That is a dangerous message with real consequences for public safety and community wellbeing.

Hawai‘i should be reducing violence, not modeling it. I urge you to reject these bills and instead invest in humane, preventative, and educational solutions that reflect our shared values.

Please do not make animal cruelty the law of our land.

Respectfully,

Janet Martinez

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 12:10:17 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Trevor Ogden	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this, and this is animal cruelty.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 12:12:40 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wendy Tupper	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Stop killing living creatures. We are better than that as humans. Please support groups that want to help our feral chicken population. There are chicken rescue groups (if they can get land) that we be able to take in feral chickens and give the am a better opportunity to live instead of in neighborhoods and streets where they don't want to be.

Please show compassion for animals. What are we teaching our kids? That its okay to take a life. All living creatures deserve to live.

This timeline that we are living in needs to change. We need to do better as people. Show Aloha to all!

Wendy

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 12:15:05 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christina Yamachika	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am writing as someone who spends my days rescuing, rehabilitating, and caring for chickens, wild birds, and other animals across Hawai‘i. This isn’t just a hobby—it’s my life, and the lives of thousands of other island residents who pour our hearts, time, and money into this work.

We are a close-knit community. We’ve built support systems, small businesses, and local economies around humane animal care. In rural areas, we spend thousands of dollars on feed, veterinary care, habitat maintenance, transportation, education, and supplies. Every dollar we spend supports our neighbors—farmers, local stores, veterinarians, keiki, and other service providers. We even help residents with their pet chickens when needed

Bills like HB980, HB1852, and HB2561 ignore this reality. They threaten years of responsible, community-driven solutions. There are humane ways to manage animal populations—without poisoning our land, harming innocent animals, or enabling vigilantism. Choosing to kill animals instead of working with those of us who care for them is not leadership—it’s giving up on our communities and ‘āina. We cannot enable animal cruelty just because people feel “annoyed and bothered”. We humans already tear up these chickens natural habitats for own our comforts like housing and recreations. Let’s have some compassion so that others may learn what compassion truly is.

Please work with the organizations that care for these animals and our environment. Reject policies that divide us and normalize cruelty. If these bills move forward, many of us will remember! We do vote. We will rally! We expect better.

I oppose HB2561 HD2.

Thank you,

Christina Y.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 12:20:54 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gemina Kaeha	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

I am writing in strong opposition to HB 2561 HD2.

Chickens are social, intelligent animals who form emotional attachments to humans and to each other. They are already among the most abused animals in Hawai‘i due to widespread cockfighting and neglect. To respond by labeling them as pests and authorizing killing only deepens the harm.

If our representatives truly want to change the narrative that Hawai‘i is serious about preventing animal abuse, we cannot commit this level of abuse ourselves.

Across our islands we have recently seen feral cats shot, dogs on video being violently mistreated by young people, farms attacked to steal and kill animals and their caregivers, tourists harming sea creatures, and an ongoing cockfighting crisis. Study after study shows that animal abuse is often the first step toward broader violent crime. Violence begets violence.

By passing bills that normalize cruelty, the Legislature opens a Pandora’s box. These policies send a message that harming animals is acceptable, even encouraged. That is a dangerous message with real consequences for public safety and community wellbeing.

Hawai‘i should be reducing violence, not modeling it. I urge you to reject these bills and instead invest in humane, preventative, and educational solutions that reflect our shared values.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 12:26:06 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Matthew Arangatta	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a resident of the mainland United States and have always wanted to visit Hawai'i for the wildlife; however, with this bill I would no longer like to visit Hawai'i. The chickens are a natural part of the islands and they're already treated unfairly with people capturing them, using them for cock fighting, or abusing them. If anything, a bill should be made that gives them more protection. They're a part of the ecosystem and environment. This is animal cruelty.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 12:33:32 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carrie O	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The killing of feral chickens is inhumane and unjust. They are just trying to survive, on this island, like all of us. You want to give license to promote killing because a person doesn't like them. This will be justifying cruelty to animals, and opening the door to more violence as a society. We need to do better, and work on humane solutions. Trapping and killing, and just killing in general is not the answer. I OPPOSE this heinous bill.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 12:42:35 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erin Pinto	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong opposition to this cruel bill. Many of us want our tax dollars to be used for humane treatment and control of feral chickens and oppose animal cruelty in all forms. The presence of feral chickens is human-caused and we need to take responsibility and use humane methods to reduce their populations, rather than using cruel and brutal "pest control" techniques that cause pain and suffering. If you wouldn't do it to your dog or your kid, you shouldn't do it to another animal.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 12:57:52 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brett Schaffer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I've only lived in Hawaii for the last 10 years, but in that time I've tried to absorb as much as the culture as I could. I may not know much, but one thing I do know is that this bill is not who we are or should become. Allowing the killing of an innocent animal, one with just as much right to be here as any person, for anything other than sustenance is deeply wrong. Allowing the worse among us the freedom to commit animal cruelty is a terrible road to go down. When you boil it down, allowing free reign to slaughter- all because they make a little bit of noise living their lives, is normalizing abuse and that is something that should never come from government.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 1:08:23 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lance kakimoto	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I do not consider feral chickens as "pests"! They are still animals and should be treated as such!! I am appalled by the thought that the inconvenience that the feral chickens may cause the public would justify termination of them as "pests"! Sure we as educated, civilized citizens are cabalabe of developing programs that will provide care and concern for these creatures! Don't we have laws that prevent ANIMAL cruelty?!!!!

DO NOT shrug your responsibility of applying ALL laws that apply to ALL ANIMALS and NOT just those that are convenient for you!!

I believe that the majority of our citizens of this great state want to ensure that we maintain the adherence to cruelty to ALL Animals laws. Do not think that you can get away with declaring theses ANIMALS as pests to deal with your irresponsibility!!!!

By the way, the number of testimony opposing this bill MUST have an impact on your decisions!! You are to represent the community and NOT just your own personal agenda!!

respectfully,

Lance Kakimoto

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 4:29:07 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Motzer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I disagree and oppose to this bill, it is animal cruelty. These animals do not deserve this this fate!

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 3:37:09 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kehau Lee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

First, I vehemently OPPOSE this bill as it is ignorant of what is happening in our communities. Cock fighters are the pests that need to be extinguished, not chickens. Killing chickens will only be replaced by more chickens as long as cock fighting continues!

I am writing to also comment on the person who keeps posting photos of a feral pig and a supposed chicken feeder in Palolo. This person is also ignorant of the facts.

The feeder is a trapper, not a feeder. The trapper removes roosters, and uses birth control for the hens.

The supposed feral pig is not feral, but tame, friendly. Kids feed it by hand. It was somebody's pet, abandoned there. It did not descend from the mountain.

The two photos of the chickens shows no chicks because of the use of birth control. The trapper has a sign on her car roof that clearly says "Trapping/Birth Control". You can also see cages by her car. Just on the other side of these bushes is the housing project where cock fighters have dumped every one of these chickens. They're not there because of feeding. And, in the back of the house of the person who submitted the photos is a hiking trail where cock fighters who live along this trail breed their roosters. According to a neighbor from this area, there are at least 200 chickens along this trail.

Just had to set the record straight. People testify as truth when they don't have a clue of the real facts!

Kehau Lee

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 2:12:54 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Megan Yamauchi-Palafos	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee,

I oppose HB2561 HD2.

I am testifying on behalf of the thousands of island residents who rescue, rehabilitate, and provide lifelong care to chickens, wild birds, and native and non native species across Hawai‘i.

This is not a fringe community. It is a deeply rooted network of caregivers who have built close knit support systems, small businesses, and local economies around humane animal care. Especially in rural communities, people spend thousands of dollars of their own money on feed, veterinary care, habitat maintenance, transportation, education and supplies. This work supports local stores, farmers, veterinarians, our keiki and service providers.

HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 ignore this reality and threaten to dismantle years of responsible, community driven solutions. There are organizations ready and willing to help manage populations humanely, without poisoning our land with pesticides, harming non-targeted animals, executing innocent chickens or empowering violent vigilantes.

Choosing the easy way out through killing and pest control contracts is not leadership. It is a failure of those who lead from behind.

Support and work directly with the organizations that care for the lives of these chickens and for our ‘āina. Reject policies that normalize cruelty, contaminate our environment, and divide our communities into us versus them. If these bills move forward, many of us will remember this choice at the ballot box.

We vote. We organize. And we expect better.

Once again, I oppose HB2561 HD2.

Megan Yamauchi-Palafos

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 2:04:41 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gavin Lee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hi,

I oppose HB2561.

This bill promotes harmful practices that normalize violence toward animals and sends the wrong message to our community and keiki. We should be leading with compassion, education, and humane solutions—not policies that allow unnecessary harm.

I urge you to reject HB2561 and support humane, responsible alternatives.

Thank you for your consideration.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 2:01:40 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Colleen Nakamoto-Inouye	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hi,

I respectfully submit this testimony in opposition to HB2561.

This bill raises serious concerns about the normalization of violence toward animals and the broader impact that message has on our community. How we choose to address challenges reflects who we are as a society. Policies that permit or encourage harm risk eroding the values of compassion, responsibility, and respect that we strive to instill in both adults and our youth. Teaching non-violent, solution-oriented approaches fosters safer, more empathetic neighborhoods. Our keiki learn by example, and the policies we pass today help shape the kind of future they will carry forward.

For these reasons, I urge you to oppose HB2561 and instead support measures that prioritize humane treatment, education, and long-term solutions that benefit both animals and our community as a whole.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 1:58:16 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ashley lee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in strong opposition to HB2561.

This bill promotes actions that normalize violence and animal abuse, rather than encouraging humane, compassionate solutions. As a member of our community, and as a parent, I am deeply concerned about the message this sends to our keiki. Laws shape values, and this measure risks teaching our children that harm is an acceptable response instead of responsibility and empathy.

We have a responsibility to model kindness, stewardship, and respect for living beings. Passing legislation that appears to condone violence undermines those values and sets a troubling precedent for future generations.

I urge you to reject HB2561 and instead support policies that reflect compassion, education, and long-term, humane solutions.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide my testimony.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 1:50:06 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jamison Clements	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The killing of feral chickens is cruel and inhumane! Please reconsider, there are plenty of other ways to control the population besides murder!

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 1:20:14 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carol B	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is horrible. Why kill a chicken just for living? I oppose this cruelty to animal bill. Auwe!
What horrendous people even submitted this bill? We need to be better than this!

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 1:16:08 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Isabella Nadeau	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is a completely crazy initiative, it's "Animal Cruelty", it's against the constitution, you are assassins!

Not much more to say: live our chicken be!!!!!!!!!!

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 1:15:51 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Natalie Kakimoto	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concern,

I am submitting my testimony to oppose this bill. I have written testimony before regarding the other bills that are cruel and inhumane in regards to the feral chickens. I've watched as the opposing numbers have outweighed the for by over a hundred or more testimonies and you all still pass it with disregard to what the testimonies are saying. I do not believe the feral chickens are pests as you call them, but instead a part of our Hawaiian culture. To disregard this and instead just push forward your own personal agendas is not what you are there for. I'm sure that all of you that are for this bill can come together, possibly using your brains and maybe heart to find a humane solution for these feral chickens. There are many wasted tax dollars used by the legislature on yourselves and for other services so I'm sure you all can find money to use to help these very kind and caring citizens and their organizations to help assist these feral chickens. Maybe go after the citizens that are using these poor chickens for illegal cock fighting???

submitting my opposing testimony again and hopefully you all will do the right thing instead of the selfish, inhumane thing.

Sincerely,

Natalie Kakimoto

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 2:51:29 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andy Berky	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support this bill, these birds are a pest and potentially diseased.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 7:57:38 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Jaworowski	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the bill but it should be amended to include a key provision in the original bill. The current bill only covers feral chickens on public land, and that's a start, but there are many feral chickens on private property. The initial bill stated that its purpose included "Affirming the authority of private property owners to humanely control feral chickens on their own property, consistent with state animal protection laws and city requirements." Please put that back in. There must be some sort of relief for those of us in urban Honolulu who are plagued with feral chickens. I don't know why this language was taken out. It should be re-added and clarified that humanely control includes humane extermination. These chickens do not belong in urban environments, either public or private. Please provide us with a path for legal relief.



HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 5:10:09 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Athena Knox	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee,

I oppose HB2561 HD2.

I am testifying on behalf of the thousands of island residents who rescue, rehabilitate, and provide lifelong care to chickens, wild birds, and native and non-native species across Hawai'i.

These animals are to be protected. That is our endowed job as humans. There is so much to learn from them. They control the bug population and touch the hearts of many children learning how to navigate the world. We must move towards coexistence and recognition of their value in the ecosystem.

This bill goes against all hopes for a brighter world and safer community.

Let us lead with compassion.

Once again, I oppose HB2561 HD2.

Athena Knox

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 5:37:23 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Justin Sumida	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm sorry, but what morons thought of this? Actually that info is readily available through a Google search. We know who you / they are. If you two are reading this, in the words of Click and Clack....(look them up if you don't know) give yourselves a dope slap. If you cant do that then give eachother a dope slap. If there's more than three of you, line up stooge style and have someone give yourselves the slap across your faces. -pack pack pack- Change your names to Larey Curly and Moe.

Also im writing this through a phone so i gonna make thos as short as possible cuz iz a PAIN to write this way.... will you read this anyway? Prolly not...so...

First of all, it it really that large of a nuisance to have chickens roaming around? Of AAAAALLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL the things happening on these islands that are a nuisance...the homeless dogs biting peoples arms off, the kids stealing my hub caps, and bags...the scary people smashing and grabbing into stores / huting small / even large businesses., homelessness, cost of living going way up.....geez....you two monkey coconutz want to focus on little chickens??...geez whats happening in your lives that makes you focus on THIS..... Dont tell, i dont want to know actually...must be crazy though.

Regardlesa....How arwsome would it be for tourists to be walking around some place and see some chickens walking around innocently....then see some local grab the chicken by the nevk and snap it's neck right in front of their family as they're eating their ice cream or sucking on their pog or whatever. "Hey hun look at that chicken!!" Buck kawSCHNAP" "OMG that dude just snapped it's nevk!!" yeah...looks good as the chicken reels around flapping till it dies right in fromt of their kids! also, last i knew, snapping one's neck in half doesnt seem to feel too good. The poor animal! If you try it on yourselves and you feel great after though..i'll take that back though.

Also you want people...the local people..... (these people?!?!?!?) to be in charge to eradicate a life??...the ones that seem to flip their cars on level roads, side swipe people in crosswalks....the ones that break into stores and homes...you want these types of people to do that type of thing?? My fingers gettin sore so go scroll through some hawaii news now, stolen stuff hawaii and that weird hungry news guy or whatever his name is on instagram ro see more examples. geez just

thinking of what people do....Seriously?? THOSE PEOPLE?!?!?! You need to give yourselves another dope slap just for that one -BA DA DOOM-

Seriously though, you should know better. Shame on you. Encouraging that kind of behavior / death is wrong. You should know better its a possible gateway for people to lead up to bigger things like crime, robberies....human death maybe? I dunno but seriously think of something better and do better.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 5:46:17 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alice	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

While attending a Prevent Child Abuse conference many years ago here in Hawaii, I learned that studies show that animal abuse leads to other forms of abuse (such as child abuse).

Creating laws that ALLOW individuals to treat animals in a cruel manner (i.e. poisoning them) will only lead to more significant issues on a much larger scale.

It is my hope that a HUMANE solution can be implemented to resolve the issue of feral chickens in Hawaii.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 8:26:32 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robin Balthaser	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senator or Representative

I am writing to express my deep outrage and opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561, including the proposal to classify chickens on public land as pests.

These bills promote violence and cruelty as public policy. That is not who we are as Hawai'i. Our 'āina is not something to dominate or destroy. It is a living system that deserves respect, care, and compassion. All living beings who share this land are worthy of humane treatment.

Killing is not the approach we want from our leadership. It does not reflect our culture, our values, or the meaning of aloha. Violence carried out in the name of the government is still violence, and it teaches the wrong lesson to our keiki and our communities.

Hawai'i should be leading with compassion, innovation, and mālama 'āina, not bloodshed. These bills move us in the opposite direction and damage trust between the people and those elected to serve them.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 and to support humane, nonviolent, community based solutions instead.

Our islands deserve better.

Chickens are social, intelligent animals who form emotional attachments to humans and to each other. They are already among the most abused animals in Hawai'i due to widespread cockfighting and neglect. To respond by labeling them as pests and authorizing killing only deepens the harm.

If our representatives truly want to change the narrative that Hawai'i is serious about preventing animal abuse, we cannot commit this level of abuse ourselves.

Across our islands we have recently seen feral cats shot, dogs on video being violently mistreated by young people, farms attacked to steal and kill animals and their caregivers, tourists harming sea creatures, and an ongoing cockfighting crisis. Study after study shows that animal abuse is often the first step toward broader violent crime. Violence begets violence.

By passing bills that normalize cruelty, the Legislature opens a Pandora's box. These policies send a message that harming animals is acceptable, even encouraged. That is a dangerous message with real consequences for public safety and community wellbeing.

Hawai'i should be reducing violence, not modeling it. I urge you to reject these bills and instead invest in humane, preventative, and educational solutions that reflect our shared values.

Please do not make animal cruelty the law of our land.

Robin Balthaser

Kauai

I am testifying in opposition to HB 2561 HD2.

This bill seeks to classify feral chickens as public nuisances and controllable pests while prohibiting the feeding and supporting of feral chickens on public lands. HB2561 HD2 concentrates on punishing those who feed and care for feral chickens as though feeding is the primary reason why chicken populations are increasing, rather than eliminating cockfighting, which relies on importing and breeding chickens before dumping those that are no longer useful. Categorizing them as pests to be controlled ignores and even rejects their rich, historical connection to kānaka ʻōiwi like myself, as they have been here long before and will remain here long after most of those who support the abandonment and starvation of these innocent creatures.

I oppose HB 2561 HD2's designation of chickens as nuisances and pests as well as its ban of feeding said animals on public lands and will address the following points:

- Chickens are historically and culturally connected to kānaka maoli
- This bill focuses on preventing feeders from supporting and finding long-term solutions for feral chickens instead of addressing widespread brutality enacted upon chickens and illicit activities such as the following:
 - Illegal cockfighting/gambling, which relies upon mass violence toward and abandonment of chickens on public lands
 - Cruelty toward animals (e.g., cockfighting) is intertwined with violence toward people
 - Hawai'i's youth are increasingly trespassing on and stealing pet chickens from private property to engage in animal torture and street fighting before dumping their bodies, behaviors which may lead to increased bullying, violence, and aggression in schools and communities
- Proposed solutions must be long-term and developed in partnership with rescuers and organized groups

Historical and cultural relevance to kānaka maoli and Hawai'i

Chickens, specifically the red jungle fowl, have a long, shared history with kānaka maoli. Helumoa or “chicken scratch” in Waikīkī was home to many ali'i. Helumoa was supposedly named after Ka'auhelumoa¹, the mythical chicken who flew from Ka'au Crater to the area we know as Helumoa. After scratching the dirt at Kākuhihewa's feet, the ali'i ordered a coconut tree to be planted at the site where Ka'auhelumoa scratched. The coconut tree later became a larger grove of trees, which was eventually named the King's Grove. Other ali'i including Mā'ilikūhahi, Lā'ieloheloheikawai, Kamehameha V Lot Kapuāiwa, and Kamehameha Schools' beloved founder Bernice Pauahi Bishop were all said to have lived in Helumoa at different times. Kākuhihewa's encounter with Ka'auhelumoa led to a historical place rich with connection to our ali'i.

¹ <https://kaiwakiloumoku.ksbe.edu/article/essays-kamehameha-schools-revitalizes-one-of-waikikiis-landmarks>

Moa have long been iconic symbols in Hawai‘i’s public image. Two of Hawai‘i’s prominent and acclaimed companies—Central Pacific Bank and Hawaiian Airlines—recognize chickens as central to Hawai‘i’s culture by including the animals in their Hawai‘i’s Best Bank ad² posted to their YouTube channel on March 2, 2026 and in the 2024 In-Flight Safety Video (*beginning at 4:45*)³, respectively. The chickens in the Hawaiian Airlines ad belong to a kānaka maoli-owned farm, once again showing how close native Hawaiians’ relationships are to moa.

Cockfighting: if gambling is illegal, *all* gambling is illegal

Cruelty toward animals—especially chickens—has run rampant throughout our islands. Cockfighting events are extraordinarily prevalent and promise thousands of dollars in illegal gambling winnings. And while the State has cracked down on illegal gambling at game rooms, rampant cockfighting events draw countless individuals, violence, outlawed activities, and worst of all: innocent roosters forced to fight gladiator-style to the death amidst celebration and anger. Hawai‘i Business Magazine published a devastating feature on cockfighting in 2017 “Doing Business in the Shadows”⁴, which highlighted how these illegal activities are ingrained in children by older relatives under the guise of being ‘cultural.’ Despite the article’s subject, Tonto, spending time in prison for cockfighting, he continues breeding and participating in the barbaric activities—going so far as to admit he fought the weekend after he was released from prison. If prosecuted and convicted people are fearless enough to publicly share they are continuing the behavior that incarcerated them in the first place, what does that say about the State’s laws?

The Civil Beat published an article in 2023 called “The Battle Against Cockfighting in Hawai‘i: Lax Enforcement Helps Foster An Attitude of ‘What’s Wrong With It?’”⁵ In the article, HPD spokeswoman Michelle You stated HPD hadn’t raided or arrested anyone for cockfighting in over one year. Cockfights were thrust into the public eye at the time of publishing due to a Waianae shooting at a cockfight, which killed two people and injured three with one of the alleged shooters being a 16-year-old at the time. The Civil Beat article noted “the focus seems to have shifted to gambling in game rooms” and that many officers had been imprisoned for profiting off of cockfighting operations⁶. The article concludes with Hawai‘i politicians’ inaction, or even approval of cockfighting despite its root in animal cruelty and illicit gambling. The irony is not lost on HPD and politicians’ crack downs on gambling in the form of game room activities

² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V6mXQ0XXCDs&t=10s>

³ <https://youtu.be/XbxFlanVIR4?si=VDWfV8zhGGFm3V9s&t=285>

⁴ <https://www.hawaiiibusiness.com/doing-business-in-the-shadows/>

⁵ <https://www.civilbeat.org/2023/04/the-battle-against-cockfighting-in-hawaii-lax-enforcement-helps-foster-an-attitude-of-whats-wrong-with-it/>

⁶ <https://www.civilbeat.org/2015/09/when-cops-become-criminals-arrests-of-hpd-officers-point-to-a-culture-of-corruption/>

compared to an entirely contrary support of gambling through violence toward chickens. If gambling is illegal, it is illegal in **all** forms.

The link between cruelty to animals and violence toward humans

The Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF) published “The Link Between Cruelty to Animals and Violence Toward Humans,” a cycle of violence commonly shared by researchers and even law enforcement agencies like the FBI⁷ for years. The FBI cites the Animal Welfare Institute organization, writing, “the Farm Bill, signed into law in 2014, amends the existing law and not only targets those responsible for putting the fights together but also contains the elemental Animal Fighting Spectator Prohibition Act. This act made it a federal offense to knowingly attend an animal fight anywhere in the United States and instituted additional charges for bringing a child under the age of 16 to an animal fight.⁸ The ALDF notes “violence is violence; and those who commit violence rarely limit their victim pool to a single species.” The Link cites many data points tying animal cruelty and violence toward people, including, but not limited to:

- Between 62-67% of animal cruelty in the home occurs in the presence of a child, which is a form of psychological trauma and negatively impacts children’s development.⁹
- Witnessing animal cruelty may cause desensitization, decreased empathy, learned maladaptive coping mechanisms and other negative behaviors, and unresolved feelings of anger, fear, and resentment—which may, in turn, lead to perpetrating violence.
- If a child is cruel to animals, then it may be a sign that the child has experienced serious abuse or neglect. Children who exhibit cruelty towards animals are more than twice as likely to have suffered maltreatment themselves.¹⁰
- Children may engage in animal cruelty because it is a learned behavior modeled by a parent or guardian.¹¹
- Teenage boys who bully their peers are more likely to have abused an animal. Both bullying and animal abuse often coincide with a need for egotistic power and a lack of cognitive empathy.¹²

⁷ <https://leb.fbi.gov/articles/featured-articles/the-link-between-animal-cruelty-and-human-violence>

⁸ <https://awionline.org/content/animal-fighting-spectator-prohibition-act>

⁹ <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7683760/>

¹⁰ <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC4212826/>

¹¹ <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7683760/>

¹² <https://www.cabidigitallibrary.org/doi/full/10.1079/hai.2017.0004>

- 43% of school shooters in the United States between 1988 and 2012 had histories of animal abuse.¹³ The majority of those histories include close-up and personal violence against neighborhood companion animals.¹⁴
- 70% of people who have committed violent crimes against animals also had records for other crimes. Animal abusers are 5 times more likely to commit violence crimes against people, 4 times more likely to commit property crimes, and 3 times more likely to have records for drug or disorderly-conduct offenses.¹⁵

Violence and disturbing behaviors toward chickens by Hawai‘i’s children

The previously cited articles mention how participation in cockfighting often begins when children are exposed to the violent behaviors and events at a very young age, while the multiple research papers and studies included in ALDF’s “The Link” all deduce animal cruelty’s correlation to childhood trauma and future violent behaviors, such as evolutions toward massacres and school shootings. Hawai‘i’s children—mostly boys in middle and high school, while some may be elementary students—are rampantly trespassing on residents’ properties and stealing their hens and/or roosters, catching roosters and making them fight on the street, torturing and mutilating their bodies, and dumping their injured and/or bait roosters in public areas and in neighborhoods when they’re no longer useful to them. Children are frequently stealing, capturing, fighting, and dumping chickens in all communities—contributing to the larger cycle of violence toward animals by children, illicit behaviors such as trespassing and theft of pet roosters and hens from residents’ homes, cockfighting on the street and in events, and dumping maimed and/or dying roosters once they’re no longer needed—all of which are ignored by this bill. These are **not** isolated incidents of violence. They are occurring in every district by children of your constituents.

Organized grassroots groups dedicated to the rescue, rehabilitation, and legal rehoming of feral chickens and even non animal-focused groups like Stolen Stuff Hawai‘i have numerous posts about children trespassing and stealing pet chickens from yards (*some of which are included below*). Even worse posts about children (and adults) disturbingly starving, torturing, and killing feral chickens are shared widely in these groups and through other forms of communication. These barbaric acts toward innocent animals like feral chickens are occurring by younger and younger children, contributing to a concerning trend of violence and bullying in young people across the State. Violence toward animals, especially committed by children this young, is not and will not be enacted only toward those creatures. This type of disturbing behavior will inevitably bleed into communities of human beings. The Civil Beat wrote about viral bullying

¹³ <https://time.com/6191947/mass-shootings-animal-cruelty/>

¹⁴ <https://nationallinkcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/ElderAbuse-WisconsinManual.pdf>

¹⁵ <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1088767913511459>

I have now had 6 of my chickens stolen out of my high fenced yard on Waianae valley road.

There are two boys that I have on camera coming onto my property and stealing my two Belgian roosters and my game fowl.

I have previously told these boys it was stealing and they were my pets when I caught them coming IN my gate to steal them the first time.

I'm aware that "this is popular in Waianae" but that doesn't make it right.

There are plenty of feral birds at the parks and all over. Im raising these from eggs as livestock & this is stealing

This is one of my babies about 3 months ago- though I'm sure now he's mutilated by the little boys who wander around stealing peoples pets.


Pay more attention to your children.

Michael J. Kitc... Follow
3d · 🌐




lastnight 1-5 am someone came around the ewa beach park area and took my chickens from my yard this is the second time this week that this has happened please lmk if seen 250\$ reward

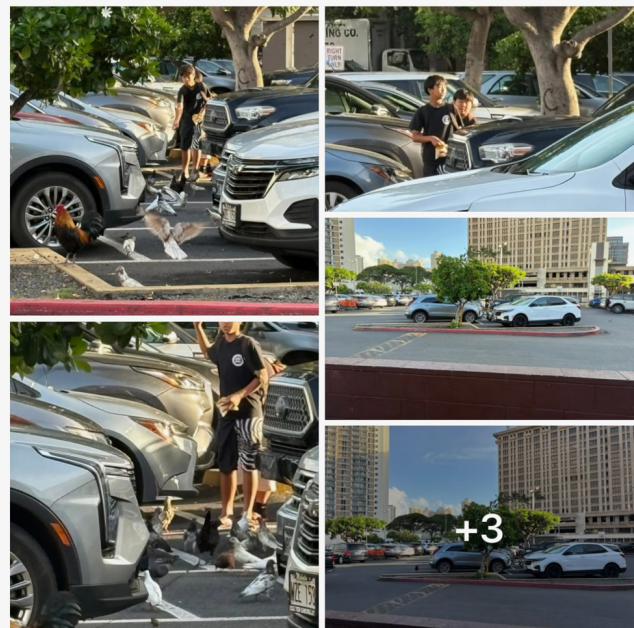
THEFT: Reposting from emery... more

 **Melissa Margaret**
Feb 20 · 🌐

Aloha! Animal Rights Hawaii suggested I reach out to you..I'm hoping you might be able to help me. There's a group of boys ages about 5-12 who torture the chickens by the Honolulu zoo, around kaimana beach park, the aquarium, around diamond head - constantly. I see them almost every day and I'm pretty sure they tortured and killed at least one cat at diamondhead and left the body. They have no fear of the police and adults. They are completely disrespectful to adults. I saw them almost knock over a stroller with an infant in it multiple times to try to catch chickens to torture them. I think they are the kids that were caught trying to drown chickens in Waikiki. The police, dcsf, and the humane society won't do anything. I also worry these children now have a higher chance of moving on to torture and kill pets and eventually people. I wonder if they are torturing other children now already. Is there anything you can do to stop them? I've called all agencies numerous times and sent pictures, etc. it's really depressing to even

 **Laszlo Csorba**
1d · 🌐

At the don quijote criminal animal cruelty gang boys torture chicken and roosters



👍👎👉 20 17 comments
Like Comment Send

Aloha

We have some troubled boys in our neighborhood who I see catching roosters and abusing them. They tie them up and try to get them to cock fight. These boys are probably between 8-13 years old. Is this just something boys do that I have to accept, or should I try to do something about it? I've untied two roosters so far but I'm sure the boys caught them again.

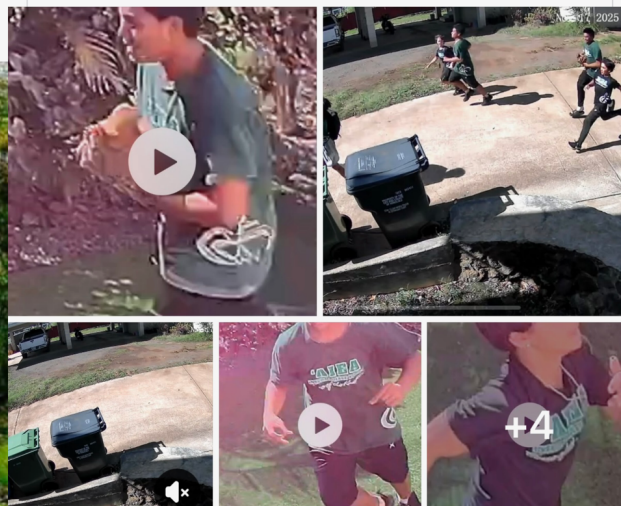
Any advice is appreciated, it breaks my heart hearing these birds scream 😞



Please help us!

Six AIEA INTERMEDIATE boys stole our daughter's pet hens on 11/17/25 at 2:15pm in the Aiea area. They climbed over our neighbors vinyl fence then trespassed to our enclosed back yard. They stole one hen and then returned for our last hen. Please help us identify them.

Police Report Number: 25.426400
Will be contacting the principal and pressing charges when found.



Michael J. Kitchens · Follow
Admin Feb 27 · 🌐

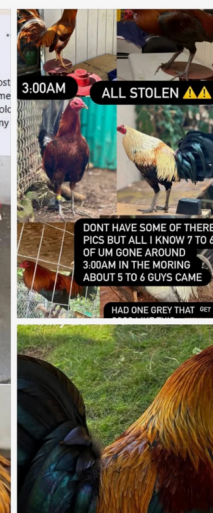
We have identified a group of 6/7 kids allegedly responsible for multiple rooster thefts in the Kalihi Valley area. If your rooster was stolen, please let us know. We are looking specifically for any photos or video of them carrying the stolen roosters.

We have their names and many photos of them. If you know the kids responsible, please warn them that they are trespassing and committing crimes.

There are many, and I stress, MANY Rooster owners who have had them stolen from their coops and privately fenced in areas. These are CRIMES and very upsetting to the bird owners as well as their family. Many of them were beloved pets. Not to mention the imbalance created by their loss in the remaining animal's environment. If you see or know these kids...tell them to stop before someone gets hurt.

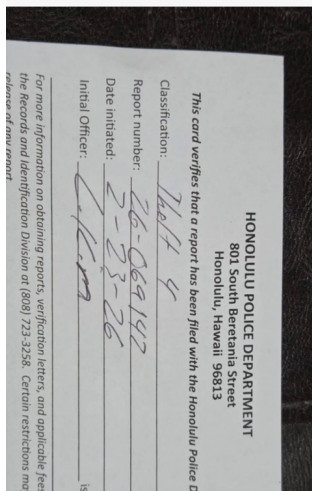
I understand the long history of chicken fighting as well as wild roosters and chickens roaming the land, however, that's not what this is. This is theft of actually owned and beloved animals. These kids need to be held accountable and stopped from stealing further.


If you have any information on these kids, any photos or video of them, or see them, please let us know.



Stolen Pet Rooster

I usually do not use Facebook, but I felt that it was important for me to do so now. Our pet rooster Sesame was stolen from his coop late at night on 2/22/26 or early morning 2/23/26 at our home in Kalihi. We raised him from a chick that we found lost on our property. He is only about a year old and is not a fighter. We're worried about him and just want him back home safe. If you have any information please text (808) 426-0799.



 **Angela Freitas**
Feb 27 · 🌐

Trespassing!! We are trying to get another neighbor's camera footage but these middle school kids were with this boy who went onto my neighbor's property, threw his fighting rooster into their yard to attack & capture another rooster. (Snickers who is wild but has lived on my & my neighbor's property since he was a chick 🐔 We love him dearly!!)

This happened on Thursday, Feb 19th around 6:08 P.M.

We heard they fought Snickers and he died on Wednesday. 😞

I can't believe this. I think they just don't want to give him back!

Anyway, rooster fighting is ILLEGAL and cruelty to animals is a felony.

If these kids are yours, please tell them to stop doing this!!

GIVE SNICKERS BACK! ❤️

Special thanks to all our neighbors with cameras. ❤️

videos in October 2025¹⁶, noting that “the state has seen a moderate increase in reports of bullying in middle schools since the Covid pandemic. Some of the most severe cases of bullying have resulted in student arrests, most recently [at the time] at Kalama Intermediate School on Maui, where five girls were arrested and charged with kidnapping after trapping a classmate in a soundproof room for 20 minutes and filming the incident.” As “The Link” and the *Revisiting a Link: Animal Abuse, Bullying, and Empathy in Australian Youth* study expose, “witnessing and/or directly engaging in animal abuse significantly correlated with bullying.” By allowing and even encouraging cruel behaviors such as cockfighting in youth and punishing efforts to rescue, rehabilitate, and legally re-home feral chickens—all of which begins with feeding them, which this bill prohibits—we are poised to see a continued increase in bullying, school violence, eventually the same unlawful behaviors these children’s families have introduced them to and participate in, and potentially violence toward other animals and people.

Lack of procedural direction

As the HD2 iteration of the bill notes prohibited acts performed for research or rescue purposes must be approved by the State or city before performance, the Senate must establish what the

¹⁶ <https://www.civilbeat.org/2025/10/viral-bullying-videos-are-sign-of-bigger-problem-in-hawai'i-schools/>

proper procedure is to receive approval. State and city agencies are already slow to implement new programs and processes, and this bill does not include language about who would be the approving department, how long it would take to issue approvals, how long approvals may last (one day, one week, one month, etc.), and what happens if the agency does not issue approvals in time for rescue or removal to occur. Additionally, if HPD is truly understaffed and underfunded as they claim, reconsider having HPD and/or other law enforcement agencies as enforcing responders.

Potential solution proposals

I urge this Senate to consider and invest in empathetic, humane long-term solutions in partnership with grassroots groups and individuals who have expertise in rescuing, rehabilitating, and rehoming chickens. Develop a working group or task force of volunteers who want to care for feral chickens in a humane way that doesn't resort only to legal penalties for feeders and disposal of any feral chickens deemed "too noisy." Potential solutions could include the following:

- Work with grassroots rescue organizations like Trooper's Chicken Rescue to establish a sanctuary for these animals where they'll be safe and removed from residential areas that may see the most noise pollution
- Provide funding and contracts to organizations that can actually help with the booming populations the Hawaiian Humane Society chooses to ignore and say they don't have the space, capacity, or funding to help
- Fund State-run spaying/neutering/sterilization/or even humane and compassionate euthanasia treatments to cull growing populations if necessary
- Pursue the ruthless and unbounded amount of people fighting chickens for money, which calls for barbaric violence toward chickens, clandestine gambling, dumping of chickens that are of no use to them, and larger populations of feral birds in specific areas
- Work with the Department of Education to develop animal empathy and education curricula for students of all ages to prevent violence and illegal behaviors students are currently and will engage in.

Short-term reactions to community noise complaints such as the prevention of feeding chickens does not solve this complex issue. Chickens will always be here, whether human beings feed them or not, just as they've been here long before most of the most vocal minority complainants. Work with individuals who prioritize rescue, rehabilitation, and rehoming efforts to establish a solution like a sanctuary similar to that of the Lāna'i Cat Sanctuary that benefits and achieves everyone's goals. Do not allow the loudest voices of residents who participate in illicit activities and/or support abhorrent policies to determine which beings get to live and who is forced to die.

Once again, I am in opposition to HB 2561 HD2.

Noelle Kakimoto

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 11:06:56 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charles Cryan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB2561 HD2.

I am disappointed that the House ignored the overwhelming majority of votes in opposition to this bill and still voted to support it even after recognizing that the bill is so problematic.

Any solution to the feral chicken population issue should be reached after discussion and collaboration between Native Hawaiian groups, chicken rescue groups, animal welfare agencies, community representatives, veterinarians, and state and city agencies.

The solution must be culturally-sensitive, take into account the unique place that feral chickens and moa have in ancient and modern Hawaiian culture, collaborative and have community support. HB2561 HD2 will not provide a long-term solution to the issue. I suggest that the Legislature promote a bill that calls for a working group of the aforementioned representatives that will reach a humane and effective solution, not just a hastily pieced together bill that is reactive to a vocal minority.

Please defer action on HB2561 HD2 and take a careful, measured, intelligent approach to this issue.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 11:11:29 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dr. Jaren Ikenaga DVM	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB2561 HD2.

I am a practicing veterinarian on O‘ahu. It saddens me that the Legislature is suggesting a solution to control the feral chicken population that involves the indiscriminate killing of animals. If legislators are truly serious about addressing animal cruelty, how can they support a bill that sanctions the killing of animals?

The issue of feral chickens is a community-wide issue and any solution should be based on collaboration between veterinarians (to ensure that animals are treated humanely, ethically and within accepted veterinary practices), animal welfare groups, animal rescue groups, Native Hawaiian representatives (to ensure that any solution is consistent with and not offensive to Native Hawaiian culture), community members and government agencies. HB2561 HD2 fails to require any collaboration between these important stakeholders in this issue and will not solve the problem. I believe that a collaborative solution can be reached which properly balances competing interests and, most importantly, accounts for the humane and ethical treatment of the chickens. I am urging the committee members to vote “no” on HB2561 HD2 and to work on a more comprehensive, well-thought-out solution to this issue.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 12:10:30 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Yawadee Srimake-Yadao	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Submitted to the Hawaii State Legislature

My name is Yawadee Srimake-Yadao, and I am a resident of Eleele, Kaua‘i. I am submitting this testimony in opposition to HB 2561.

I urge this committee to reject legislation that would open the door to the unregulated abuse of feral chickens in Hawai‘i. Chickens are living animals that have become woven into the fabric of our islands, and they deserve thoughtful consideration. These birds actively forage on centipedes, beetles, and other insects — including the coconut rhinoceros beetle, an invasive species that poses a serious threat to our coconut and palm trees. Bills like this one weaken animal cruelty protections for feral chickens, it opens the door to abuse.

I ask this committee to vote NO on HB 2561. Protect these animals. Fund humane management programs. .

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Yawadee Srimake-Yadao

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 2:26:37 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thanapat Tangjittong	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representative Gedeon,

I am writing to express my deep outrage and opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561, including the proposal to classify chickens on public land as pests.

These bills promote violence and cruelty as public policy. That is not who we are as Hawai'i.

Our 'āina is not something to dominate or destroy. It is a living system that deserves respect, care, and compassion. All living beings who share this land are worthy of humane treatment.

Killing is not the approach we want from our leadership. It does not reflect our culture, our values, or the meaning of aloha. Violence carried out in the name of the government is still violence, and it teaches the wrong lesson to our keiki and our communities.

Hawai'i should be leading with compassion, innovation, and mālama 'āina, not bloodshed. These bills move us in the opposite direction and damage trust between the people and those elected to serve them.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 and to support humane, nonviolent, community based solutions instead.

Our islands deserve better.

With respect and aloha,

Thanapat Tangjittong (Hawaii Kai)

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 2:34:03 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alexis Bryant	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Alexis, and I am a resident of Hawai‘i. I am submitting this testimony in strong opposition to HB2561, HB980, and HB1852. I am also representing thousands of residents who rescue, rehabilitate, and provide lifelong care to feral chickens across the island.

While this bill is presented as a public health and nuisance measure, its provisions risk increasing animal abuse, enabling illegal cockfighting activity, and sending harmful messages to children about the acceptability of cruelty toward animals. Hawai‘i already struggles with widespread cockfighting, and any law that weakens protections for chickens and roosters, or reframes them as pests, creates dangerous loopholes that can be exploited.

Classifying feral chickens as a “controllable pest” on public lands is deeply concerning. This language devalues living animals and opens the door to inhumane treatment under the guise of control, including shooting, violent trapping, or other abusive acts carried out without proper oversight. In a state where cockfighting remains a persistent problem, this classification risks further normalizing violence toward these animals.

The bill’s prohibition on feeding or supporting feral chickens on public lands may appear reasonable on its surface, but in practice it discourages compassion while failing to address the root causes of the issue, such as abandonment, illegal breeding, and cockfighting-related dumping. Criminalizing care without providing meaningful, humane alternatives will not reduce suffering; it will only hide it.

Humane population control options already exist and should be prioritized over lethal or abusive methods. These include egg management, such as collecting freshly laid eggs or humanely adding eggs to prevent hatching; partnerships with animal rescues or sanctuaries to relocate excess roosters; humane trapping conducted by trained personnel with birds transferred to rescue organizations; and stronger enforcement and education to prevent dumping, particularly related to cockfighting activity. These approaches reduce population growth responsibly without normalizing cruelty.

There are also successful models from other island communities that Hawai'i should seriously consider. In Key West, Florida, feral chickens are legally protected and recognized as part of the island's character. It is illegal there to abuse, harm, or kill them. Instead of punitive or violent control, Key West works with a wildlife center that assists with the relocation and rehabilitation of chickens when needed. This approach demonstrates that humane treatment, public accountability, and coexistence are both achievable and effective.

Most troubling is the normalization of animal abuse among children, which I personally witness far too often. I have repeatedly seen children capture, harm, and torture chickens in public areas. I have called authorities numerous times while these acts were actively occurring and waited on site, yet no law enforcement response ever came. This situation highlights gaps in the existing legal framework and underscores the need for proactive legislative attention.

In one instance, a child told me directly that he wanted one hundred dollars for a chicken he had just caught, stating that the chicken was intended for fighting and that the cops would not do anything. This interaction was deeply disturbing and demonstrates that children already understand there are no real consequences for this behavior. It reflects a failure of enforcement and a legal environment where animal abuse is effectively tolerated.

When children grow up believing that harming animals is acceptable, ignored, or excused, it creates far greater problems for the future of our communities. This is not only an animal welfare issue, it is a public safety and child development issue. Numerous studies link animal cruelty to future violent behavior, and our laws should be working to prevent this, not reinforce it.

It is also deeply concerning that Hawai'i already carries a widely documented reputation for weak animal protection and high rates of animal cruelty, something that can be easily confirmed through public reports and national rankings. This image does not align with the values Hawai'i

publicly promotes of compassion, stewardship, and respect for life, and legislation like HB2561 risks reinforcing that reputation rather than correcting it.

Animal abuse should never be dismissed or defended as culture. Cockfighting and the torture of animals are not part of Hawaiian culture, and labeling cruelty as cultural tradition is a harmful excuse that enables further abuse while disrespecting true Hawaiian values of mālama, kuleana, and respect for life.

Feral chickens and roosters are sentient beings who deserve humane treatment and legal protection. Hawai'i's laws should be closing loopholes, not creating new ones that make abuse easier to justify or ignore. The Legislature must decide whether Hawai'i will continue to be seen as a place that tolerates cruelty, or choose to lead with compassion, accountability, and humane solutions that reflect the values it claims to uphold.

As engaged residents and voters, many of us are paying close attention to how our legislators act on this issue. Decisions made on bills like HB2561 will be remembered when voting time comes, and I, along with many others, will continue to advocate for these animals and for laws that reflect what is right and humane.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to oppose HB2561, and the following bills HB 980 HB1852.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Alexis

Oahu, HI

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 2:38:23 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Evelyn	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

My name is Evelyn I do not live in Hawai‘i full-time, but I have visited and I follow the islands closely, especially regarding the treatment of feral chickens. I am submitting this testimony in strong opposition to HB2561, HB980, and HB1852.

What is deeply shocking, and frankly unacceptable is that **Representative Jackson Sayama** is the one who introduced this bill. The thought that any legislator would propose a law that allows or encourages cruelty toward animals is morally reprehensible. This bill undermines everything Hawai‘i claims to stand for: aloha, mālama, and kuleana. It sends a message that harming sentient beings for convenience is acceptable, and that is unconscionable.

My concern is also deeply personal: my daughter is strongly involved in the chicken rescue community in Hawai‘i, dedicating her time and energy to rescuing, rehabilitating, and providing lifelong care for these birds. I have seen firsthand how much compassion, commitment, and responsibility goes into this work. The idea that a bill could criminalize care or make it easier to harm chickens is not only heartbreaking it is an attack on the very people in the community who embody aloha and mālama in action.

Many people, both locally and on the mainland, are horrified that this bill exists at all. A widely circulated petition opposing it has been signed by concerned citizens from across Hawai‘i and beyond, showing that the public will not stand by while legislation normalizes cruelty. The introduction of this bill has left a bitter taste in the mouths of residents and visitors alike. Representative Sayama may want to reconsider his approach, because pursuing legislation that condones inhumane treatment could seriously impact his reputation and political future. Many believe that continuing to advance this bill risks losing public trust and voter support entirely.

The bill’s framing of chickens as “pests” is misleading and unfair. Chickens play an important ecological role: they forage continuously, eating roaches, beetles, larvae, and other insects, naturally controlling pest populations. They scratch and aerate the soil, contributing to a balanced ecosystem. They are part of Hawai‘i’s living landscape, not a nuisance. Rooster crowing is instinctual behavior, just as dogs bark, birds call, and people host noisy gatherings. Labeling a natural animal behavior as justification for harm is both irrational and cruel.

This issue has already attracted national attention. People on the mainland are watching and expressing outrage at the thought that Hawai'i legislators would propose such a law. The message is clear: cruelty disguised as "pest control" is unacceptable and reflects poorly on the state.

Humane alternatives exist. Egg management, partnerships with rescues and sanctuaries, humane trapping and relocation, and enforcement against dumping and cockfighting are all effective ways to address concerns **without** promoting harm. These solutions reflect the values Hawai'i claims to uphold and maintain public trust.

Chickens are living, sentient beings who contribute ecologically, culturally, and symbolically to the islands. They deserve protection and respect, not legislation that justifies cruelty.

I urge you, as lawmakers, to oppose HB2561, HB980, and HB1852. Representative Sayama and the Legislature must understand that the public is watching, both in Hawai'i and across the mainland. Advancing inhumane measures will not be forgotten, and accountability will follow.

Mahalo for your time.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 2:39:52 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rob	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha committee,

My name is Rob I do not live in Hawai‘i, but I visit many times and follow local issues closely. I am submitting this testimony in vehement opposition to HB2561, HB980, and HB1852.

This issue is personal to me. My daughter is, deeply involved in the chicken rescue community, dedicating herself to saving, rehabilitating, and providing lifelong care for these animals. Chickens are not pests. They forage for insects like roaches and beetles, aerate soil, and contribute to Hawai‘i’s ecological balance. These birds help the environment and are a natural part of the islands’ landscape.

Roosters crowing is instinctive behavior. Just as cicadas hum, frogs sing, and waves crash along the shore, crowing is part of the natural rhythm of life in Hawai‘i. Humans tolerate far louder and more disruptive sounds every day traffic, construction, fireworks, but a rooster is being singled out for simply behaving naturally. Targeting them in this way is cruel and unreasonable.

It is shocking and morally unacceptable that Representative Jackson Sayama introduced this bill. The idea that legislation could allow or promote harm to living animals is appalling. People across Hawai‘i and the mainland are outraged. A petition opposing these bills has circulated widely and gathered thousands of signatures. Pursuing this legislation risks public trust, damages the state’s reputation, and could have serious consequences for Representative Sayama’s credibility and political future.

Humane alternatives already exist: egg management, relocation through rescues and sanctuaries, and enforcement against dumping and cockfighting. These approaches address legitimate concerns without causing harm. and reflect the values of aloha, mālama, and kuleana.

Chickens are living, sentient beings, integral to Hawai‘i’s ecology, culture, and identity. I urge the Legislature to oppose HB2561, HB980, and HB1852, and to reject any law that compromises compassion, ethics, or the natural harmony of the islands.

Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 4:20:25 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jason Bryant	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Honorable Members,

My name is Jason B., and I am a Hawai‘i resident submitting testimony in opposition to HB2561, HB980, and HB1852.

These bills raise serious concerns not only from an animal welfare standpoint, but from a cultural and ethical one. Chickens have existed in Hawai‘i since the arrival of Polynesian voyagers and have long been part of the islands’ ecological and cultural identity. Over generations, they became embedded in the rhythms of local life. Their presence today is not accidental—it is historical.

Much of the frustration driving these proposals stems from rooster crowing. However, crowing is an inherent biological instinct. It is not misconduct, and it cannot be trained away. Historically, the sound of roosters marked the beginning of the day across rural Hawai‘i. Reframing that natural behavior as justification for labeling animals as pests represents a significant shift away from coexistence.

We must also examine consistency. Many sources of neighborhood noise originate from human activity—fireworks, late-night gatherings, or barking dogs. Yet we do not respond by declaring those sources inherently disposable. When we apply a harsher standard to animals than to ourselves, it reflects a deeper imbalance in how we assign value.

The proposed classification of chickens as “controllable pests” is especially troubling. Terminology shapes policy outcomes. Once animals are defined as pests, the threshold for humane treatment often erodes. In a state already confronting challenges with cockfighting and animal cruelty, such a shift risks compounding existing problems.

Equally important is the cultural dimension. Hawai‘i consistently promotes values such as mālama, kuleana, and aloha. These concepts are not symbolic—they carry expectations about how we relate to living systems. Policies that prioritize eradication over stewardship risk undermining those foundational principles.

There is also a societal impact to consider. The way laws define acceptable treatment of animals influences public behavior. When compassion is weakened at the legal level, it becomes

weakened socially. That effect is particularly significant for youth, who develop their understanding of empathy through the norms they observe.

Importantly, opposing these bills does not mean ignoring legitimate concerns. Humane alternatives already exist, including egg management, relocation partnerships, and targeted enforcement against dumping and cockfighting. These approaches address real issues without abandoning ethical responsibility.

Ultimately, this discussion is about alignment. If Hawai'i is to uphold its stated values, its policies must reflect them. Choosing humane, culturally grounded solutions affirms the identity we claim. Moving toward harmful classifications risks contradicting it.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Legislature to reject HB2561, HB980, and HB1852 and pursue solutions rooted in responsibility, balance, and respect for life.

I will closely be following how the legislators act towards this hearing and strongly consider my future votes, if it is not opposed and dismissed.

Mahalo.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 7:18:50 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Franchelle	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello. My name is Franchelle White. I oppose HB2561 HD2. As you are considering this bill, think about how this appears to the tourism factor... Where I can assure you that this will be posted over social media. Where Hawaii will be known as a State that is cruel towards animals. Also, don't you think that Hawaii has more important things to focus on than about Chickens?

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 6:17:53 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elise	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill punishes compassion, limits humane resources and rescue, intervention and partnership. I believe in humane solutions, and am interested in collaborative solutions for O‘ahu’s free roaming chicken population - I would prefer to support animal rescues to help come up with solutions to create a sustainable sanctuary for our island and neighborhoods. Chickens are not pests and I fear this bill will lead to an increase in the inhumane treatment of living creatures. The chickens are apart of our life and deserve humane treatment.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 7:45:16 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rudy V	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is unacceptable as a society. Killing chickens because they are just trying to live is not right. It will cause more violence in our communities as a whole, and killing chickens and roosters because people just don't like them, or don't like the noise, is WRONG! What kind of lesson are we teaching our keiki? If you don't like something, just go kill it - This is WRONG on so many levels, and this bill should NOT BE PASSED! I OPPOSE THIS ANIMAL CRUELTY BILL.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 8:50:47 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kawailehua Atkinson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TO: Chair Gabbard, Chair Inouye, and Members of the Committees **FROM:** Kawailehua Atkinson **MEASURE:** HB2561, HD2 **POSITION:** STRONGLY OPPOSE

Aloha Chairs and Members of the Committees,

My name is Kawailehua Atkinson and I work in Special Education at an elementary school in Wai‘anae. I am writing to ask you to please hold HB2561, HD2.

Mālama Āina and our Keiki: In Hawai‘i, we are taught the importance of mālama āina; to honor and nurture the land as a respected relative. This bill does the opposite. By labeling living beings as pests, the State is telling our keiki that some lives do not matter and that abuse is okay if an animal is a nuisance.

The Cycle of Abuse In our community, chicken fighting is a daily reality. Keiki are being taught by adults how to fight birds and, eventually, how to dump them on the side of the road when they are spent. When we pass a law that calls these animals pests, we are pushing this culture of violence onto our keiki even more. We see the results of this in our classrooms; studies show that keiki who are taught to abuse animals can grow up to have more trouble with empathy and violence later in life.

A Waste of Resources Instead of using resources to ticket residents for feeding animals, our efforts should go toward stopping the fighting rings and the abandonment that causes the overpopulation on our lands. We should be teaching our keiki to be pono, not giving them a legal excuse to be cruel.

Please do not pass this bill. It is not the right lesson for our keiki or the right way to manage our land.

Mahalo, Kawailehua Atkinson

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 9:14:00 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Fiorillo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representative Cordero,

I am writing in STRONG OPPOSITION to HB 2561 HD2.

Chickens are social, intelligent animals who form emotional attachments to humans and to each other. They are already among the most abused animals in Hawai‘i due to widespread cockfighting and neglect. To respond by labeling them as pests and authorizing killing only deepens the harm.

If our representatives truly want to change the narrative that Hawai‘i is serious about preventing animal abuse, we cannot commit this level of abuse ourselves.

Across our islands we have recently seen feral cats shot, dogs on video being violently mistreated by young people, farms attacked to steal and kill animals and their caregivers, tourists harming sea creatures, and an ongoing cockfighting crisis.

Study after study shows that animal abuse is often the first step toward broader violent crime. Violence begets violence.

By passing bills that normalize cruelty, the Legislature opens a Pandora’s box. These policies send a message that harming animals is acceptable, even encouraged. That is a dangerous message with real consequences for public safety and community wellbeing.

Hawai‘i should be reducing violence, not modeling it. I urge you to REJECT these bills and instead invest in humane, preventative, and educational solutions that reflect our shared values.

Please do not make animal cruelty the law of our land.

Respectfully,

Jessica Fiorillo

District 7

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 9:36:18 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Steve Stasick	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representative Kong,

I am writing to express my deep opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561, including the proposal to classify chickens on public land as pests.

These bills promote violence and cruelty as public policy. That is not who we are as Hawai'i. Our 'āina is not something to dominate or destroy. It is a living system that deserves respect, care, and compassion. All living beings who share this land are worthy of humane treatment.

Killing is not the approach we want from our leadership. It does not reflect our culture, our values, or the meaning of aloha. Violence carried out in the name of the government is still violence, and it teaches the wrong lesson to our keiki and our communities.

Hawai'i should be leading with compassion, innovation, and mālama 'āina, not bloodshed. These bills move us in the opposite direction and damage trust between the people and those elected to serve them.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 and to support humane, nonviolent, community-based solutions instead.

Our islands deserve better.

With respect and aloha,
Steve Stasick
District 33

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 9:56:07 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lindsey Gascon	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly oppose HB2561 HD2. Though I understand that feral chicken populations can create challenges in certain communities, this bill takes an unnecessarily harsh and counterproductive approach that fails to reflect Hawaii’s values of mālama (care), balance, and respect for living beings.

1. Lethal control is not a long-term solution

Decades of wildlife management research show that killing animals does not effectively reduce populations over time. When chickens are removed, remaining birds reproduce more rapidly due to decreased competition for food and space. This “vacuum effect” leads to a cycle of killing without meaningful population control, wasting taxpayer resources while failing to solve the problem.

2. Criminalizing humane care harms communities

This bill would make it illegal to feed, rescue, or relocate chickens—actions that many responsible residents and volunteer rescuers take to reduce suffering and manage populations. These individuals are not the problem; they are part of the solution. Penalizing compassionate community members discourages cooperation and removes a critical support system that currently helps manage these animals humanely.

3. Humane, non-lethal alternatives exist and work

There are proven, effective, and humane methods to control feral chicken populations, including:

- Managed feeding programs combined with population monitoring
- Egg removal or egg replacement programs to prevent hatching
- Trap–neuter–manage–style approaches adapted for birds

- Partnerships with rescues, sanctuaries, and local farmers
- Public education on responsible feeding practices

These strategies address root causes rather than relying on repeated killing, and they align with modern, ethical animal management practices.

4. Ethical and cultural considerations

Chickens are part of Hawaii's landscape and daily life. Treating them solely as pests to be exterminated disregards community values and the importance many residents place on compassion toward animals. A humane approach reflects the spirit of mālama 'āina and fosters a more respectful relationship between people and the environment.

5. Risk of inhumane and unregulated killing methods

Allowing broad "pest control" measures raises serious concerns about what methods may be used, including potentially inhumane or indiscriminate techniques that could also harm other wildlife, pets, or even public health.

Therefore, HB2561 HD2 is not a balanced or effective solution. It prioritizes lethal control, penalizes compassionate action, and ignores humane alternatives that could provide real, long-term results.

I respectfully urge you to reject this bill and instead support policies that:

- Promote humane, science-based population management
- Partner with local rescuers and community organizations
- Fund non-lethal control programs and public education

Hawaii can lead with compassion and innovation. We can address community concerns without resorting to unnecessary harm.

Mahalo for allowing me to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

Lindsey Gascon

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 9:31:20 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amy Cady	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly OPPOSE this cruel and inhumane bill.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 10:09:57 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelli Medeiros	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB2561 which would not allow chickens to be rescued or cared for. Chickens and roosters have been long time members of our community and were used to wake farmers before alarm clocks. They are amazing at pest control and do no harm to our community. Hawaii is known for its terrible animal treatment and blatant disregard for the lives of living creatures. There should be more laws that are pro animal rescue and none that are against. You can judge a community and a person by how they treat animals. The real nuisances are the transplants that move here and complain about our way of life in Hawaii. Do better!!! Treat animals better!!! Thank you, Kelli Medeiros

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 10:05:04 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara Ricer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chickens are curious animals, and they each have a unique personality.

Wild chickens are being abused in Hawai'i regularly, often in extrnwly cruel ways. Legislating this cruelty into official policy makes no sense, and is cruel in itself.

In a county with un-regulated stadium-level sound systems in vehicles and private residences, designating chickens as a "nuisance" is irresponsible and makes no sense. Some roosters may crow early in the morning, but it is ONLY due to the humans nearby making noise or turning on beight lights. Jungle fowl do not naturally wake up in the middle of the night.

Designating a sentient species as a "pest" is a dangerous prescedent to set. It leaves the door open for further cruelty (and even theft of private animals and pets) in the name of the law. This bill also makes it much more difficult for rescuers and organizations to step in when needed.

On an island, it makes no logical sense to strive for eradication of a population of animals that might even offer us some food security within the current world climate.

This bill is dangerous for the animals (including pets that may accidentally escape or be stolen), and it will have tragic effects on our community.

Please do not make animal cruelty the law of our land.

Respectfully,

Sara Ricer

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 10:12:46 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Irene Campos	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly OPPOSE this cruel, inhumane bill toward feral chickens.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 10:48:53 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Costanza Pernigotti	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fear that, by designating feral fowl as controllable pest and nuisance, this legislation would open the door to more instances of unwarranted abuse and unnecessary cruel treatment of these animals. I already frequently come across, both in person and online, people catching roosters to then use them for fighting or bait or hurting chicks in a meaningless way, even trespassing to do so. I worry that the passing of this bill would further embolden such behavior. I also think this bill would unfairly target and penalize those who tend to the needs of said abused animals when they are lucky enough to be rescued. Thank you.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 11:05:17 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Payton Knox	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee,

I oppose HB2561 HD2.

I am testifying on behalf of the thousands of island residents who rescue, rehabilitate, and provide lifelong care to chickens, wild birds, and native and non native species across Hawai‘i.

This is not a fringe community. It is a deeply rooted network of caregivers who have built close knit support systems, small businesses, and local economies around humane animal care. Especially in rural communities, people spend thousands of dollars of their own money on feed, veterinary care, habitat maintenance, transportation, education and supplies. This work supports local stores, farmers, veterinarians, our keiki and service providers.

HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 ignore this reality and threaten to dismantle years of responsible, community driven solutions. There are organizations ready and willing to help manage populations humanely, without poisoning our land with pesticides, harming non-targeted animals, executing innocent chickens or empowering violent vigilantes.

Choosing the easy way out through killing and pest control contracts is not leadership. It is a failure of those who lead from behind.

Support and work directly with the organizations that care for the lives of these chickens and for our ‘āina. Reject policies that normalize cruelty, contaminate our environment, and divide our communities into us versus them. If these bills move forward, many of us will remember this choice at the ballot box.

We vote. We organize. And we expect better.

Once again, I oppose HB2561 HD2.

Payton Knox

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 11:08:18 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Geeta Isardas	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this measure. The feral chickens are a beautiful part of our Islands and they help manage the insect population tremendously. I have been personally traumatized from seeing one shot in front of me and still deal with that horrible memory. Please do not allow them to be harmed in this way. Allowing people to harm them as a way to control their populations is devastating and will harm people who do not want to see animals hurt. Please show compassion to these creatures and those of us who love the animals of Hawaii. Mahalo.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 11:17:48 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kimberley Medeiros	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senator or Representative,

I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561.

With over 40 years of experience raising both feral and purebred egg layers, I've always advocated for feral chickens. They are hardier, live longer, and produce eggs year-round—a staple my family has enjoyed for four decades.

During this time of raising feral chickens, I have found that they are smart, intelligent, social, protectors of their families, including humans.

We are once again being labeled a 'killing' state, choosing lethal methods over humane alternatives. Humans brought these animals here and humans abandoned them; therefore, it must be our responsibility to find a compassionate way to fix the problem we created.

Alternatives?

As I stated earlier, use them for egg laying production having the community care for them and share in the bounty.

Use contraceptive feed for areas where the chickens cannot be caught for taming. Although costly, how many hundreds of thousands of dollars have you already spent doing studies and hiring contractors to eradicate them inhumanely?

Our islands are facing a crisis of cruelty. From the shooting of feral cats and the filmed abuse of dogs to farm attacks and the mistreatment of sea creatures by tourists, violence against animals is becoming alarmingly visible. We must recognize that animal abuse is not an isolated issue; it is a proven precursor to broader violent crime.

Violence begets violence, and it must stop here!

Hawai'i should be reducing violence, not modeling it. I urge you to reject these bills and instead invest in humane, preventative, and educational solutions that reflect our shared values.

We cannot allow animal cruelty to be codified into law. Our islands deserve humane solutions, not state-sanctioned violence.

Respectfully,
Kimberley Medeiros
Kauai, Hawaii

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 11:17:53 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Zoe Rivera	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly OPPOSE this cruel, inhumane bill toward feral chickens

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 11:18:35 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Larina Hawkins	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senator or Representative,

I am writing to express my deep outrage and opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561, including the proposal to classify chickens on public land as pests.

I have personally witnessed countless times the cruelty inflicted on chickens by children and their parents, capturing chickens, tying strings to their feet, dragging them, taunting them, chasing them, torturing them, the list of highly disturbing, inhumane treatment goes on and on.

Chickens are social, intelligent animals who form emotional attachments to humans and to each other. They are already among the most abused animals in Hawai‘i due to widespread cockfighting and neglect. To respond by labeling them as pests and authorizing killing only deepens the harm.

These bills promote violence and cruelty as public policy. That is not who we are as Hawai‘i. Our ‘āina is not something to dominate or destroy. It is a living system that deserves respect, care, and compassion. All living beings who share this land are worthy of humane treatment.

Killing is not the approach we want from our leadership. It does not reflect our culture, our values, or the meaning of aloha. Violence carried out in the name of the government is still violence, and it teaches the wrong lesson to our keiki and our communities.

Hawai‘i should be leading with compassion, innovation, and mālama ‘āina, not bloodshed. These bills move us in the opposite direction and damage trust between the people and those elected to serve them.

If our representatives truly want to change the narrative that Hawai‘i is serious about preventing animal abuse, we cannot commit this level of abuse ourselves.

Across our islands we have recently seen feral cats shot, dogs on video being violently mistreated by young people, farms attacked to steal and kill animals and their caregivers, tourists harming sea creatures, and an ongoing cockfighting crisis. Study after study shows that animal abuse is often the first step toward broader violent crime. Violence begets violence.

By passing bills that normalize cruelty, the Legislature opens a Pandora's box. These policies send a message that harming animals is acceptable, even encouraged. That is a dangerous message with real consequences for public safety and community wellbeing.

Hawai'i should be reducing violence, not modeling it. I urge you to reject these bills and instead invest in humane, preventative, and educational solutions that reflect our shared values.

Please do not make animal cruelty the law of our land.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 and to support humane, nonviolent, community based solutions instead.

Our islands deserve better.

With respect and aloha,

Larina Hawkins

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 11:39:40 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lory Ono	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I vehemently oppose this cruel and unnecessary bill. Please OPPOSE HB 2561 HD2.

Mahalo!

Lory Ono

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 11:40:47 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Valerie Roldan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Not sure that my other testimony went through so I will restate it as best as I can.

This law is cruel and will open the flood gates of cruelty/murder. There will be so many people who will not follow the human euthanasia part. And, many human casualties could become an issue that you will face soon after passing this god awful law.

Chickens have been part of Hawai'i since the beginning, also being descendants of dinosaurs. They dig up compacted soil, natural weed, and their poop is the best fertilizer. Chickens also eat pests of the islands including centipedes (this is nature not humans messing with the way of the world and animal kingdom). They are also natural alarm clocks and although humans get upset we are supposed to follow chickens rise and sleep cycle, we would live happier and healthier lives if we did (note, i have come close to following it and I feel better all around).

Allowing this bill has the high chance of another passenger pigeon tragedy. Humans found these pigeons to be nuisances as well, and now, they are extinct. All that they did for humans and humans just killed them.

Do not pass this bill, do not say yes to murder, and do not keep looking at chickens like they are not worth anything.

Every life matters! Live with Love

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 11:50:06 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James Kuhlmann	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is cruelty to animals, and horrible to know that people are even suggesting this kind of violence. I oppose this bill. How shameful on our state for even considering these kind of horrific acts.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 11:56:13 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christopher Vandever	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senator or Representative,

I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561.

Chickens are social, intelligent animals who form emotional attachments to humans and to each other. They are already among the most abused animals in Hawai'i due to widespread cockfighting and neglect. To respond by labeling them as pests and authorizing killing only deepens the harm.

If our representatives truly want to change the narrative that Hawai'i is serious about preventing animal abuse, we cannot commit this level of abuse ourselves.

Across our islands we have recently seen feral cats shot, dogs on video being violently mistreated by young people, farms attacked to steal and kill animals and their caregivers, tourists harming sea creatures, and an ongoing cockfighting crisis. Study after study shows that animal abuse is often the first step toward broader violent crime. Violence begets violence.

By passing bills that normalize cruelty, the Legislature opens a Pandora's box. These policies send a message that harming animals is acceptable, even encouraged. That is a dangerous message with real consequences for public safety and community wellbeing.

Hawai'i should be reducing violence, not modeling it. I urge you to reject these bills and instead invest in humane, preventative, and educational solutions that reflect our shared values.

Please do not make animal cruelty the law of our land.

Respectfully,
Christopher Vandever
Kaimuki

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 12:11:15 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katelyn Domdoma	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing on behalf of the thousands of island residents who rescue, rehabilitate, and provide lifelong care to chickens, wild birds, and both native and non-native species across Hawai‘i.

This is not a fringe community—it is a deeply rooted network of caregivers who have built close-knit support systems, small businesses, and local economies around humane animal care. Especially in rural communities, individuals invest thousands of dollars of their own money into feed, veterinary care, habitat maintenance, transportation, education, and supplies. This work directly supports local stores, farmers, veterinarians, our keiki, and service providers.

For me, this work recently became deeply personal. What started as helping a single vulnerable chick turned into a profound commitment to rescue and rehabilitation. I have spent sleepless nights keeping fragile chicks warm, learning how to treat injuries, and doing everything I can to give these animals a second chance. Like so many others across our islands, I do this not for recognition or profit, but because I care deeply about the lives we so often overlook.

HB 1852 and HB 2561 ignore this reality and threaten to dismantle years of responsible, community-driven solutions. There are organizations—and individuals like myself—ready and willing to help manage populations humanely, without poisoning our land with pesticides, harming non-target species, or resorting to the mass killing of animals.

Choosing the easy way out through lethal control and pest management contracts is not leadership—it is a failure to engage with the very communities already doing this work with compassion and accountability.

I urge you to support and collaborate with the people and organizations who are already caring for these animals and stewarding our ‘āina. Reject policies that normalize cruelty, contaminate our environment, and divide our communities.

We vote. We organize. And we expect better.

With aloha and determination,

Katey Domdoma

Hawaii Kai

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 12:14:37 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Geremu	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please Oppose HB2561

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

I oppose HB2561. It is a huge embarrassment to the people of Hawaii. Labeling chickens as pests, restricting humane care, and removing protections against killing them conflicts with our values of compassion and mālama ‘āina. These measures would make Hawai‘i appear hypocritical about aloha and animal welfare, and they risk promoting cruelty rather than responsible, humane solutions.

Please vote no.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely, Geremu McKinney

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 12:07:22 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ann Murphey	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representative Gedeon,

I am writing to express my deep outrage and opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561, including the proposal to classify chickens on public land as pests.

These bills promote violence and cruelty as public policy. That is not who we are as Hawai'i.

Our 'āina is not something to dominate or destroy. It is a living system that deserves respect, care, and compassion. All living beings who share this land are worthy of humane treatment.

Killing is not the approach we want from our leadership. It does not reflect our culture, our values, or the meaning of aloha. Violence carried out in the name of the government is still violence, and it teaches the wrong lesson to our keiki and our communities.

Hawai'i should be leading with compassion, innovation, and mālama 'āina, not bloodshed. These bills move us in the opposite direction and damage trust between the people and those elected to serve them.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 and to support humane, nonviolent, community based solutions instead.

Our islands deserve better.

With respect and aloha,

Ann Murphey (Hawaii Kai)

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 12:24:59 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jasmine Murphey	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representative Gedeon,

I am writing to express my deep outrage and opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561, including the proposal to classify chickens on public land as pests.

These bills promote violence and cruelty as public policy. That is not who we are as Hawai'i.

Our 'āina is not something to dominate or destroy. It is a living system that deserves respect, care, and compassion. All living beings who share this land are worthy of humane treatment.

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I strongly urge you to oppose HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 and to support humane, nonviolent, community based solutions instead.

Our islands deserve better.

With respect and aloha,

Jasmine Murphey (Hawaii Kai)

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 12:27:21 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Trey Quiocho	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representative La Chica,

I am writing to express my deep outrage and opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561, including the proposal to classify chickens on public land as pests.

These bills promote violence and cruelty as public policy. That is not who we are as Hawai'i.

Our 'āina is not something to dominate or destroy. It is a living system that deserves respect, care, and compassion. All living beings who share this land are worthy of humane treatment.

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Hawai'i should be leading with compassion, innovation, and mālama 'āina, not bloodshed. These bills move us in the opposite direction and damage trust between the people and those elected to serve them.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 and to support humane, nonviolent, community based solutions instead.

Our islands deserve better.

With respect and aloha,

Trey Quiocho (Mililani)

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 12:34:30 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Izumi Sugahara	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representative Sayama,

I am writing to express my deep outrage and opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561, including the proposal to classify chickens on public land as pests.

These bills promote violence and cruelty as public policy. That is not who we are as Hawai'i.

Our 'āina is not something to dominate or destroy. It is a living system that deserves respect, care, and compassion. All living beings who share this land are worthy of humane treatment.

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Hawai'i should be leading with compassion, innovation, and mālama 'āina, not bloodshed. These bills move us in the opposite direction and damage trust between the people and those elected to serve them.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 and to support humane, nonviolent, community based solutions instead.

Our islands deserve better.

With respect and aloha,

Izumi Sugahara (Kaimuki)

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 12:37:15 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Francis Manankil	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representative Gedeon,

I am writing to express my deep outrage and opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561, including the proposal to classify chickens on public land as pests.

These bills promote violence and cruelty as public policy. That is not who we are as Hawai'i.

Our 'āina is not something to dominate or destroy. It is a living system that deserves respect, care, and compassion. All living beings who share this land are worthy of humane treatment.

Killing is not the approach we want from our leadership. It does not reflect our culture, our values, or the meaning of aloha. Violence carried out in the name of the government is still violence, and it teaches the wrong lesson to our keiki and our communities.

Hawai'i should be leading with compassion, innovation, and mālama 'āina, not bloodshed. These bills move us in the opposite direction and damage trust between the people and those elected to serve them.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 and to support humane, nonviolent, community based solutions instead.

Our islands deserve better.

With respect and aloha,

Francis Manankil (kawaii kai)

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 12:30:45 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mallika Newsome	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representative Sayama,

I am writing to express my deep outrage and opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561, including the proposal to classify chickens on public land as pests.

These bills promote violence and cruelty as public policy. That is not who we are as Hawai'i.

Our 'āina is not something to dominate or destroy. It is a living system that deserves respect, care, and compassion. All living beings who share this land are worthy of humane treatment.

Killing is not the approach we want from our leadership. It does not reflect our culture, our values, or the meaning of aloha. Violence carried out in the name of the government is still violence, and it teaches the wrong lesson to our keiki and our communities.

Hawai'i should be leading with compassion, innovation, and mālama 'āina, not bloodshed. These bills move us in the opposite direction and damage trust between the people and those elected to serve them.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 and to support humane, nonviolent, community based solutions instead.

Our islands deserve better.

With respect and aloha,

Mallika Newsome

Your Name] [Your District]

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 12:49:58 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Malia Otto	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Malia Otto. I am a mother, a partner, a homeowner with animals, a teacher, a travel agent, and the outgoing president of the Kaimukī High School PTA. I am not representing the PTA today — these comments are solely my own. I share these roles simply to underscore that I am deeply committed to volunteerism, community wellbeing, and especially to policies that benefit children — including protecting and democratizing access to nature on public lands.

For those reasons, I stand in opposition to this bill.

1. Hawai‘i’s Ecological Legacy

We already hold the painful distinction of being the extinction capital of the world. To now legalize widespread killing of a long-established canoe animal — the jungle fowl — without comprehensive research or restraint would further entrench that legacy.

Is that truly the reputation we wish to cement? Do we want to be remembered as the generation that fast-tracked eradication rather than stewardship?

This bill is framed as “management,” but in effect it green-lights large-scale eradication. That is not thoughtful conservation. It is reactionary policy. And once damage is done, it cannot be undone.

2. The Bill Contradicts Itself

Section B, paragraph 3 states that “certain birds may be treated as pets for pest management purposes.” Yet elsewhere, the bill legitimizes full-scale culling.

Which is it? Are these animals pests to be eradicated, or are they recognized as functional contributors in pest management? The language is internally inconsistent and requires substantial clarification. Legislation should not contradict itself.

3. Where Is the Science?

If public health is the concern, we must be honest and precise. There is no evidence that chickens are causing mass illness. Categorically, they are not a greater health threat than other urban birds. Fear-based framing without supporting data weakens the integrity of the bill.

If noise is the true issue — and for many residents it is — then say that plainly. Noise is measurable. Science can define impermissible decibel thresholds. If we are serious about solutions, then write them with scientific specificity. Vague language invites misuse, overreach, and “epic fury!!!” And a kill-em-all- mentality, without much foresight.

4. Redundancy and Intent

Killing chickens is already legal in the context of agriculture and food systems. So what new authority is this bill actually granting? If enforcement is the issue, then strengthen enforcement. If nuisance m-mitigation is the issue, then target nuisance mitigation. But do not disguise broad eradication under unclear language.

We must ask: what is truly behind this bill?

5. Lean In, Don't Eradicate

Chickens are one of the most sustainable and resilient food sources recognized on Planet Earth. They are adaptive, resource-efficient, and culturally embedded. The jungle fowl has existed here long before all of us.

Instead of importing the negative connotation of “chicken” as cowardly, perhaps we should observe reality. Anyone who has watched a mother hen defend her chicks or a rooster protect his flock knows these animals are bold, strategic, and protective.

We do not need less connection to nature. We need more. We, in Hawai’i, for ourselves. We, in Hawai’i, for our tourism. Years in the tourism industry have made it incredibly obvious how travelers find our chickens in fact, not a nuisance, but undeniably charming. For some, especially the kids, even more charming than the hotels, the pools, the beaches.

We need more thoughtful integration.

More respect for life.

More education.

6. If Culling Proceeds, Then Safeguards Are Essential

If the state insists on moving forward, then at minimum there must be:

- Clear humane standards for dispatch.
- Education to prevent abuse and cruelty.
- Transparent reporting and oversight.
- Time for further ecological and public health research.

Rushing to eliminate a long-standing population without robust data is not good governance.

7. Slow Down

Policy made in haste often becomes regret in hindsight. These birds have lived here as part of our landscape for generations. We should not rush toward eradication simply because coexistence is inconvenient.

Our children are watching how we treat living things.

Let our legacy be stewardship, not extermination.

I urge you to vote no on this bill — or at the very least, slow it down, refine it, and ground it firmly in science, transparency, and humane standards.

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Chair Lee, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to express **my strong opposition to HB2561, HD2**. As you consider the environmental and land-use implications of this bill, I urge you to look beyond a "disposal" model and instead address the root causes of feral populations: human negligence and a lack of integrated land management.

The Human Cost of the "Pest" Designation

Labeling feral chickens as "controllable pests" is an ecologically blunt instrument that validates a culture of indifference and extreme cruelty. In the context of Agriculture and Environment, we must recognize that how we treat the animals on our land reflects our community's ethics.

As a resident of Ewa, I have seen the devastating results of this "pest" label. **I recently picked up a rooster from the side of the road who had been left to die. He had been subjected to unspeakable cruelty: his comb and wattles were cut and burnt, his wings were clipped, and he had a severe, open gash on his neck. He died in my arms as I was transporting him to get help.** When the State formally brands an animal as a "nuisance" or "pest," it signals to the public that these lives are worthless. It effectively green-lights the kind of horrific abuse I witnessed and normalizes this violence for the youth in our community.

Sustainable Land Management & Support for Sanctuaries

From a Water and Land perspective, the "collection and disposal" funding in HD2 is a temporary fix for a systemic problem on our public lands. Funding culls without enforcing laws against abandonment and animal cruelty creates an endless, expensive, and violent cycle.

True land stewardship involves:

- **Support for Sanctuaries:** Redirecting "disposal" funds toward grants for local animal sanctuaries. These organizations provide the infrastructure for humane relocation and long-term care that the State currently lacks.
- **Targeted Enforcement:** Using resources to penalize those who treat our public lands as dumping grounds for unwanted animals.
- **Ecological Balance:** Implementing humane fertility control (like OvoControl) which manages population density without the environmental disruption caused by mass trapping and removal.

A Request for Humane Stewardship

I urge these committees to pivot toward a model of Humane Stewardship. Rather than funding a cycle of killing, let us invest in the enforcement of abandonment laws and provide meaningful support to the sanctuaries that are already doing the heavy lifting for our communities. We must hold the people who abuse and abandon animals accountable, rather than punishing the animals themselves.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask the Committees to **HOLD HB2561, HD2**.

With aloha,

Megan V.

Resident of Ewa

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 12:54:59 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
shannon martinez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I do not support this bill. It endangers and disrupts my family of chickens and it could lead to abuse of animals and anyone protecting an animal. This will also lead to an increase in neighborhood disputes and children being harmed because they were trying to hunt or protect a chicken.

chickens are no more a nuisance than the loud mopeds, e-bikes and planes that fly too low. Chickens provide free insect control, free learning opportunities and free examples of aloha.

We can encourage people to take better care of containment and see if there are areas of the islands better suited to supporting the louder roosters. Please look into other, more responsible ways of caring for our land than treating a formerly domesticated animal as a pest comparable to a mosquito.

Thank you.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 1:21:20 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chuck Murphay	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representative Gedeon,

I am writing to express my deep outrage and opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561, including the proposal to classify chickens on public land as pests.

These bills promote violence and cruelty as public policy. That is not who we are as Hawai'i.

Our 'āina is not something to dominate or destroy. It is a living system that deserves respect, care, and compassion. All living beings who share this land are worthy of humane treatment.

Killing is not the approach we want from our leadership. It does not reflect our culture, our values, or the meaning of aloha. Violence carried out in the name of the government is still violence, and it teaches the wrong lesson to our keiki and our communities.

Hawai'i should be leading with compassion, innovation, and mālama 'āina, not bloodshed. These bills move us in the opposite direction and damage trust between the people and those elected to serve them.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 and to support humane, nonviolent, community based solutions instead.

Our islands deserve better.

With respect and aloha,

Chuck Murphey (Hawaii Kai)

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 12:56:00 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thomas Ricer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chickens convert centipedes and cockroaches into palatable human food. We live on an island with extreme food insecurity due to our population and lack of sustainable agriculture.

If you want to legislate nuisances, please consider human-sources of amplified sound and unnatural light, both of which cause feral chickens to make noise at night and disrupt the natural cycles of native plants and animals.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 12:56:53 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katie Saleutogi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Katie Saleutogi, and I am writing to strongly oppose HB 1852 and HB 2561.

Chickens are not just “pests.” They are intelligent, social animals that form bonds with each other and with humans. Here in Hawai‘i, they are already among the most vulnerable animals due to ongoing issues like cockfighting and neglect. Labeling them as pests and authorizing their killing only adds to that harm instead of addressing the root problems.

If we truly want Hawai‘i to be seen as a place that takes animal welfare seriously, our laws should reflect compassion and responsibility—not normalize cruelty.

We are already seeing concerning patterns across our communities: animals being abused, neglected, or harmed in disturbing ways. Research consistently shows that animal cruelty is often linked to broader violence. When we allow or encourage harm toward animals, it doesn’t stay isolated—it impacts the overall safety and wellbeing of our communities.

Passing bills like these sends the wrong message—that harming animals is acceptable. That’s not the Hawai‘i I want to live in.

I respectfully urge you to reject HB 1852 and HB 2561 and instead support humane, preventative, and educational solutions that align with the values of care and respect that our islands are known for.

Please do not make animal cruelty part of our law.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,
Katie Saleutogi

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 12:57:13 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle T Tan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senator or Representative [Last Name],

I am writing to express my deep outrage and opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561, including the proposal to classify chickens on public land as pests.

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Killing is not the approach we want from our leadership. It does not reflect our culture, our values, or the meaning of aloha. Violence carried out in the name of the government is still violence, and it teaches the wrong lesson to our keiki and our communities.

Hawai'i should be leading with compassion, innovation, and mālama 'āina, not bloodshed. These bills move us in the opposite direction and damage trust between the people and those elected to serve them.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 and to support humane, nonviolent, community based solutions instead.

Our islands deserve better.

With respect and aloha,

[Your Name]

[Your District]

Aloha Senator or Representative [Last Name],

I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561.

Chickens are social, intelligent animals who form emotional attachments to humans and to each other. They are already among the most abused animals in Hawai'i due to widespread cockfighting and neglect. To respond by labeling them as pests and authorizing killing only deepens the harm.

If our representatives truly want to change the narrative that Hawai'i is serious about preventing animal abuse, we cannot commit this level of abuse ourselves.

Across our islands we have recently seen feral cats shot, dogs on video being violently mistreated by young people, farms attacked to steal and kill animals and their caregivers, tourists harming sea creatures, and an ongoing cockfighting crisis. Study after study shows that animal abuse is often the first step toward broader violent crime. Violence begets violence.

By passing bills that normalize cruelty, the Legislature opens a Pandora's box. These policies send a message that harming animals is acceptable, even encouraged. That is a dangerous message with real consequences for public safety and community wellbeing.

Hawai'i should be reducing violence, not modeling it. I urge you to reject these bills and instead invest in humane, preventative, and educational solutions that reflect our shared values.

Please do not make animal cruelty the law of our land.

Respectfully,

Michelle Tan

OAHu Honolulu District

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 12:57:54 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Justin Hervey	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Chair Lee, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing to strongly oppose HB2561 HD2. My objection to this measure is based on fundamental moral grounds. By focusing on penalizing everyday citizens, this bill completely ignores the violent, gang-like culture that is the actual root cause of our feral animal problem.

We are already facing a severe and documented crisis of animal cruelty and violence in our communities, driven largely by underground cockfighting rings. The explosion of the feral chicken population is not a natural occurrence; it is the direct byproduct of illegal breeding pipelines and the constant, callous dumping of unwanted or injured birds onto our streets and public lands.

HB2561 HD2 misdirects government resources to criminalize compassion while giving a free pass to organized operators who treat these animals as disposable commodities. Knowing the level of daily care, biosecurity, and responsibility that a proper flock requires, it is morally unacceptable to watch the state turn a blind eye to the actual perpetrators of this cruelty. Instead of cracking down on the violence and illegal gambling that degrade our neighborhoods, this bill indirectly reinforces that exact gang-like culture by letting the bad actors off the hook.

If we truly want to solve the feral chicken issue, we need legislation that targets the violence, the illegal cockfighting rings, and the cruelty of dumping—not a bill that punishes the community and reinforces a culture of criminal neglect.

I urge you to vote **NO on HB2561 HD2**. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Justin H.

Resident of Ewa

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 1:01:42 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sonny Saleutogi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Sonny Saleutogi, and I am writing to strongly oppose HB 1852 and HB 2561.

Chickens are not just “pests.” They are intelligent, social animals that form bonds with each other and with humans. Here in Hawai‘i, they are already among the most vulnerable animals due to ongoing issues like cockfighting and neglect. Labeling them as pests and authorizing their killing only adds to that harm instead of addressing the root problems.

If we truly want Hawai‘i to be seen as a place that takes animal welfare seriously, our laws should reflect compassion and responsibility—not normalize cruelty.

We are already seeing concerning patterns across our communities: animals being abused, neglected, or harmed in disturbing ways. Research consistently shows that animal cruelty is often linked to broader violence. When we allow or encourage harm toward animals, it doesn’t stay isolated—it impacts the overall safety and wellbeing of our communities.

Passing bills like these sends the wrong message—that harming animals is acceptable. That’s not the Hawai‘i I want to live in.

I respectfully urge you to reject HB 1852 and HB 2561 and instead support humane, preventative, and educational solutions that align with the values of care and respect that our islands are known for.

Please do not make animal cruelty part of our law.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,
Sonny Saleutogi

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 1:01:54 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aldine Hire-Burdett	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Feral chickens are a visible and living part of Hawai‘i’s unique environment and culture. While their populations can sometimes create challenges, killing them should not be the default solution. These animals are sentient beings that deserve humane consideration, and there are more compassionate, sustainable alternatives such as population control through non-lethal methods, habitat management, and community-based programs.

Resorting to widespread killing risks normalizing harm rather than encouraging responsible stewardship of our shared environment. Hawai‘i has long been guided by values of mālama ‘āina—caring for the land and all life within it. Addressing feral chicken populations should reflect those values by prioritizing humane, ethical, and innovative solutions that respect both the community and the animals.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 1:04:15 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jo'van hire-burdett	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Feral chickens are a visible and living part of Hawai'i's unique environment and culture. While their populations can sometimes create challenges, killing them should not be the default solution. These animals are sentient beings that deserve humane consideration, and there are more compassionate, sustainable alternatives such as population control through non-lethal methods, habitat management, and community-based programs.

Resorting to widespread killing risks normalizing harm rather than encouraging responsible stewardship of our shared environment. Hawai'i has long been guided by values of mālama 'āina—caring for the land and all life within it. Addressing feral chicken populations should reflect those values by prioritizing humane, ethical, and innovative solutions that respect both the community and the animals.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 1:04:19 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noah Beran	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chickens are culturally significant to Hawai'i and they keep invasive bug populations down. To pass this bill would provide more harm to Hawai'i than it would good. It's also not a good precedent to set to let people treat intelligent animals as pests and kill them as they please. The chickens have been here as long as Polynesian people have, they deserve respect.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 1:09:39 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Blaine Hower	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I want to share a story I witnessed: a rooster was given food, and instead of eating it himself, he made sure his hens and their chicks had food first. It was truly remarkable to see how close these roosters are to their Ohana.

I believe this bill might be influenced by a cockfights network. It seems like this chicken issue could be connected to cockfights. There's now a reason to believe that if chickens can be killed, then cockfights might be seen as acceptable too. I think there's more to this bill than it appears, and it could attract national attention—possibly through documentary films or other discussions.

Animal activists worldwide, including PETA and others, have been contacted by various individuals and organizations.

This could lead to very bad publicity for Hawaii's tourism industry.

Many tourists find the chickens adorable. There must be a more humane way than killing chickens and justifying their deaths. It's barbaric and inhumane to any living creature. Please reconsider this bill, and if you don't, I will likely not vote for you again. I will be very disappointed if I hear you've supported this.

Chickens are living beings and are very loved in Hawaii.

Please do not kill innocent creatures who care for their Ohana.

Mahalo,

Blaine Hower

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 1:16:24 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrea Wade	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concern:

It seems people within city limits feel entitled to a world with no noise and no other animals living within their vicinity that could destroy their peace. By that metric, I propose that anything that makes noise before 8am be completely eradicated--I don't want to hear cars, I don't want to hear children playing across the street, I don't want to hear anyone mowing their grass, I don't want to hear people having parties, I don't want to hear planes... In fact, let's just go ahead and say people should be fined for talking before 8am, okay? Because all these things annoy me, and I think you should get rid of them.

That doesn't sound reasonable, does it? Right. Because the world makes noise. Public lands are the one place chickens have to go to. By removing public lands as the one place they can be, they will have nowhere. Are you going to let me keep more than 2 chickens then? No, you want to stop people from even having them on their own property too. So cockfighters get to have as much as they want and me, a simple rescuer who keeps a couple or eggs and companionship, gets punished. Once again, it's always the little guy doing the good work getting shafted by psychopaths and their moneyed interests.

And what gives us the right to eradicate an animal just because a few people don't like the noise? How can we treat with disdain a potential sustainable food source when Hawaii is staring down an energy and resources crisis? By all means, if people on private property want to capture and kill animals, they are free to do so. But we should not be allowing a few psychopathic people the ability to maim and kill an animal on public property with no recourse while once again punishing people who enjoy the wildlife on that same property (to say nothing of harming the poor animals). It is setting up to allow abuse of animals on public property while punishing rescuers and do-gooders. Essentially, you will be giving people carte-blanche to kill living creatures with no recourse. What you should be focusing on is stopping the illegal practice of cockfighting. Perhaps you think this legislation is supposed to help, but it won't--the chicken fighters will still find ways to harm these animals because they don't follow the rules anyway...and this will only make it worse. And who will suffer? The farmers, the keepers, the pet-owners, the rescuers--the good people of this island who are doing their best to preserve life.

This is just more misguided legislation meant to mollify a bunch of complainy types who think the world should bend to their whim and that in the end is going to perpetuate animal abuse on public property, a significant escalation of what the state and city and county allows.

And while we're at it, shame on you, Grandinetti, for introducing this legislation. So glad to know my representative supports measures that encourage animal abuse. I'll keep that in mind for the next election cycle.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 1:16:34 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hannah Mizuno	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Senate Committee,

I am writing to share my strong opposition to HB 2561, especially the proposal to label chickens on public land as pests.

This approach feels deeply misaligned with the values we hold here in Hawai‘i. Our ‘āina is not something to control or eliminate—it is a living, interconnected system that calls for care and respect. The animals that live here are part of that system and deserve to be treated with compassion.

Choosing killing as a solution is not the kind of leadership our communities need or want. It does not reflect aloha, nor does it model the kind of responsibility and stewardship we hope to pass on to our keiki. When harm is carried out under policy, it sends a message that violence is acceptable.

Hawai‘i has the opportunity to lead with thoughtful, humane, and community-driven solutions that honor mālama ‘āina. This bill moves us away from those principles rather than toward them.

I respectfully urge you to oppose HB 2561 and instead support approaches that are compassionate, nonviolent, and grounded in the values of our islands.

Our communities and our ‘āina deserve better.

With aloha,

Hannah

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 1:18:11 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lee S. Hayakawa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge this House to consider and invest in empathetic, humane solutions such as providing funding and contracts to organizations that should actually help with the booming populations that the Hawaiian Humane Society chooses to ignore and say they don't have the space, capacity, or funding to help; researching and distributing contraceptives for our invasive species; funding State-run spaying/neutering/sterilization/or even humane and compassionate euthanasia treatments to cull growing populations if necessary; and/or actually pursuing the ruthless and unbounded amount of people fighting chickens for money, which calls for barbaric violence toward chickens, clandestine gambling, and larger populations of feral birds in specific areas. Do not allow the loudest voices of residents who participate in illicit activities and/or support abhorrent policies like starvation to determine which beings get to live and who is forced to die. People don't get to take other human lives on their own terms, so we shouldn't be allowed to do the same to animals.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 1:17:14 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joann Sy	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators and Representatives,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561, including the proposal to classify chickens on public land as pests.

Chickens are social and intelligent animals who form bonds with humans and with each other. In Hawai‘i, they are already among the most vulnerable to abuse due to widespread cockfighting and neglect. Labeling them as pests and authorizing their killing will only deepen that harm.

These bills promote violence and cruelty as public policy. That is not who we are as Hawai‘i. Our ‘āina is not something to dominate or destroy—it is a living system that calls for respect, care, and compassion. All beings who share this land deserve humane treatment.

If we are serious about addressing animal abuse in Hawai‘i, we cannot model that harm through our own laws. Across our islands, we have seen increasing incidents of violence toward animals—from feral cats being shot to the mistreatment of dogs, attacks on farms, harm to sea life, and the ongoing cockfighting crisis. Research consistently shows that violence toward animals is often linked to broader patterns of violence. Violence begets violence.

Hawai‘i should lead with compassion, innovation, and mālama ‘āina—not policies rooted in harm. These bills move us in the wrong direction and risk damaging trust between communities and those elected to serve them.

I urge you to reject HB 1852 and HB 2561, and instead invest in humane, preventative, and community-based solutions that reflect our shared values. Work alongside the organizations already caring for these animals and our environment.

We must reduce violence—not normalize it. Please choose policies that unite our communities, protect our environment, and uphold compassion.

We are watching. We vote. And we expect better.

With aloha and determination,

Joann

Honolulu, HI

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 2:18:39 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Linda Elento	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Feral roosters are more than a nuisance; oosters are detrimental to my health as well as for other citizens who suffer from certain health conditions.

Roosters crow at all hours of the night and day, interrupting sleep and intensifying migraine headaches. These conditions interfere with an individual's ability to function at work, perform activities of daily living, and care for family members.

We appreciate the Committee's consideration of testimony in support of measures to reduce and eliminate feral roosters and chickens and enforcement of a law preventing feeding of these feral chickens and roosters on both public and **private land** and killing these roosters and chickens that roam on one's private lands as a simpler way to manage the feral chicken problems. Who's to say if a rooster on a sidewalk one moment and on my grass yard the next will be covered under our law?

The City's service of catching these chickens and roosters is costly and unpredictable and not always available. Have you tried catching a rooster? I have tried and I cannot, even with chicken trap cages We need you to pass this bill to include such items I have included in my testimony.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 3:35:33 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Pcola_Davis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

CHICKENS AND/OR CATS

Every year inhumane bills try to get passed! We try and milk the public with fines.

"No person shall abandon, dump, release, or relocate any chicken to evade a violation of the limits on household chicken keeping established under county law or ordinance."

Now change one word in that paragraph to "cat."

How will you be able to see a person "dumping?"

Prohibiting, abandoning.. There is NO WAY to control this!!

Maybe there are bigger FISH to fry!

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 3:53:14 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Haven Ramelb	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chairs and Committee Members,

My name is Haven Ramelb and I am a resident of Honolulu. I am writing today to express my strong opposition to HB2561 HD2.

While I understand the concerns regarding the growing population of feral chickens in our communities, I believe this bill as currently drafted is not the right solution for the following reasons:

- **Concerns Over "Pest" Designation:** Classifying these animals as "controllable pests" on public lands may lead to inhumane eradication methods. Our community values the ethical treatment of all animals, and we should prioritize humane management strategies over simple extermination.
- **Impact on Caregivers:** The prohibition and fines associated with "supporting" these animals could unfairly penalize residents who are attempting to manage populations humanely or who provide care out of compassion.
- **Need for Alternative Solutions:** Instead of punitive measures and broad pest designations, the State should invest in comprehensive, non-lethal management programs, such as expanding support for ethical rescue organizations or implementing controlled fertility programs.

Adding on, I am particularly concerned about the message HB2561 HD2 sends to the children of Hawaii. By legally designating these animals as 'controllable pests,' we risk desensitizing our youth to the suffering of living beings. Psychological research has long shown a 'link' between the treatment of animals and the development of empathy. Teaching our children that the solution to an 'inconvenience' is eradication, rather than humane management, undermines the values of aloha and compassion we strive to instill in the next generation.

Furthermore, I am deeply concerned that by officially designating these animals as 'nuisances' and 'controllable pests,' HB2561 HD2 will embolden individuals who already harbor tendencies toward animal cruelty. When the State devalues a species, it provides a legal and moral loophole for abusers to justify their actions as 'pest control' or 'public service.' We know through extensive psychological research—often referred to as 'The Link'—that animal abuse is a significant predictor of future violence against humans. Rather than curbing the problem, this bill risks

providing a sanctioned environment for violent behavior to go unchecked and unprosecuted, ultimately making our entire community less safe.

I respectfully urge the committee to hold this bill or amend it to focus on more humane, community-based management solutions that do not involve "pest" designations or heavy fines for compassionate residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Haven Ramelb

Honolulu, HI

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 3:54:53 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ashley Gauvreau	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Think of life. These are animals that wake up every morning waiting to see their owners and other animals and vise versa... They cause no harm they are other people's meaning for love and compassion.. especially after finding out people in the Epstein files eat babies... Why would you eat chickens let people love what was here before us....the chicken or the egg is still the question

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 4:04:41 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Felicia J Bonser	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As an individual citizen, I would like to oppose HB2561. For over a decade, I have personally rescued chickens, both feral, and domesticated, and given them safety, love and security. It's become my life's mission to ensure every one of these creatures is cared for in any capacity. For Hawaii to deem these animals nuisances is appalling. Chickens on your islands are one of the most charming things about your state. I've been going to Hawaii for 30 years now, and every time I'm there, I enjoy watching the freedom and safety These birds have. Like Florida, Ybor specifically , you should be protecting these animals. They're benign, non-offensive, extremely loving, and if nothing else, fun to watch. But they are truly remarkable and smart birds. Extremely under appreciated and treated like a commodity. Allowing your residents to execute these birds because they don't like them is something that should never be allowed in any state within this country. Chickens deserve to live and be treated on the same level as dogs or cats. How people can view these animals as any less sentient Than any other animal is disgusting. Stop viewing them as disposable. They are no more disposable than your neighbors dog. I would expect a lot more from the Hawaiian islands. With so much love and compassion that flows through your community, you would think this wouldn't even be an issue. Don't allow this bill to pass. Save the chickens!

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 4:22:43 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lee Cuccia	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need to control chicken populations however it should be done in a humane manner. Mahalo!

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 4:30:46 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nadine Chiang	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senator and Representatives

I am writing in strong opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561.

Chickens are social, intelligent animals who form emotional attachments to humans and to each other. They are already among the most abused animals in Hawai‘i due to widespread cockfighting and neglect. To respond by labeling them as pests and authorizing killing only deepens the harm.

If our representatives truly want to change the narrative that Hawai‘i is serious about preventing animal abuse, we cannot commit this level of abuse ourselves.

Across our islands we have recently seen feral cats shot, dogs on video being violently mistreated by young people, farms attacked to steal and kill animals and their caregivers, tourists harming sea creatures, and an ongoing cockfighting crisis. Study after study shows that animal abuse is often the first step toward broader violent crime. Violence begets violence.

By passing bills that normalize cruelty, the Legislature opens a Pandora’s box. These policies send a message that harming animals is acceptable, even encouraged. That is a dangerous message with real consequences for public safety and community wellbeing.

Hawai‘i should be reducing violence, not modeling it. I urge you to reject these bills and instead invest in humane, preventative, and educational solutions that reflect our shared values.

Please do not make animal cruelty the law of our land.

We vote. We organize. And we expect better.

With aloha and determination,
Nadine Chiang

Hawaii Kai

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 4:38:27 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pamela Small	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Sirs and Madams,

Myname is Pamela Small and I live on the Big Island. I am writing today to DEEPLY OPPOSE HB2561.

This bill is inhumane and cruel to feral chickens. I am, frankly, shocked that such a deeply flawed and heartless bill is even being considered by the legislature.

Hawaii is a state that still embraces animal cruelty in many forms. Instead of trying to shut down dog fighting, cock fighting, agriculture theft, or theft of local pets as bait for these horrific animal fighting rings you are proposing to allow barbaric removal of defenseless chickens that are causing harm to no-one.

Hawaii needs to do better. Please show that you, as legislators, are better than the thugs that abuse animals statewide. Vote NO to HB 2561.

Mahalo,

Pamela Small

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 5:12:45 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nani Brown	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in opposition to this bill because although chickens can be a nuisance in certain areas, this solution is going to allow the perpetuation of animal cruelty. People have chickens as pets, people depend on chickens for eggs and with the growing threats to our funding and imports, rising food cost, adding poison or other cruel efforts to eradicate these animals will add to the problem in the future. This bill will harm our food sources and potential food sources. Chickens are great organic solutions to pesticides while producing food. That is a positive 2 for one for our lāhui. I strongly oppose this bill.

March 18, 2026

To: House of Representatives
From: Ku‘ualoha Ho‘omanawanui

Re.: Opposition to HB 2561

Aloha Legislators,

I oppose HB 2561 for multiple reasons, including the proposal to classify chickens on public land as pests. This bill unintentionally promotes violence and cruelty as public policy. That is not who we are as Hawai‘i. As a Kanaka Maoli born, raised, living, and paying taxes in Hawai‘i, aloha ‘āina—cherishing, caring for, protecting, and supporting our environment, is not just about the lands, seas, and skies. It includes our plants and animals. Chickens are but one of the bird species born in the Kumulipo; the Hawaiian akua Wākea (sky father) is but one example of an ancestor who took the form of a chicken (rooster). They are beloved “canoe” animals brought to Hawai‘i by our voyaging ancestors, and are not just an important food source, but are also ‘aumakua (family guardian ancestors) and beloved family members for some.

Killing is not the approach we want from our leadership. It does not reflect our culture, our values, or the meaning of aloha. Violence carried out in the name of the government is still violence, and it teaches the wrong lesson to our keiki and our communities. Hawai‘i should be leading with compassion, innovation, and mālama ‘āina.

I grew up in paniolo ranching and farming culture on Kaua‘i, and participated in 4-H from 8-18 years old, raising dairy heifers and participating in the horsemanship club. Many of my family, friends, and neighbors also raised chickens, and since the Covid lockdown in 2020, I have volunteered time with local O‘ahu-based bird rescue organizations, and have found chickens to be social, intelligent animals who form emotional attachments to humans and to each other. They are already among the most abused animals in Hawai‘i due to widespread cockfighting and neglect. To respond by labeling them as pests and authorizing killing only deepens the harm. If our representatives truly want to change the narrative that Hawai‘i is serious about preventing animal abuse, we cannot commit this level of abuse ourselves.

I live in a townhouse complex in an area of Ha‘ikū, Kāne‘ohe ma uka of the highway, along a ravine with a stream that is a home for an abundance of feral chickens. I have found a safe, easy, humane way to reduce their population is to allow the hens to lay eggs in my plant pots outside, and collect them before they hatch. I spent a whopping \$4 at a local feed store for some fake ceramic eggs that I use so the hens continue to sit, and do not continue to produce their own eggs for 3 weeks (their incubation time). If we don’t eat the eggs, others ask for them, or we feed them back to the chickens (they will eat them raw or cooked). On occasion, especially when an egg breaks and is stinky, we just throw it in the trash or into the bushes. I have encouraged others to do the same, and we’ve managed to keep the population in check for six years now, with no violence, poisons, cruel traps, starvation, or spending any money. An easy fix in public spaces is to set out a nesting box (recycling a cardboard box suffices).

There are far too many instances across our islands of people mistreating animals of all kinds. Aside from videos that circulate on social media, I often come across birds who are severely injured due to being shot at with darts, bb guns, bludgeoned with rocks, sticks, or other weapons, roosters fought and left for dead with severe injuries, and more. Just a few months ago I treated a pigeon who had been intentionally impaled with a wooden chopstick!

Study after study shows that animal abuse is often the first step toward broader violent crime. Violence begets violence. By passing bills that normalize cruelty, the Legislature opens a Pandora's box. These policies send a message that harming animals is acceptable, even encouraged. That is a dangerous message with real consequences for public safety and community wellbeing. Hawai'i should be reducing violence, not modeling it. I urge you to reject these bills and instead invest in humane, preventative, and educational solutions that reflect our shared values. Please do not make animal cruelty the law of our land. I would love to see more animal care opportunities in our schools, aside from individual teachers who lead clubs on their own time on individual campuses, or, like me, who integrate lessons re. mālama manu—caring for the birds on our own campus: native species such as the migrating kōlea and nesting manu-ō-kū, to introduced heritage species like chickens, to introduced birds like the shama and z doves. It is an extension of the Humanities, the area in which I teach, with shows us through the arts what it means to be human at our best, to learn empathy and compassion through studying the literature, visual art, performance art, etc. of others. Such empathy and compassion extends to the sciences through subjects like biology and finding value in the natural world around us—the plants, animals, and elements that are the foundation of our environment and our world. In such violent, turbulent times we are living in, adding to violent solutions is truly not the answer, and does not reflect Hawai'i as an Aloha State. Aloha is not and should not be a tourist industry slogan. We must all do our best to truly embody it, and promoting animal cruelty authorized through this bill does not do that.

Moreover, I am just one of the thousands of tax paying island residents who rescue, rehabilitate, and provide lifelong care to chickens, wild birds, and native and non native species across Hawai'i. This is not a fringe community. It is a deeply rooted network of caregivers who have built close knit support systems, small businesses, and local economies around humane animal care. Especially in rural communities, people spend thousands of dollars of their own money on feed, veterinary care, habitat maintenance, transportation, education and supplies. This work supports local stores, farmers, veterinarians, our keiki and service providers. Much of my hard earned money is reinvested into our local community via patronizing our local feed stores, veterinarians, and even farmers markets to buy lettuces, other greens, and fruits for my family and our animals. I value the friendships I've made with the owners and employees at these establishments, all hardworking local families who are the backbone of our lifestyle and communities.

HB 2561 ignores this reality and threaten to dismantle years of responsible, community driven solutions. There are organizations ready and willing to help manage populations humanely, without poisoning our land with pesticides, harming non-targeted animals, executing innocent chickens or empowering violent vigilantes. Choosing the easy way out through killing and pest control contracts is not leadership. It is a failure of those who lead from behind.

Support and work directly with the organizations that care for the lives of these chickens and for our 'āina. Reject policies that normalize cruelty, contaminate our environment, and divide our communities into us versus them. If these bills move forward, many of us will remember this choice at the ballot box. We vote. We organize. And we expect better.

Mahalo for your time and consideration of my testimony. Please kill this bill.

me ke aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kumalo Iomanawanui". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small dot at the end.

ku'ualoha ho'omanawanui
Ha'ikū, Kāne'ōhe, Ko'olaupoko, O'ahu

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 7:07:14 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jezreel Joy Calhoon	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly OPPOSE this cruel, inhumane bill toward feral chickens. This bill is insinuating that animal abuse, with already concerning numbers, is what our aloha state allows and promotes.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 6:48:12 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sienna Hartley	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a born and raised Hawai'i resident. I can understand how some may see chickens as a pest however, humans are the ones ruining ecosystems and polluting the Earth. We live in a beautiful place with wild life. I see boar in my neighborhood and mo'o in my house and that is part of the beauty of Hawai'i. How can say how far people will take getting ride of the "nuisance". Chicken's protect us from over population of many different invasive species. At the end of the day I do not this there is a "humane" way of removing an animal from where they call home. That is all thank you.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 6:50:04 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shawna Biemann	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee,

I absolutely oppose HB2561 HD2.

I am testifying on behalf of the thousands of island residents who rescue, rehabilitate, and provide lifelong care to chickens, wild birds, and native and non native species across Hawai‘i.

This is not a fringe community. It is a deeply rooted network of caregivers who have built close knit support systems, small businesses, and local economies around humane animal care. Especially in rural communities, people spend thousands of dollars of their own money on feed, veterinary care, habitat maintenance, transportation, education and supplies. This work supports local stores, farmers, veterinarians, our keiki and service providers.

HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 ignore this reality and threaten to dismantle years of responsible, community driven solutions. There are organizations ready and willing to help manage populations humanely, without poisoning our land with pesticides, harming non-targeted animals, executing innocent chickens or empowering violent vigilantes.

Choosing the easy way out through killing and pest control contracts is NOT leadership. It IS a failure of those who lead from behind.

Support and work directly with the organizations that care for the lives of these chickens and for our ‘āina. PLEASE reject policies that normalize cruelty, contaminate our environment, and divide our communities into us versus them. If these bills move forward, many of us will remember this choice at the ballot box.

Not to mention, the ongoing theft of pet roosters for the cruelty of the gambling fights will be perpetuated and NOT prosecuted as such. This opens so many levels of “acceptable cruelty and torture “

Please do not let this bill pass, the chickens are NOT our biggest problems.

Once again, I absolutely oppose HB2561 HD2.

Very emotionally sincerely,

Shawna Biemann

Current chicken lover, rescuer and responsible rehabber.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 6:52:10 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sunshine Eckstrom	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This terrible bill should be strongly opposed by anyone who has any sense of common decency. HB2561 promotes cruelty over humane, community-based solutions. Let's not go backwards in our treatment of animals. Chickens are intelligent, sentient animals who deserve more than this shameful bill. Oppose HB2561 and oppose cruelty to animals.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 7:55:07 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Margery Nakayama	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I hearby oppose this bill and would like to instead enforce humane treatments of feral birds. I believe they are not considered pests and It is not their fault to be in this predicament. We as human beings are responsible for this happening, and we should be better stewards of taking care of these animals instead of killing them. I support the sanctuaries that are willing to care for these birds. Killing them is an easy way out and a very inhumane way to solve a problem that we created. So I oppose this bill and I would like to see a humane solution for these innocent creatures.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 8:26:47 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amber Saenz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senator Fevella,

I am writing to express my deep outrage and opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561, including the proposal to classify chickens on public land as pests.

These bills promote violence and cruelty as public policy. That is not who we are as Hawai'i. Our 'āina is not something to dominate or destroy. It is a living system that deserves respect, care, and compassion. All living beings who share this land are worthy of humane treatment. Killing is not the approach we want from our leadership. It does not reflect our culture, our values, or the meaning of aloha.

If passed, i fear some will even feel encouraged to play out this cruelty like its a game or trophy. Violence carried out in the name of the government is still violence, and it teaches the wrong lesson to our keiki and our communities.

Hawai'i should be leading with compassion, innovation, and mālama 'āina, not bloodshed. These bills move us in the opposite direction and damage trust between the people and those elected to serve them.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 and to support humane, nonviolent, community based solutions instead.

Our islands deserve better.

With respect and aloha,

Amber Saenz

District 20

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 9:02:28 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Grace Singer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

I am writing to express my deep outrage and opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561, including the proposal to classify chickens on public land as pests.

These bills promote violence and cruelty as public policy. That is not who we are as Hawai'i. Our 'āina is not something to dominate or destroy. It is a living system that deserves respect, care, and compassion. All living beings who share this land are worthy of humane treatment.

Killing is not the approach we want from our leadership. It does not reflect our culture, our values, or the meaning of aloha. Violence carried out in the name of the government is still violence, and it teaches the wrong lesson to our keiki and our communities.

Hawai'i should be leading with compassion, innovation, and mālama 'āina, not bloodshed. These bills move us in the opposite direction and damage trust between the people and those elected to serve them.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 and to support humane, nonviolent, community based solutions instead.

Our islands deserve better.

**With respect and aloha,
Grace Singer
Kailua, O'ahu**

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 10:03:49 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Claudia cox	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representative David A. Tarnas

I am writing to express my deep outrage and opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561, including the proposal to classify chickens on public land as pests.

These bills promote violence and cruelty as public policy. That is not who we are as Hawai'i.

Our 'āina is not something to dominate or destroy. It is a living system that deserves respect, care, and compassion. All living beings who share this land are worthy of humane treatment.

Killing is not the approach we want from our leadership. It does not reflect our culture, our values, or the meaning of aloha. Violence carried out in the name of the government is still violence, and it teaches the wrong lesson to our keiki and our communities.

Hawai'i should be leading with compassion, innovation, and mālama 'āina, not bloodshed. These bills move us in the opposite direction and damage trust between the people and those elected to serve them.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 and to support humane, nonviolent, community based solutions instead.

Our islands deserve better.

With respect and aloha,

Claudia cox

Haleiwa

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 10:48:00 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Veronica Hussey	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Veronica, and I am a resident of Oahu. I am writing in opposition to HB2561 HD2.

I have personally witnessed adults paying teenagers to catch chickens for money, where the animals are chased, swung by their legs, and have their feathers pulled out while still alive. Roosters are also being targeted and sold for fighting. Today, I also witnessed a neighbor kicking a chicken—behavior I have never seen in my neighborhood before.

These incidents reflect a growing pattern of cruelty. Measures that lack humane standards and oversight risk encouraging this behavior. Chickens are sentient animals, and population control efforts should reflect Hawaii’s values of compassion and responsibility.

I respectfully urge you to oppose HB2561 HD2 and instead support humane, regulated solutions.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Veronica A Hussey

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 11:45:29 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ShaiAnne brooks	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Removing chickens from the "wild bird" category for the purpose of being able to legally kill them is not okay. Chickens in Hawaii are not, and do not cause issues to the point of needing them removed. This would be a waste of money that could be going towards much more important things such as our kalihi roads. They are no more of a nuisance than any other common bird.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 2:39:33 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mitsuyo Sakata	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Position: Oppose Unless Amended to Require Non-Lethal Control

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Mitsuyo Sakata, and I respectfully submit testimony in opposition to HB 2561 unless it is amended to require humane, non-lethal management methods.

As a Japanese citizen who cares deeply about Hawaii, I am particularly concerned about the economic and reputational implications of authorizing expanded lethal control of feral chickens.

While I understand that unmanaged populations can create nuisance concerns, several important issues remain:

1. Lack of Clear Public Health Data

At this time, there does not appear to be publicly presented data demonstrating a significant statewide public health emergency caused by feral chickens. Before allocating funding or expanding lethal control authority, I respectfully urge the Legislature to require clear, transparent evidence of measurable public health risk.

Public policy — especially when it involves taking animal life and appropriating funds — should be grounded in documented need and data-driven analysis.

2. Impact on Japanese Tourism and Economic Risk

Japan has historically been one of Hawaii’s most important international visitor markets. Japanese tourism has been slower to recover in recent years. In this fragile economic environment, Hawaii should avoid actions that could generate negative international attention.

Japanese culture places strong emphasis on compassion toward animals and harmony with nature. Social media coverage or news suggesting that Hawaii is conducting widespread killing of animals could create reputational harm and discourage travel.

Even the perception of cruelty can influence public sentiment abroad, particularly in Japan, where animal welfare issues are taken seriously by many consumers.

3. Long-Term Effectiveness and Cost Concerns

Lethal removal alone often fails to provide sustainable population control if root causes — such as food access, feeding practices, and breeding rates — are not addressed. Without prevention measures, populations may rebound, requiring continued funding year after year.

Preventative strategies such as sterilization, feeding enforcement, and waste management improvements may provide more sustainable long-term cost control.

Recommended Amendments

If this bill proceeds, I respectfully urge the Legislature to:

- Require evidence-based justification and transparent public health data
- Prioritize non-lethal control methods
- Mandate humane handling standards and oversight
- Require cost-analysis reporting on long-term effectiveness

Hawaii's global reputation, economic stability, and values of compassion should all be carefully considered before expanding lethal animal control programs.

Mahalo for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Mitsuyo Sakata

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 3:47:34 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gretchen	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senator and Representatives,

I am writing on behalf of the thousands of island residents who rescue, rehabilitate, and provide lifelong care to chickens, wild birds, and native and non native species across Hawai'i.

This is not a fringe community. It is a deeply rooted network of caregivers who have built close knit support systems, small businesses, and local economies around humane animal care. Especially in rural communities, people spend thousands of dollars of their own money on feed, veterinary care, habitat maintenance, transportation, education and supplies. This work supports local stores, farmers, veterinarians, our keiki and service providers.

HB 1852 and HB 2561 ignore this reality and threaten to dismantle years of responsible, community driven solutions. There are organizations ready and willing to help manage populations humanely, without poisoning our land with pesticides, harming non-targeted animals, executing innocent chickens or empowering violent vigilantes.

Choosing the easy way out through killing and pest control contracts is not leadership. It is a failure of those who lead from behind.

Support and work directly with the organizations that care for the lives of these chickens and for our 'āina. Reject policies that normalize cruelty, contaminate our environment, and divide our communities into us versus them. If these bills move forward, many of us will remember this choice at the ballot box.

We vote. We organize. And we expect better.

With aloha and determination,
Gretchen Sol

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 7:02:24 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maya Iriondo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I and my family STRONGLY OPPOSE this cruel, inhumane, unnecessary bill. Besides enabling the worst kind of behavior in certain people, this bill goes against public interest. Feral chickens are excellent at taking care of the excess insect population in our parks and public spaces with an efficiency that public service could not match. Leave the chickens alone.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 7:07:07 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this cruel and inhumane bill towards feral chickens. They help keep the bugs down and are a great part of Hawaii. Please do not condone animal abuse.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 9:32:46 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Helen Brown	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This purposed law crosses Too many lines of the rights of citizens. It is an unwelcomed dictatorship that is not acceptable and will not solve the growing chicken, cat or homeless populations in Hawaii.

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 9:47:11 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Hernandez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to express my deep outrage and opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561, including the proposal to classify chickens on public land as pests.

These bills promote violence and cruelty as public policy. That is not who we are as Hawai'i. Our 'āina is not something to dominate or destroy. It is a living system that deserves respect, care, and compassion. All living beings who share this land are worthy of humane treatment. Chickens, including feral chickens, have long been a part of Hawaii's community and should not become the target of widespread killing.

Killing is not the approach we want from our leadership. It does not reflect our culture, our values, or the meaning of aloha. Violence carried out in the name of the government is still violence, and it teaches the wrong lesson to our keiki and our communities.

Hawai'i should be leading with compassion, innovation, and mālama 'āina, not bloodshed. These bills move us in the opposite direction and damage trust between the people and those elected to serve them.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 and to support humane, nonviolent, community based solutions instead.

Our islands deserve better.

With respect and aloha,

Robert Hernandez

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 12:34:04 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Dudoit	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senator or Representative

I am writing to express my deep outrage and opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561, including the proposal to classify chickens on public land as pests.

These bills promote violence and cruelty as public policy. That is not who we are as Hawai'i. Our 'āina is not something to dominate or destroy. It is a living system that deserves respect, care, and compassion. All living beings who share this land are worthy of humane treatment.

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Hawai'i should be leading with compassion, innovation, and mālama 'āina, not bloodshed. These bills move us in the opposite direction and damage trust between the people and those elected to serve them.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 980, HB 1852, and HB 2561 and to support humane, nonviolent, community based solutions instead.

Our islands deserve better.

With respect and aloha,
Jennifer Dudoit
Ewa

HB-2561-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 12:50:55 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/20/2026 1:03:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gaye Chan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am appalled by and writing in strong opposition to HB 1852 and HB 2561.

Cruelty, violence, and disrespect for life are never a solution. Also, violence begets violence. There is already so much animal cruelty here; starting a state-sanctioned process just deepens it.

Study after study shows that animal abuse is often the first step toward broader violent crime.