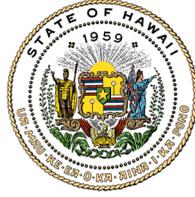


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA
P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY
CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER
AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of
RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
Acting Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on
AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS**

**Wednesday, March 18, 2026
9:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 325**

**In consideration of
SENATE BILL 1230, SENATE DRAFT 2
RELATING TO MEAT DONATION**

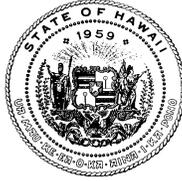
Senate Bill 1230, Senate Draft 2 proposes to exempt the donation of wild game meat, including axis deer, to charitable, religious, or nonprofit organizations for needy persons from certain laws regarding meat inspection and transportation. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources supports this bill and offers the following comments.**

The regulation of game species by the Department's hunting rules, Hawai'i Administrative Rules Chapters 122 and 123, and the Hawai'i Revised Statutes, only restricts the sale or offer for sale of any game animal or parts of the carcass of any game animal taken from any public hunting area.

The Department supports giving licensed public hunters the option to donate their quarry to charitable, religious, or nonprofit organizations.

While the Department oversees the hunting of game animals, it does not manage the processing or food safety of meat donations. The Department of Health handles health and safety regulations for donated wild game meat.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony COMMENTING on SB1230 SD2
RELATING TO MEAT DONATION**

REPRESENTATIVE CORY M. CHUN, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

Hearing Date, Time and Room Number: 03/18/2026, 9:30 am, 325

1 **Fiscal Implications:** Undetermined. This measure may impact the priorities identified in the
2 Governor's Executive Budget Request for the Department of Health's ("Department")
3 appropriations and personnel priorities.

4 **Department Position:** The Department offers comments.

5 **Department Testimony:** The Environmental Health Services Division ("EHSD") provides the
6 following testimony on behalf of the Department:

7 SB1230 SD2 amends Hawaii Revised Statutes ("HRS") chapter 159, "Hawaii Meat
8 Inspection Act," to establish an exemption for the slaughtering, transportation, and/or
9 preparation of wild game meat if the meat products are to be exclusively donated pursuant to
10 HRS chapter 145D, "Donation of Food."

11 The mission of the Department is to protect and improve the health and environment
12 for all people in Hawai'i. Increasing access to local and readily available sources of protein, such
13 as wild axis deer meat, may increase the availability of local and nutritious foods and help to
14 relieve food insecurity. Ready access to safe and nutritious food is a social determinant of
15 health, and the Department notes that both physical and mental health outcomes improve
16 when healthy food options are available to the public for consumption. Furthermore,

1 overpopulation of wild game animals has had a significant economic impact on local farmers
2 who are forced to invest in costly protection measures to prevent crop loss, and this
3 overpopulation has had a negative effect on the State’s environment, increasing runoff as
4 unprotected watersheds are overgrazed.

5 The Department defers to the Hawai’i State Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity
6 (“DAB”) as to the implementation and substantive matters of this measure. However, the
7 Department notes its concerns regarding potentially negative public health impacts by allowing
8 the donation of wild game meat without adequate inspection. All meat products sold and
9 served in the State are subject to inspection immediately prior to harvest to ensure that
10 potentially diseased animals are not processed as food, to prevent contamination of the
11 processing facility and prevent the spread of illness. Bypassing these protections may expose
12 those who receive donated wild game meat to a lesser standard of safety because the meat
13 was donated and not purchased.

14 Current regulations link HRS chapter 159 to the Department’s administrative rules
15 chapter 11-50, “Food Safety Code,” to keep local meat products safe. These regulations require
16 an inspection by a qualified veterinarian to ensure that harvested animals are not
17 contaminated before entering the food chain. Diseases that can harm humans, such as
18 leptospirosis and brucellosis, can be found in wild game, and tuberculosis has been
19 documented in axis deer on Moloka’i.

20 The Department recognizes that other states implement successful wild game meat
21 donation programs, but notes that in states like Utah and Wisconsin, hunting seasons start in
22 the fall and ambient temperatures are significantly colder. Rapidly cooling harvested meat plays
23 a major role in keeping meat safe. Because of Hawai’i’s year-round hot and humid climate,
24 there is less margin for error as properly handling and transporting harvested meat in a timely
25 manner is critical to reduce the proliferation of microbial contaminants.

1 The Department is currently collaborating with DAB to strengthen the State's meat
2 processing capabilities and supports the Legislature's investment in DAB and the Department to
3 build up its meat inspection program to ensure that all meat, including donated wild game
4 meat, is safe for public consumption.

5 **Offered Amendments:** None.

6 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

JOSIAH K. NISHITA
Managing Director



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

TO: Representative Cory M. Chun, Chair
Representative Matthias Kusch, Vice Chair
Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

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

DATE: March 12, 2026

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT OF SB1230 SD2, RELATING TO MEAT DONATION**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of this important measure.

The Act exempts the donation of wild game meat, including axis deer, by a hunter for the use or distribution by a charitable, religious, or nonprofit organization to needy persons from certain laws regarding the inspection and transportation of meat. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD2)

We **SUPPORT** this measure for the following reasons

1. **Improves Local Food Security and Community Resilience:** Maui County continues to face high food costs and increased demand on food banks and community feeding programs. Allowing the donation of properly processed wild game meat will add a new, local protein source for nonprofit organizations serving keiki, kūpuna, and low-income families. Expanding legal avenues for meat donation aligns with the County's Food and Nutrition Security Plan goals to increase access to affordable, nutritious, locally sourced food and reduce dependence on imported protein.
2. **Supports Responsible Game Management and Reduces Waste:** Maui County's overabundant wild ungulates (such as axis deer) damage farms, ranches, and native ecosystems, placing additional economic strain on agricultural producers and county resources. When harvested animals cannot be donated, valuable high-quality meat is often wasted, undermining both resource stewardship and community benefit. By creating a clear legal pathway for meat donation to nonprofits, while also integrating ways to ensure food safety by other acceptable means in lieu of USDA inspection. SD1230 SD1 turns a current liability into an asset, complementing existing management efforts and supporting a more sustainable, circular agro-economic system.

3. **Aligns with DOA’s Mission and Leverages Existing Infrastructure:** The Maui County Department of Agriculture is tasked with supporting a sustainable regional agricultural system that bolsters resident health and economic resiliency; enabling wild game meat donation directly advances this mission. SD1230 aligns with Hawai’i programs in many other states that safely channel hunter-harvested meat to “Hunters for the Hungry” -type initiatives, demonstrating that such models can operate with appropriate public-health safeguards. Maui County has strong existing networks of food banks, pantries, and community organizations that can handle donated food; clarifying the legality of wild game meat donation allows these partners to fully utilize existing cold-storage, distribution, and food-safety capacity.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Council Chair
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura

Councilmembers
K. Kauano'e Batangan
Tom Cook
Gabe Johnson
Tamara Paltin
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez
Shane M. Sinenci
Nohelani U'u-Hodgins



Director of Council Services
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

Deputy Director of Council Services
Richelle K. Kawasaki, Esq.

COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.MauiCounty.us

March 12, 2026

TO: Honorable Cory M. Chair, Chair
House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

FROM: Yuki Lei Sugimura
Council Vice-Chair *Yuki Lei Sugimura*

SUBJECT: **Testimony in Support of SB 1230 – Relating to Meat Donation**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of this important measure. The purpose of this measure is to exempt the donation of wild game meat, including axis deer, to a charitable, religious, or nonprofit organization to needy persons from certain laws regarding the inspection and transportation of meat.

I SUPPORT this measure as it addresses several important issues, particularly for Maui County. Overpopulation of axis deer, and other wild game animals, in Maui County has resulted in severe damage to our watersheds, ecosystems, and agricultural industry. Additionally, food insecurity is a daily reality for many of our residents. By removing barriers and clarifying the process for meat donations, this bill can help to address both the overpopulation of axis deer and food insecurity in our communities.

While not the only solution to address the damage caused by axis deer, hunters do play an important role in controlling the population. These hunters utilize axis deer meat to feed their families and friends, and have long sought to also donate this lean and healthy source of protein to those in need through local food banks and other organizations.

I respectfully request your support in moving this bill forward. Thank you for this opportunity to provide my testimony on this important matter.

For the foregoing reasons, I SUPPORT this measure.

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 1230 SD2
RELATING TO MEAT DONATION**

To: Chair Chun and Members of the House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

From: Robin Kean
President, Maui Wild Game Management to Feed the Hungry

Date: March 18, 2026

Aloha Chair Chun and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of SB 1230 SD2.

Maui Wild Game Management to Feed the Hungry supports this measure because it addresses two urgent and ongoing needs in our community: controlling invasive axis deer populations and increasing access to healthy protein for families in need.

On Maui, axis deer continue to cause serious damage to agriculture, ranch lands, fencing, landscaping, watersheds, and private property. At the same time, many families in our community are struggling with the rising cost of food. This bill creates a practical and much needed pathway to turn part of this problem into a direct community benefit by allowing more lawfully harvested wild game meat to be donated through charitable, religious, and nonprofit organizations to those in need.

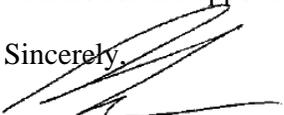
Our organization has seen firsthand both the scale of the axis deer problem and the need for more efficient ways to get quality protein into the community. Too often, unnecessary legal barriers prevent harvested animals from being put to good use. SB 1230 SD2 is a common sense step that supports food security, reduces waste, and helps encourage the removal of invasive animals that are already causing substantial harm across Maui.

This measure is especially important for Maui. Axis deer are not a future concern. They are a current and growing problem affecting farmers, ranchers, landowners, and the broader community every day. Healthy protein from properly handled harvested animals should not go to waste when it can help feed local families.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to pass SB 1230 SD2.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support.

Sincerely,



Robin Kean
President

Maui Wild Game Management to Feed the Hungry



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

Rep. Cory M. Chun, Chair
Rep. Matthias Kusch, Vice Chair

SB1230 SD2

RELATING TO MEAT DONATION

March 18, 2026, 9:30 AM
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

Chair Chun, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB1230 SD1** which exempts the donation of wild game meat, including axis deer, to a charitable, religious, or nonprofit organization to needy persons from certain laws regarding the inspection and transportation of meat.

Exempting wild game from the full extent of regulation when used for donation to our communities allows us to better feed these communities high quality sources of protein, while also creating an outlet for efforts to remove invasive species such as deer, goat, and pigs from the environment. Unmanaged ungulates damage our ecosystems and cause detriment to farming and ranching operations. The deer population in Maui County needs to be reduced dramatically in order to maintain the health of the land. Encouraging the hunting and donation of wild game will help us to meet both environmental and social needs.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four county-level Cattlemen's Associations. Our member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of over 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director





1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 |
Honolulu, HI 96813
P: 808-533-1292 | e:
info@hawaiiifood.com

Executive Officers

Kit Okimoto, Okimoto Corp., *Chair*
Jayson Watts, Mahi Pono, *Vice Chair*
Jill Tamura, Tamura Super Market, *Secretary/Treas.*
Lauren Zirbel, HFIA, *President and Executive Director*
Paul Kosasa, ABC Stores, *Advisor*
Toby Taniguchi, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Joe Carter, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, Odom, *Advisor*
Eddie Asato, Pint Size Hawaii, *Advisor*
Gary Okimoto, Safeway, *Advisor*
Maile Miyashiro, C&S Wholesale, *Immediate Past Chair*

TO: Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems
FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: March 18, 2026

TIME: 9:30am

RE: SB1230 SD1 Relating to Meat Donation

Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, manufacturers and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

HFIA is in support of this measure. Axis deer are an invasive species and keeping the population under control is necessary in order to protect our agricultural lands and ecosystems. Axis deer can be a plentiful source of affordable locally sourced meat, which can help address food insecurity in our state. Right now there are some unnecessary impediments that prevent axis deer meat from being donated. This measure would help remove those roadblocks and allow for meat donation. We encourage the committee to pass this measure and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.



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 18, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

TESTIMONY ON SB 1230, SD2
RELATING TO MEAT DONATION

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
9:30 AM

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice-Chair Kusch, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate, and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports SB 1230, SD2, which provides an exemption under Chapter 159, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS), to facilitate the donation of wild game meat—such as axis deer—to charitable, religious, and nonprofit organizations serving those in need.

Across the state, invasive species are wreaking havoc on agriculture and ecosystems. Maui County's axis deer population has grown uncontrollably, fueled by abundant forage after rainfall events. These deer destroy crops and pastures, consuming any available vegetation. Similarly, feral pigs pose a serious threat—not only eating crops but also uprooting and trampling farmland, damaging pasture grasses, and promoting the spread of invasive weeds. They devastate orchards by consuming fruit, citrus, and nuts, while their rooting can kill young trees, shrubs, and vines or spread soil-based fungal diseases. Additionally, feral pigs break irrigation lines, tear agricultural nets, and damage other essential farming equipment.

Beyond agricultural destruction, unchecked feral animal populations create serious risks to livestock, public health, and the environment. As their numbers grow and food sources dwindle, malnutrition weakens them, making them more susceptible to disease. This raises concerns about the spread of livestock diseases, such as bovine tuberculosis, which has already been documented in Moloka'i due to feral pig transmission.

Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers are dedicated to increasing local food production and self-sufficiency, but they cannot succeed if feral animals continue to consume or destroy their crops and livestock. These invasive species cause widespread economic, environmental, and public health damage—threatening native ecosystems, cultural and historic resources, and even the safety of people, pets, and wildlife. Without effective solutions, the costs and consequences will only escalate.

HRS §145D-2 (ACT 54, 2023) already establishes liability protections for individuals and entities donating food in good faith, including wild game meat, ensuring such donations can be made without fear of legal repercussions. However, despite these protections, existing meat inspection and transportation requirements under Chapter 159 have remained a significant barrier to the donation and distribution of wild game. SB 1230, SD2 resolves this issue by explicitly exempting the processing, transportation, and donation of wild game meat from these inspection requirements, provided the meat is not mixed with federally regulated meat products and is transported only between approved locations.

This bill increases access to high-quality protein sources for food-insecure individuals and families by enabling more wild game donations. Without this exemption, much of the wild game harvested by hunters goes to waste due to legal restrictions. HB 1334 allows this resource to be put to good use in feeding our community. While HRS §145D-2 provides liability protections, SB 1230, SD2 further clarifies the legal framework surrounding wild game donations, eliminating uncertainties that may currently discourage hunters and organizations from participating.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau urges support of SB 1230, SD2 to help mitigate the impact of invasive species while simultaneously addressing food insecurity.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.

March 18, 2026, 9:30 a.m.
Hawaii State Capitol
Conference Room 325 and Videoconference

To: House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems
Rep. Cory Chun, Chair
Rep. Matthias Kusch, Vice Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii
Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns

Re: SB1230 SD2 — RELATING TO MEAT DONATION

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and other Committee Members,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii **supports** [SB1230 SD2](#), which would exempt wild game meat donated to charitable organizations from state meat inspection and transportation rules.

This measure would go a long way toward improving Hawaii's food security and reducing the ecological and economic damage done by invasive species such as Axis deer, goats and wild pigs.

To sell or distribute meat products, a rancher or hunter must typically have the animal processed in a facility inspected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture or an equivalent state agency. Hawaii does not have a state meat inspection agency and has limited processing capacity. Further, Axis deer do not qualify for free USDA inspections because they are considered a "non-amenable species."

All of this makes it challenging to process invasives for human consumption. An exemption for donated meat is a commonsense response to this challenge, which many states have already adopted.¹

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas
Director of Strategic Campaigns
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

¹ "[Game Meat Donation Programs](#)," Congressional Sportsmen Foundation, accessed March 11, 2026.

SB-1230-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 8:39:13 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/18/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Warren Watanabe	Maui County Farm Bureau	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Maui County Farm Bureau supports SB1230 SD2, Relating to Meat Donation. Axis deer on Maui continues to destroy crops and pastures resulting in costly control methods. This measure can be part of a comprehensive management program and help provide protein for those in need. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.



MAUI
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
VOICE OF BUSINESS

LATE

**HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 325
FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2026, 10:00 A.M.**

To The Honorable Representative Cory M. Chun, Chair
The Honorable Representative Mattias Kusch, Vice Chair
Members of the committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

SUPPORT SB1230 SD2 RELATING TO MEAT DONATION

The Maui Chamber of Commerce **SUPPORTS SB1230 SD2** which exempts the donation of wild game meat, including axis deer, to a charitable, religious, or nonprofit organization to needy persons from certain laws regarding the inspection and transportation of meat.

The Chamber would like to point out that axis deer, an invasive species that poses a continuing threat to Hawaii's environment, could provide significant quantities of meat as a protein source for nonprofit food distribution services, such as the State's network of food banks and Feed My Sheep, Inc. of Maui County. However, there is a gap between the hunters and the retailers and nonprofit services because the meat requires processing prior to distribution. For meat donation, other states such as Wisconsin and Michigan offer models that Hawaii can assess to develop processes for plan implementation and program funding, including licensing fees and other funding sources managed by wildlife agencies or nonprofits.

This bill is a significant tools in controlling the over-population of Axis deer on all islands.

For these reasons we **SUPPORT SB1230 SD2** and respectfully request its passage.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.



PO Box 4, Kunia, Hawaii, 96759 || 808-622-9026 || www.agstewardshiphawaii.org

March 10, 2026

Aloha e Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

On behalf of Agriculture Stewardship Hawai'i, we offer our **support for including the Green Fee projects and food and agriculture bills within HB1800**. This legislation represents a historic opportunity to strengthen Hawai'i's stewardship programs through transparency, accountability, and community-informed governance in the allocation of Green Fee revenues and in support to our local food system.

Agriculture Stewardship Hawai'i is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the viability and sustainability of Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers through technical assistance, resource coordination, business education, and policy support. We have **25 years of experience** supporting conservation agriculture and stewardship on Hawai'i's working lands and also lead the [Statewide Food Systems Coordination Initiative](#) (HSFSC) initiative, launched in 2024 with philanthropic and gubernatorial support to strengthen coordination within Hawai'i's food system.

The Green Fee portfolio consists of **75 high-impact, ready-to-deliver projects** carefully selected by the Council. Together, these projects address climate hazards and risks holistically through a broad range of complementary approaches. By proactively investing in these initiatives, Hawai'i can mitigate the otherwise unmanageable costs and potential devastation of future disasters. We also recognize that **several other bills under consideration have budgetary implications that intersect with the Green Fee portfolio and broader stewardship efforts**, including:

- **HB1953 – Ag & Conservation Stewardship Fund:** Creates a cost-share fund for conservation agriculture to help producers manage natural resources.
- **HB2208 – Farm to Families:** Purchases fresh, local, culturally relevant food for families facing food insecurity while supporting local farmers.
- **HB2155 Agricultural Statistics**
- **HB1602 DAB Grant writer**
- **HB2548 Climate-Resilient Food Systems Grant Program** and more.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Dr. Amanda Shaw, PhD, Statewide Food Systems Coordinator
Email: amanda@agstewardshiphawaii.org, Tel: 808 429 5310

*Agriculture Stewardship Hawai'i is a DBA of:
O'ahu Resource Conservation and Development Council, a 501c3 Nonprofit Corporation*

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 1230 SD2
RELATING TO WILD GAME MEAT DONATION

To:	Chair Chun and Members of the House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems
From:	Albert Garr
Date:	3/12/2026
Subject:	Support for SB 1230 SD2
Position:	In support

Aloha Chair Chun and Members of the Committee,

I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of SB 1230 SD2.

This measure is an important step toward addressing two pressing issues in Hawai'i: the need to better manage invasive ungulate populations, including axis deer, and the need to increase access to healthy protein for local families and communities in need.

SB 1230 SD2 would help create a clearer pathway for donated wild game meat to be distributed through charitable, religious, and nonprofit organizations. This would reduce waste, support food security, and make better use of animals that are already being harvested.

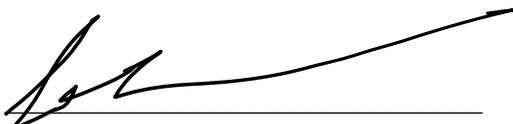
For communities such as those on Maui, where axis deer continue to damage agricultural lands, native landscapes, fencing, and private property, this bill offers a practical and community oriented solution. It connects responsible wildlife management with the urgent need to provide food assistance to those who can benefit from it.

This bill is a sensible measure that supports local food resilience, responsible harvesting, and community benefit. It helps remove barriers while still allowing for appropriate attention to public health and safe handling practices.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to pass SB 1230 SD2.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support.

Respectfully submitted,



Signature

Albert Garr

SB-1230-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2026 7:19:40 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/18/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Keeney	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SB1230 offers a strong solution to two big problems: Controlling the local invasive ungulate population, and putting high quality, nutrient rich food in the hands of those in need. I support this bill for those two reasons, and urge that it be passed so the people of Maui can get the help they need on both fronts.

Respectfully,

Michael Keeney

SB-1230-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2026 7:24:49 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/18/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicolaas van der Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Chun and Members of the Committee,

I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of SB 1230 SD2.

This measure is an important step toward addressing two pressing issues in Hawai'i: the need to better manage invasive ungulate populations, including axis deer, and the need to increase access to healthy protein for local families and communities in need.

SB 1230 SD2 would help create a clearer pathway for donated wild game meat to be distributed through charitable, religious, and nonprofit organizations. This would reduce waste, support food security, and make better use of animals that are already being harvested.

For communities such as those on Maui, where axis deer continue to damage agricultural lands, native landscapes, fencing, and private property, this bill offers a practical and community oriented solution. It connects responsible wildlife management with the urgent need to provide food assistance to those who can benefit from it.

This bill is a sensible measure that supports local food resilience, responsible harvesting, and community benefit. It helps remove barriers while still allowing for appropriate attention to public health and safe handling practices.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to pass SB 1230 SD2.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support.

Respectfully submitted,

SB-1230-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2026 7:31:16 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/18/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael I Rice	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I stand in SUPPORT of this bill, I feel it is a good step towards assisting the hungry within the state while also combatting some invasive or pest species.

SB-1230-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2026 11:40:36 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/18/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eli Olson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a hunter I support this bill to be able to provide for my family and my community.

SB-1230-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/12/2026 11:45:42 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/18/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brian Etheredge	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Chun and Members of the Committee,

I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of SB 1230 SD2.

This measure is an important step toward addressing two pressing issues in Hawai'i: the need to better manage invasive ungulate populations, including axis deer, and the need to increase access to healthy protein for local families and communities in need.

SB 1230 SD2 would help create a clearer pathway for donated wild game meat to be distributed through charitable, religious, and nonprofit organizations. This would reduce waste, support food security, and make better use of animals that are already being harvested.

For communities such as those on Maui, where axis deer continue to damage agricultural lands, native landscapes, fencing, and private property, this bill offers a practical and community oriented solution. It connects responsible wildlife management with the urgent need to provide food assistance to those who can benefit from it.

This bill is a sensible measure that supports local food resilience, responsible harvesting, and community benefit. It helps remove barriers while still allowing for appropriate attention to public health and safe handling practices.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to pass SB 1230 SD2.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support.

Chef Brian Etheredge

SB-1230-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2026 9:18:25 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/18/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andi Pawasarat-Losalio	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Andi, and I am writing in SUPPORT of SB1230.

At home here we face some of the highest food costs in the nation and food insecurity is a very real challenge for many families across our islands. While there are some families fortunate to have hunters who harvest wild game including axis deer, pig, sheep, goat and other animals, not all families have hunters that can do this important work of providing meat for families.

It is simply unbelievable to me that this meat, a valuable source of nutrition and local protein, cannot currently be legally donated to food banks, churches and nonprofit organizations that serve people in need.

Hawai'i produces very little of its own food, leaving us heavily dependent on imports. In the big picture, every pound of locally harvested wild game redirected to families in need is a step toward greater food security and resilience for our communities. In the daily view, our people are literally struggling to survive. Food assistance programs are being cut, costs are rising, and choices are shrinking. Our communities need access to healthy, whole food and protein.

To allow this food resource to be wasted, while our neighbors struggle to put food on the table, is mind blowing and not practical. Allowing hunters to donate this meat to charitable organizations is not just common sense, it is a moral imperative.

Bill SB1230 gives us that opportunity to make the shift back to a practical and common sense pathway to turn what is already happening, the hunting of invasive species, into a direct benefit for all people of Hawai'i. I urge the Committee to pass this bill without delay.

Thank you

SB-1230-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2026 9:49:04 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/18/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kai E Naumann	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB1230 because it allows hunters to donate wild game meat to charities and organizations that help feed people in need. In Hawai'i, many families struggle with the high cost of food, and this bill helps provide another source of healthy protein that might otherwise go to waste. Allowing donated wild game meat to be shared with nonprofit and religious organizations can help reduce food insecurity while also supporting responsible wildlife management. SB1230 is a practical way to help both our community and the environment.

SB-1230-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/13/2026 8:36:32 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/18/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
garrick yamamoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the right to be able to donate meat

SB-1230-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 12:45:50 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/18/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Furst	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice Chair Kusch, and Committee Members,

My name is Richard Furst and I am an avid hunter on the island of Oahu. I am writing to express my strong support for SB1230 Relating to Meat Donation. This bill exempts wild game meat from the requirements of USDA inspection if it is donated to non-profit charities for the purposes of feeding the needy. This important bill was carried over from last year's legislative session. Reviewing the testimony submitted during last year's hearings, this measure (and its companion bill HB1334) received overwhelming support from the public, multiple government agencies, and non-profit organizations. Given the tremendous public support this bill received, it is surprising that it was not seen as an easy win and passed last year.

With Hawaii's perpetual shortage of locally-grown food resources and the pervasiveness of hunger among our people, it would be a massive benefit to the people of Hawaii to have a source of high-quality, nutritious protein available from food banks and other charitable organizations. This is especially true considering that game mammal species in Hawaii are all considered invasive species, and the State is spending public funds on eradication efforts. Being able to donate meat to families in need would help to motivate an increase in hunter harvest, while helping to control the environmental damage that ungulates pose on our sensitive ecosystems.

I believe that the hunting community in Hawaii is very interested in supporting this effort, as we did after the tragic fires in Lahaina and Kula. If passed into law, this measure would help align Hawaii's laws with those of the Federal government and many other states in allowing wild game meats to be donated to "Hunters for the Hungry" programs. This measure would be a huge win for the people and the environment, and with the strong support it gathered last year, should be an easy one to pass through for reconciliation and forward for the Governor's signature.

Mahalo in advance for your support and taking action to forward this bill on to becoming law.

Best regards,

Richard Furst

SB-1230-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 9:40:36 PM

Testimony for AGR on 3/18/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jackie Keefe	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice Chair Kusch, and Members of the House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems,

My name is Jackie Keefe, and I am **in strong support of SB1230 SD2**, which was written with the intention of clarifying exemption rules for DOH.

Maui County is deep into an axis deer crisis which is destroying our ecosystems at an explosive rate. Axis deer are *not subject to the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA)* as they are considered **food**, not meat. This means that donated axis deer meat is not subject to USDA inspection, and this bill seeks to codify that into our State law.

Axis deer (venison) is a local, sustainable protein source. Maui County (and Hawai'i nei) is experiencing extreme food insecurity. Axis deer meat is both an available, healthy food source and offers Maui County a path towards more responsible 'āina stewardship.

Hunters and food banks have been hesitant to embrace donation in recent years due to liability fears. SB1230 seeks to protect good samaritan donors from these concerns.

Maui County desperately needs this clarifying law, which was requested by DOH to Maui Wild Game Management.

Please protect Maui County's farmers, ranchers, and delicate ecosystems and **pass SB1230 SD2**, and remember that this bill is only one piece of a large puzzle!

Please visit the website for [The Kahikolu Project — Maui Food Technology Center](#) to better understand the crisis that Maui County is facing.

Mahalo for the oppportunity to testify.

Jackie Keefe, Lahaina

SB-1230-SD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 7:37:40 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/18/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Troy Fernandez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Chun and Members of the Committee,

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For communities such as those on Maui, where axis deer continue to damage agricultural lands, native landscapes, fencing, and private property, this bill offers a practical and community oriented solution. It connects responsible wildlife management with the urgent need to provide food assistance to those who can benefit from it.

This bill is a sensible measure that supports local food resilience, responsible harvesting, and community benefit. It helps remove barriers while still allowing for appropriate attention to public health and safe handling practices.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to pass SB 1230 SD2.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support.