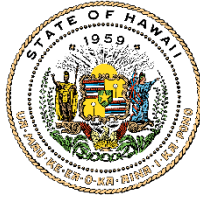


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



**STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'
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**

**Friday April 17, 2026
10:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 325**

**In consideration of
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 71**

Senate Concurrent Resolution 71 urges the Legislature to introduce and pass legislation establishing strict liability for individuals who keep, harbor, or feed certain animals in a manner that results in property damage. The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) offers the following comments.

The Department recognizes the need to address issues associated with at-large chickens, ungulates, and felids, and supports the development of policy to manage these populations. Given the often-unclear boundaries in which these animals exist, it is critical that any legislation include clear definitions and standards. These should specify: which animals are considered pets or agricultural animals versus feral or unmanaged populations; when an animal is deemed "at-large"; where such animals may lawfully be kept; who bears responsibility for their care and control; and what penalties apply when animals are maintained, fed, or harbored in prohibited areas. In drafting such legislation, the Department strongly encourages consultation with the Division of Forestry and Wildlife to ensure clarity, enforceability, and alignment with existing statutes.

With respect to the proposal to task the Hawaii Invasive Species Council (HISC) with conducting a study on feral chickens, the Department notes that HISC already carries a broad and resource-intensive mandate. Its responsibilities include the prevention, detection, control, and, where

feasible, eradication of high-priority invasive species such as Little Fire Ants, Coconut Rhinoceros Beetles, Coqui Frogs, Rapid 'Ōhi'a Death, Brown Tree Snakes, Queensland Longhorn Beetles, and numerous other threats that are often addressed before gaining public attention. Given this extensive scope, HISC typically defers to the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB) on species that are primarily agricultural in origin or context. As feral chickens are descended from domesticated agricultural stock, DAB is better positioned to serve as the lead subject-matter expert. As a key member of HISC, DAB's expertise would necessarily inform any study or report produced by the Council.

The Department further notes that animals commonly regarded as domestic or agricultural are not typically classified as invasive species, in part because their status can vary depending on context. This ambiguity can complicate enforcement and limit effective management. Accordingly, the Department recommends that the Legislature establish clear, context-specific definitions—such as pet, stray, feral, ownership, and liability—to guide implementation and enforcement. While the Legislature retains the authority to designate feral chickens as invasive (i.e., a species that causes or is likely to cause economic, environmental, or public health harm), such a determination may be made with or without a formal HISC study.

Should the Legislature direct HISC to undertake a study on the invasive potential of feral chickens, the Department respectfully requests that adequate funding be provided to support this effort.

Alternatively, the Department recommends amending the resolution to direct the Department to classify feral chickens as injurious wildlife. This designation would enable landowners and other authorized individuals to manage and control feral chicken populations on their property using lawful methods.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments

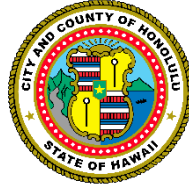
**DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMER SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA LAWELawe KUPA
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA

ADMINISTRATION
925 DILLINGHAM BOULEVARD, SUITE 257 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817
PHONE: (808) 768-3392 • FAX: (808) 768-3750 • WEBSITE: honolulu.gov

KIMBERLY M. HASHIRO
DIRECTOR
PO'O

MEGAN JOHNSON
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
HOPE PO'O



April 15, 2026

The Honorable Cory M. Chun, Chair
The Honorable Matthias Kusch, Vice Chair
and Members of the House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems
State Capitol, Conference Room 325
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

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

SUBJECT: S.C.R. No. 71 - Urging This Body to Introduce and Pass
Legislation to Establish Strict Liability for Individuals Who Keep,
Harbor, or Feed Certain Animals in a Manner that Results in
Damage to Property

HEARING: Friday, April 17, 2026, 10:30 a.m.

The City and County of Honolulu, Department of Customer Services (CSD) respectfully offers testimony in **support** of S.C.R. No. 71 for your committee's consideration. 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.

For these reasons, the Department of Customer Services **supports** S.C.R. No. 71 and thanks you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

Kimberly M. Hashiro
Director

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/14/2026 6:13:43 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

SCR71 is written with such broad strokes that it would be laughable if it were not so dangerous. This is ridiculous! Please table SCR 71. Mahalo.



Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

Date: April 16, 2026

To: Chair Rep. Cory Chun
Vice Chair Rep. Matthias Kusch
and Members of the Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

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

RE: Testimony in strong opposition to SCR 71 / SSCR 3415
Friday, April 17, 2026, 10:30 a.m., Room 325 & Videoconference

On behalf of the Hawaiian Humane Society, thank you for considering our strong opposition to SCR 71 / SSCR 3415, which urges the Legislature to introduce and pass legislation to establish strict liability for individuals who keep, harbor, or feed certain animals in a manner that results in damage to property.

The Hawaiian Humane Society is a non-profit education and advocacy organization that shelters, protects, rescues, reunites and rehomes animals. Established in 1883, it is O'ahu's largest animal welfare organization helping local pets and people in need. Hawaiian Humane's mission is to advocate for the human-animal bond and the humane treatment of all animals. Public policy advocacy has been critical to meeting that mission throughout our history.

Our approach to legislation is focused on humane, effective strategies for protecting all animals, improving public safety and strengthening the human-animal bond. This measure does not protect animals, people or public safety. It punishes compassionate community members and ignores the root causes of abandoned animal populations.

The feral chicken population is a result of the cock fighting industry being allowed to operate with impunity in our state. This illegal activity results in the torture of animals and inflicts the harm of illicit drugs, weapons and gambling on our communities, yet it is rarely punished by law enforcement.



Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

The Free-Roaming cat population is a result of pets being abandoned and fertile cats breeding outdoors. The legislation called for by this resolution would result in further growth of that population by interfering with humane management. Trap-Neuter-Return-manage is a proven, humane strategy for reducing Free-Roaming cat populations — and it requires the very feeding this resolution seeks to penalize.

Feral ungulates are a result of abandonment and mismanagement, yet this measure seeks to punish people for trying to help animals and it removes effective tools. For example, it would prevent property owners from using porcine birth control to manage wild pig populations as that requires baited feeding.

I urge the Legislature to defer SCR 71 and work with animal welfare advocates, conservationists, ranchers and other stakeholders to pursue evidence-based, compassionate solutions rather than repeating approaches that have failed session after session.

Mahalo for your consideration.

April 15, 2026

Board of Directors

Alexandra Alton

Emma Cobb

Anitra Frazier

Bryan Kortis, JD
National Programs
Director

Dr. Lisa Labrecque,
DVM

Nancy Peterson

Susan Richmond,
Executive Director

**NYC Community Cat
Program Director**

Jackie Borodan

Re: SCR 71 / SSCR 3415

To the Honorable Members of the House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems:

On behalf of Neighborhood Cats, a nonprofit registered in Hawaii, I would like to express our **strong opposition** to SCR 71/SSCR 3415.

In the past ten years, progress has been made in managing the overpopulation of free-roaming cats in Hawaii through expanded low cost and free spay/neuter programs. These programs rely on volunteers who care for the cats, including feeding. Measures designed to punish and discourage these volunteers would be counterproductive and result in less spay/neuter and more cats.

In contrast, the unprecedented and, frankly, mean-spirited approach advocated in SCR 71/SSCR 3415 has no empirical evidence of success. Notably, the resolution does not point to a single example of successful free-roaming cat control that was based on making volunteer feeders liable for property damage. Because none exist. This resolution is but another example of extreme elements in the conservation community advocating hardline, confrontational, unscientific measures which would fail if attempted.

If this resolution was to pass, it would be setting up the Legislature for a huge fight next year between conservationists and the animal welfare community. Dividing the public is not a road to success and does not embody an aloha spirit. Boost the efforts that are working now, don't damage them with ill-considered legislation.

Thank you for considering our views,



Bryan Kortis
National Programs Director

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 9:01:32 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marian Hussenbux	Animal Interfaith Alliance in Britain	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SCR 71 / SSCR 3415 urges the Legislature to introduce and pass legislation to establish strict liability for individuals who keep, harbour, or feed certain animals in a manner that results in damage to property.

We understand that the feral chicken population is a result of the cock fighting industry being allowed to operate with impunity in your state. AIA has opposed this permission and we wonder why, when it is banned in the USA federally, it still goes on and causes this perceived problem.

The Free-Roaming cat population is a result of companion animals being abandoned and fertile cats breeding outdoors. The trap-neuter-return-manage strategy, used in so many countries to good effect, requires feeding to build trust with the cats, lure them into traps and maintain the ongoing health of the animals.

We beg to strongly oppose the Legislature in this matter.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 9:28:57 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathy Carroll	Maui Humane Society	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

SCR 71 / SSCR 3415

Submitted by: Maui Humane Society

I serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the Maui Humane Society (MHS) and am authorized to submit testimony on behalf of our organization in strong opposition to SCR 71 / SSCR 3415.

This resolution applies a one-size-fits-all approach to three distinct free-roaming animal populations—feral chickens, free-roaming cats, and feral ungulates—each of which exists for different reasons and requires a different, evidence-based response. By treating these populations as interchangeable and directing legislation at the people who feed or care for animals, SCR 71 / SSCR 3415 misidentifies the problem and will worsen the very conditions it claims to address.

Feral Chickens

The feral chicken population in Hawai‘i is a direct consequence of cockfighting—an illegal industry that has long operated with impunity in our state. Addressing the root cause means stronger enforcement against illegal cockfighting, not penalizing community members who provide supplemental feeding to wild birds. While public education about the unintended harms of feeding wildlife is warranted, those individuals are not responsible for establishing these populations in the first place.

Free-Roaming Cats and Trap-Neuter-Return-Manage (TNRM)

Free-roaming cat populations stem from pet abandonment and the outdoor breeding of unsterilized cats. The most effective and humane solution is Trap-Neuter-Return-Manage (TNRM)—an approach backed by decades of research and adopted by animal welfare organizations nationwide.

TNRM depends on the ability of trained caregivers to feed managed colonies. Feeding is not incidental to this work—it is essential. It builds the trust needed to trap cats, allows caregivers to monitor colony health, and enables the humane sterilization that stops population growth.

Colonies with high sterilization rates produce fewer litters, stabilize over time, and ultimately decline. The downstream benefits are significant: reduced shelter intake, lower euthanasia rates, fewer nuisance complaints, and less cat dumping.

Legislation that interferes with managed colony caregiving—as this resolution calls for—would not reduce the free-roaming cat population. It would increase it, by dismantling the infrastructure of TNRM before sterilization can take effect. This is precisely the opposite of what good public policy should accomplish.

Feral Ungulates

Feral ungulate populations are the result of historical abandonment and inadequate land management—not the actions of individuals trying to help animals in need. Penalizing compassionate community members does nothing to address these systemic failures and diverts attention from the policy interventions that would actually make a difference.

A Recurring Pattern — and a Call for Lasting Solutions

The Maui Humane Society also wishes to note that measures of this kind have been introduced repeatedly in the legislature, session after session, and have been rejected each time—a reflection of the compassion and good judgment of this body and the communities we serve. If passed, such legislation would not solve the problems it identifies. It would instead undermine the humane, community-based solutions that are already working.

We respectfully urge this committee to oppose SCR 71 / SSCR 3415 and to instead support evidence-based, community-centered approaches to animal population management—approaches that address root causes, protect the work of dedicated caregivers, and reflect the values of aloha that define our islands.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Kathy Carroll, Ph.D.

Board Member, Maui Humane Society

Founder, Lāna`i Cat Sanctuary

WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SCR71

Brian Burns
President & Founder
Trooper's Chicken Rescue
O'ahu, Hawai'i

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

I write in strong opposition to SCR71 on behalf of Trooper's Chicken Rescue and the thousands of Hawai'i residents who believe in compassionate, effective, and responsible solutions to the feral chicken issue. While SCR71 is framed as a response to nuisance concerns, it is deeply flawed in both approach and consequence, and risks creating more problems than it solves.

1. SCR71 MISIDENTIFIES THE ROOT CAUSE

SCR71 repeatedly suggests that feeding and harboring chickens is the primary driver of population growth and nuisance behavior, this is factually and operationally incorrect. Feral chicken populations in Hawai'i are driven by:

- Illegal cockfighting operations
- Abandonment of domestic birds
- Uncontrolled breeding cycles
- Lack of coordinated relocation infrastructure

Punishing or targeting feeders does not reduce population growth. It only removes the very people helping stabilize and monitor these birds.

2. THE BILL CREATES "STRICT LIABILITY" FOR COMPASSION

SCR71 urges legislation that would impose strict liability on individuals who feed or harbor chickens if any property damage occurs. This is extremely dangerous policy.

It means:

- A resident feeding an injured bird could be held legally liable
- A rescuer stabilizing a flock could be punished
- Compassion becomes a legal risk

This does not solve a problem; it criminalizes community care.

3. IT TARGETS THE WRONG PEOPLE

This measure focuses enforcement on:

- Residents
- Feeders
- Volunteers
- Animal rescuers

Meanwhile, it completely ignores the largest contributor to the problem:

- Illegal cockfighting operations
- Organized animal cruelty networks

These activities:

- Breed and dump birds into the feral population
- Operate with minimal enforcement
- Are tied to broader criminal activity

SCR71 does nothing to address this.

4. IT CREATES LIABILITY WITHOUT INFRASTRUCTURE

SCR71 assumes that individuals should be held accountable for chickens...

But the State has:

- No relocation system
- No intake capacity
- No sanctuary infrastructure
- No coordinated humane population plan

Instead of building solutions, this resolution:

- Shifts responsibility to private citizens
- Without providing any alternative

That is not governance, that is deflection.

5. IT WILL CREATE UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

Even the Legislature has already acknowledged that poorly designed policies in this space can lead to:

- Increased community conflict
- Enforcement challenges
- Unintended safety risks

SCR71 will likely result in:

- Less reporting of injured animals
- More abandonment
- Increased underground activity
- Reduced ability to humanely manage populations

6. IT DOES NOT REFLECT HAWAI'I VALUES

Hawai'i is rooted in:

- Aloha
- Mālama 'āina
- Compassion for living beings

SCR71 moves us toward:

- Punitive enforcement
- Legal liability for kindness
- Normalization of harm

That is not who we are.

7. THE STATE IS IGNORING READY PARTNERS

Trooper's Chicken Rescue has:

- Actively reached out to lawmakers
- Offered partnership solutions
- Built a growing network of volunteers
- Developed plans for large-scale humane relocation

Yet despite these efforts:

We have received no response from the State.

Instead of collaboration, this resolution moves forward without engaging the very organizations already doing the work.

WHAT WE SHOULD DO INSTEAD

If the Legislature truly wants to solve this issue, we urge you to:

- Partner with local nonprofits already managing this problem
- Develop a state-supported relocation and sanctuary system
- Address illegal cockfighting with real enforcement
- Fund humane population management strategies
- Build infrastructure instead of criminalizing compassion

CONCLUSION

SCR71 is not a solution.

It is:

- Misguided

- Incomplete
- Potentially harmful

It shifts responsibility onto the public while ignoring root causes and refusing partnership with those already working toward real solutions.

We respectfully urge you to OPPOSE SCR71 and instead work with Trooper's Chicken Rescue to build a compassionate, effective, and sustainable path forward for Hawai'i.

With respect and aloha,
Brian Burns
President & Founder
Trooper's Chicken Rescue



Soup and Friends Animal Rescue opposes SCR71.

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 the now-deferred 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? Thankfully Senators Mike Gabbard and Chris Lee, chairs of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment and Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts, respectively, listened to the 130+ testimonies in opposition compared to around 8 in support. We urge this Legislature 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 TNRP practice.

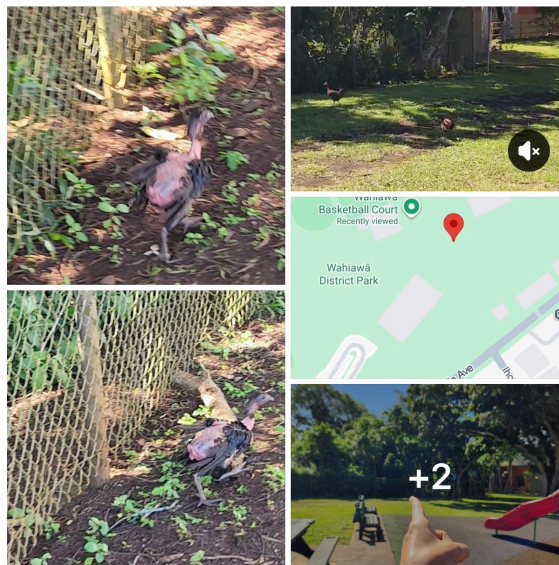
To catch a chicken for rehabilitation or rehoming purposes, rescuers must gain the chicken’s trust. Trust is built on consistent feeding and presence in the chicken’s environment. In the event a chicken is particularly injured or requires quick removal due to bad weather, dangerous environmental conditions, 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

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

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.

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 SCR71.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 10:34:24 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
amanda little	Kaka'ako cat feeders	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

I strongly oppose SCR 71 / SSCR 3415.

This measure takes a one-size-fits-all approach to complex, human-caused issues and risks punishing the very people working to solve them. Free-roaming cat populations exist primarily due to abandonment and lack of access to spay/neuter—not because of community members providing care.

Volunteers who feed and monitor these animals are not the problem—they are part of the solution. Humane management strategies like trap-neuter-return (TNR) rely on consistent feeding to build trust, safely trap animals, and prevent further reproduction. Penalizing this work will not reduce populations; it will destabilize them and make the situation worse.

This proposal shifts responsibility away from the root causes and instead targets compassionate residents who are filling gaps where systems fall short. That is not effective policy—it is counterproductive.

Hawai'i should be investing in evidence-based solutions such as spay/neuter access, education, and community partnerships—not discouraging them.

I urge you to oppose this measure.

Respectfully,
Amanda Little - Retired Coast Guard and animal activist

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 10:10:04 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michele Opiteck	Cat colony caregivers Honolulu	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this measure.

TNRM cats in all areas of the island with TRAINED Trappers that communicate with the cat colony feeders.

The Humane Society the state , city and county and private property owners and security personnel. There is a need to agree upon Certification program that is set up to humanely take care of the issue of trap neuter release manage all of the cat colonies for free roaming cats. There needs to be more appointments OPEN FOR THE PUBLIC AND RESCUES at the Humane Society.

Thank goodness Cat Friend has stepped up and is doing their best to fix and do TNR THIS doesn't make it convenient for the individual small colonies and DO GOODERS that randomly feed Cats. MORE public education is needed.

This must be supported by CITY and County properties state properties, private properties.

It's inhumane to kill animals and to treat caregivers as criminals

I oppose this language yet I know something needs to be done. Do not criminalized and or terrorize people that are doing the right thing by TNRM

Michele Opiteck:

Cat colony caregivers Honolulu 5013c

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 11:23:17 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
michael willinsky	Save Maui Cats Inc	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We had Save Maui Cats strongly oppose this bill. TNRM Trap, neuter, return, manage has been proven to be the only successful solution to solving a cat over population problem in over 500 major cities worldwide

These constant threats to change the sacrifices that so many volunteers make for Hawai'i is disgusting. Hoping somebody can do their research there rather than propose, absurd rules that will put us all backwards and prove counterproductive for the entire state.

Please contact us for more information. We seem to have to submit testimony every year for these outlandish proposals that will never work and have never worked. It's shameful that the state doesn't provide more support, but rather tries to penalize and punish the only volunteers willing to help solve this crisis for everyone.

We have been Committed to helping Hawai'i for Nearly 20 years and have made a giant difference in stabilizing West Maui. This bill will destroy all of our efforts in a couple of short months. Please reconsider these terrible decisions or we will be forced to quit and so will so many others, causing an incredible backlash across the state and throughout the tourism community.

Michael Willinsky

SaveMauiCats@gmail.com

[808-344-6999](tel:808-344-6999)

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/14/2026 8:50:48 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael A. Cobb Jr	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill. No to strict liability. No additional money.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 3:25:41 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrea Armitage	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Members of the Agriculture Committee:

The Free-Roaming cat population is a result of pets being abandoned and fertile cats breeding outdoors. The legislation called for by this resolution would result in further growth of that population by interfering with humane management. The trap-neuter-return-manage strategy requires feeding to build trust with the cats, lure them into traps and maintain the ongoing health of the animals.

Feral cats are a result of human abandonment and mismanagement, yet this measure seeks to punish people for trying to help animals rather than address the root causes. Leaving these colony cats to starve is animal cruelty and is not the way to address this multi-systemic problem.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Andrea Armitage

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 3:26:24 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephanie McLaughlin	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please DO NOT SUPPORT THIS BILL. It is not a good idea and will harm animals in Hawaii.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 3:39:55 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melanie Kim	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This measure takes a one-size approach to complex issues and ignores their different underlying causes.

The feral chicken population is a result of the cock fighting industry being allowed to operate with impunity in our state. People who feed wild birds need to be educated about the harm they are doing, but they are not the reason these populations exist.

The Free-Roaming cat population is a result of pets being abandoned and fertile cats breeding outdoors. The legislation called for by this resolution would result in further growth of that population by interfering with humane management. The trap-neuter-return-manage strategy requires feeding to build trust with the cats, lure them into traps and maintain the ongoing health of the animals.

Feral ungulates are a result of abandonment and mismanagement, yet this measure seeks to punish people for trying to help animals rather than address the root causes.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 3:49:59 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nandita Sharma	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is absolutely unconscionable that the Legislature would consider legislation that punishes empathy and care, which is precisely what this abhorrent proposed Bill does.

I live on a dead-end street in Kahalu'u. People dump cats on our street all of the time. We trap and release them to ensure that they don't reproduce. The idea that the Legislature would consider making our care for these cats the problem is appalling and appeals to the worst in people.

Anyone who thinks for more than a minute about this understands that a) it is cruel to simply kill stray cats, b) that cats don't just magically disappear if you stop feeding them, c) that the only thing preventing 20 cats from becoming 200 cats is neighbors (like my partner and me) trapping, fixing, and releasing these cats.

As someone who does TNR, I can tell you that it is impossible to catch cats you don't regularly feed. You need them to trust you so you can get them fixed and have them stop reproducing.

And, in any case, stray cats deserve as healthy and happy a life as they can get. Cruelty is not the answer and doesn't solve anything, even if it makes ignorant people feel like they are "doing something."

Please do not pass this legislation. If you do, you will go down in history as supporting a cruel, despicable, and useless Bill. The cats will still be here. In fact, there will be more of them. And they will be sick and starving. Don't be wilfully ignorant.

OPPOSITION TO RESOLUTION [SCR 71 / SSCR 3415](#)

I am writing in strong opposition to resolution [SCR 71 / SSCR 3415](#), which urges the Legislature to introduce and pass legislation to establish strict liability for individuals who keep, harbor, or feed certain animals in a manner that results in damage to property.

This measure takes a one-size approach to complex issues and ignores their underlying causes.

The Free-Roaming cat population is a result of pets being abandoned and fertile cats breeding outdoors. The legislation called for by this resolution would result in further growth of that population by interfering with humane management. The trap-neuter-return-manage strategy requires feeding to build trust with the cats, lure them into traps and maintain the ongoing health of the animals and sterilize them so that cat reproduction is prevented.

Feral cats are a result of abandonment and mismanagement, yet this measure seeks to punish people for trying to help animals rather than address the root causes of the problem. If such a short-sighted approach is allowed to pass into law the problem of cat overpopulation will become much worse. Not to mention the animal cruelty involved in such a bill. We should all remember Ghandi's statement: "the greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated".

Judith Aikawa, MD
37 Apali Way
Kula, HI 96790

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 4:19:50 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Kart	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SHAME on us

"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated".

Gandhi advocated for compassion, arguing that helpless creatures deserve the most protection from human cruelty.

WHy do you keep trying to pass pass bills to harm animals who are victims of humans.

In my neighborhood thanks to colony caretaker who trapped and fixed 30 cats in one short block, we now have stopped the breeding.

We have cock fights in hawaii, nothing is done unless someone was shot.

Feral chickens are a result of cock fighters, chickens did not ask for this life, where is your morals to protect the weakest ?

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 4:20:58 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Natalie Graham-Wood	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose SCR71. My name is Natalie Graham-Wood and I reside at Sunset Beach, Oahu.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 4:32:28 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I strongly oppose and condemn this cruel and unnecessary bill. This bill would allow people to be punished for doing what's right and feeding animals. As a person who takes in multiple strays and assists with wildlife, this bill would make it so much harder for people to feel confident in helping animals. I myself have struggled with the legalities of feeding animals, and this bill would just make it harder and would, without a doubt, negatively impact the animals especially colony cats, who rely on people for food and welfare, whether it was due to the fact they were dumped or because they were born into unfortunate circumstances.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 4:46:09 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gaye Chan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This Bill, unenforceable and encourages neighbors to turn in neighbors, does nothing to address the underlying causes. Additionally, it goes against values that cross cultures of respecting life and our shared spaces, and instead, promotes cruelty and vindictiveness. The funding that SCR71 requires would be much better served by education and resources to communally manage our shared resources. Please shut down this cruel Bill.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 5:20:04 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Greg "Pu'uwai Aloha" Baker	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SCR 71

Relating to Strict Liability for Feeding or Harboring Animals

Committee(s): House Agriculture (AGR) & Judiciary (JHA)

Hearing Date: Friday, April 16, 2026

Aloha Chair(s), Vice Chair(s), and Members of the Committee,

My name is Greg Pu'uwai Aloha Baker, and I am submitting testimony **in opposition to SCR 71** on behalf of **Hawai'i Animal Advocacy** and as a resident of the state of Hawai'i.

We support responsible solutions to address property damage and protect Hawai'i's communities and wildlife. However, **SCR 71, as written, would create unintended harm, undermine effective management practices, and expose responsible community members to unjust liability.**

1. SCR 71 Misapplies “Strict Liability” to Compassionate and Beneficial Actions

SCR 71 proposes **strict liability** for individuals who “keep, harbor, or feed” animals that cause property damage.

This standard is overly broad and problematic because it:

- **Eliminates the need to prove negligence**
- Applies liability even when individuals act responsibly
- Includes **feeding**, which is often part of structured management programs

Under this framework, a person who:

- Sterilizes cats
- Vaccinates them
- Provides consistent feeding to reduce roaming

...could still be held financially liable for any alleged damage, regardless of their efforts to reduce harm.

➔ This creates **legal risk for doing the right thing**

● 2. The Bill Fails to Distinguish Managed vs. Unmanaged Animal Populations

Decades of research show that **management matters**.

Well-managed community cat colonies:

- Are **stable or declining** over time
- Exhibit **reduced roaming and nuisance behaviors**
- Can result in **lower predation pressure compared to unmanaged populations**

For example:

- Woinarski et al. 2017 demonstrates that predation rates vary significantly depending on environment and food access, with **lower impacts in human-modified areas where food is available**

SCR 71 ignores this critical distinction and instead treats:

- Responsible caretakers
- Irresponsible dumping or neglect

...as legally equivalent.

→ This is **not evidence-based policy**

● 3. Likely Outcome: More Harm, Not Less

If individuals face strict liability for feeding animals, the predictable outcome is:

- People **stop feeding**
- Cats become **hungrier and roam further**
- Predation and nuisance behaviors can **increase**, not decrease
- Community members disengage from management entirely

This undermines widely used and studied approaches such as:

- Targeted Trap–Neuter–Return (TNR)
- Colony stabilization and reduction strategies

→ SCR 71 risks **making the problem worse**

● 4. Overly Broad Scope Creates Legal Ambiguity

SCR 71 applies to:

- Cats (felids)
- Chickens
- Ungulates (e.g., pigs, goats)

The terms:

- “harbor”
- “feed”

...are not clearly defined and could include:

- Temporary care
- Incidental feeding
- Attempting to help an abandoned animal

→ This exposes ordinary residents to **unpredictable liability**

5. A Better Path Forward (Aligned with Aloha ‘Āina)

We respectfully urge the Legislature to pursue solutions that are:

Evidence-based

- Support targeted, high-impact sterilization of cats (≥ 70 –75% of a colony)

Humane and effective

- Encourage responsible community cat caretaking, not penalize it

Focused on root causes

- Pet abandonment
- Lack of accessible spay/neuter services
- Backyard breeding

Place-based

- Prioritize sensitive wildlife areas with tailored strategies to address predators - dogs, cats, pigs
(e.g., relocation + predator control in Wildlife Priority Zones only)
-



Conclusion

SCR 71, while well-intentioned, would:

- **Penalize responsible community members**
- **Discourage effective population management**
- **Create legal ambiguity**
- **Likely worsen the very issues it seeks to address**

For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to **HOLD SCR 71** and instead work collaboratively on **science-based, humane, and locally appropriate solutions.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Greg Pu'uwai Aloha Baker, Founder
Hawai'i Animal Advocacy
www.HawaiiAnimalAdvocacy.org

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 5:43:50 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cheryl Bouillon	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Cheryl Bouillon and I am a resident of Maui, HI

I live in Kihei and I drive to Kahului once a week to feed and water colony cats.

I understand that this colony was established 20 years ago. Most of the kitties have been abandoned there from their owners, they are scared and lost.

There is a trap, neuter, spay, return program established there. The cats need to be cared for as there is nothing in the area for them to sustain themselves.

My Testimony is about allowing colony cat feeders to continue feeding and watering in the established areas in Kanaha Beach Park on Maui

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 5:58:18 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Thompson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Lisa and I reside in East Honolulu. I oppose SCR71. Until you address the root causes of feral chickens and other animals, the problem will not go away. We would not have a problem if PEOPLE were more responsible and stopped dumping animals.

Also, who is going to enforce this law? Our understaffed HPD???

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 6:44:38 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Whitten	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this proposal.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 7:25:23 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julia C	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly OPPOSE SCR71. It's a very bad and unfair resolution trying to punish innocent people for showing compassion to animals.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 7:36:09 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ulli James	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

“Feeding, trapping, and fixing cats is the only thing keeping feral cat populations from exploding. If we ban people from helping these cats, they’ll stop getting fed — so they’ll hunt even more birds and wildlife to survive. They’ll also stop getting trapped and neutered, so they’ll breed out of control. The population will surge, the bird deaths will get worse, and the problem we’re trying to solve will explode.

This bill lacks any common sense. Please vote against SCR 71.”

To: House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

Measure Title: URGING THIS BODY TO INTRODUCE AND PASS LEGISLATION TO ESTABLISH STRICT LIABILITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO KEEP, HARBOR, OR FEED CERTAIN ANIMALS IN A MANNER THAT RESULTS IN DAMAGE TO PROPERTY.

Report Title: Property Damage; Chickens; Ungulates; Felids; Penalties; Study; Report

I am in opposition to SCR71 / SSCR3415.

Unfortunately this measure takes a one-size approach to complex issues and ignores their different underlying causes.

Specifically:

1. The feral chicken population is a result of the cock fighting industry being allowed to operate with impunity in our state. People who feed wild birds need to be educated about the harm they are doing, but they are not the reason these populations exist.
2. The Free-Roaming cat population is a result of pets being abandoned and fertile cats breeding outdoors. The legislation called for by this resolution would result in further growth of that population by interfering with humane management. The trap-neuter-return-manage strategy requires feeding to build trust with the cats, lure them into traps and maintain the ongoing health of the animals.

Feral cats are a result of abandonment and mismanagement, yet this measure seeks to punish people for trying to manage animals rather than address the root causes.

Again, I am opposing the Legislature and their continuation of a pattern of bills introduced session after session that fail, thanks to the compassion of our community, and would not address the issues they claim to be concerned with if they did pass.

Wayne Niide

Resident – Kaimuki / St Louis

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 7:46:52 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JOANNE PARKER	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this SCR71!!

What are invasive species? How is this going to be enforced?

Terrible, inhumane, please shelve this!

Mahalo

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 9:29:58 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole LeClaire	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to respectfully oppose the proposed bill that would limit the ability of individuals and community members to care for feral cats.

For many of us, caring for these animals is not a casual act—it is a humane response to a situation that already exists. Feral cat populations do not disappear when care is restricted. Without responsible community involvement, these populations often grow unchecked, leading to more suffering, more public health concerns, and greater strain on already overburdened animal control systems.

Community-based care—especially when it includes feeding, monitoring, and participation in trap-neuter-return (TNR) programs—is widely recognized as one of the most effective and humane ways to stabilize and gradually reduce feral cat populations. Removing the ability for compassionate individuals to participate in this process risks worsening the very issues the bill may be trying to address.

Beyond the practical implications, this bill raises a deeper concern about how we, as a society, choose to treat vulnerable animals. Many caregivers invest significant personal time and resources to ensure these cats are not suffering. Penalizing or restricting that care discourages responsible stewardship and may unintentionally lead to neglect, abandonment, or increased euthanasia rates.

I urge you to consider solutions that support humane, evidence-based approaches—such as expanding access to spay/neuter services, supporting TNR programs, and partnering with local rescue organizations—rather than limiting the ability of citizens to help.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope you will stand for policies that reflect both compassion and practical effectiveness.

I am testifying in opposition to SCR71.

This senate concurrent resolution seeks to establish strict liability for individuals who keep, harbor, or feed certain animals in a manner that results in damage to property. SCR71 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 ‘ōiwi 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 SCR71’s goal of punishing those who help and relocate feral animals and chickens rather than pursuing those committing barbaric acts of violence toward them in public every day 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‘ilikūkahi, 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.

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

Kākuhihewa’s encounter with Ka‘auhelumoa led to a historical place rich with connection to our ali‘i.

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

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/>

is not lost on HPD and politicians' crack downs on gambling in the form of game room activities 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.



Melissa Margaret

Feb 20 · 📷

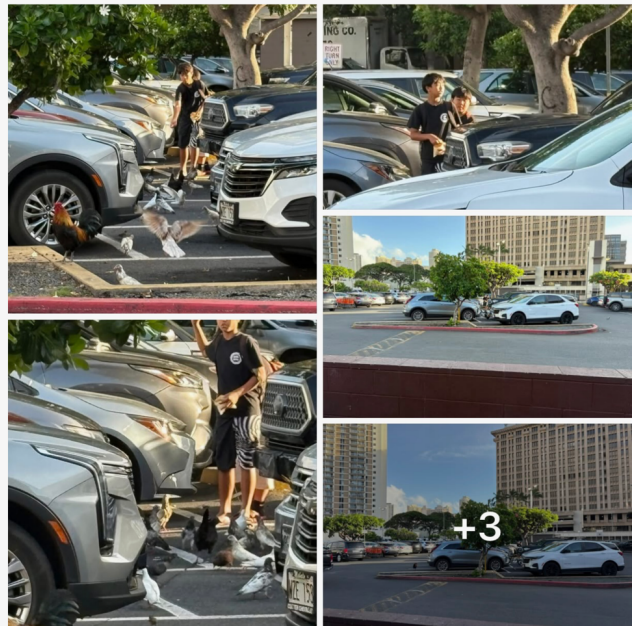
Aloha! Animal Rights Hawaii suggested I reach out to you..I'm hoping you might be able to help me. There's a group of boys ages about 5-12 who torture the chickens by the Honolulu zoo, around kaimana beach park, the aquarium, around diamond head - constantly. I see them almost every day and I'm pretty 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.

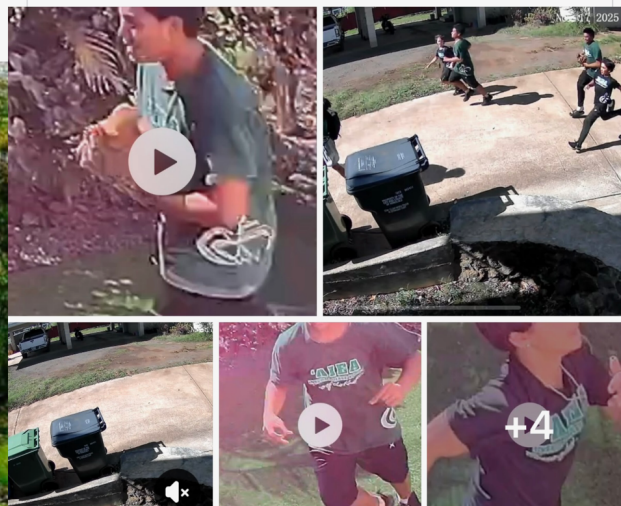
Any advice is appreciated, it breaks my heart hearing these birds scream 😞



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 · 🌐

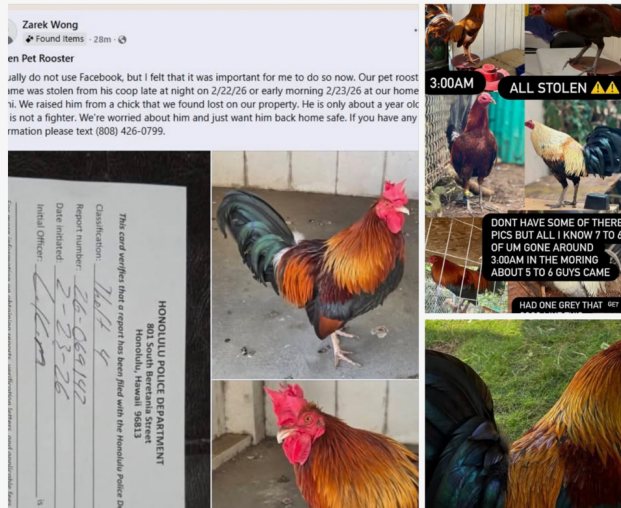
We have identified a group of 6/7 kids allegedly responsible for multiple rooster thefts in the Kalihi Valley area. If your rooster was stolen, please let us know. We are looking specifically for any photos or video of them carrying the stolen roosters.

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.

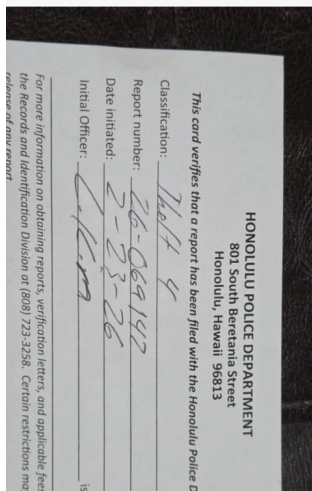
I understand the long history of chicken fighting as well as wild roosters and chickens roaming the land, however, that's not what this is. This is theft of actually owned and beloved animals. These kids need to be held accountable and stopped from stealing further.


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 Legislature 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 SCR71.

Noelle Kakimoto

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 10:23:56 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Alexis, and I respectfully submit testimony in opposition to this proposed legislation.

While I understand the intent of addressing property damage concerns related to animals, this bill is overly broad and risks creating serious unintended consequences for both animal welfare and community members who are acting in good faith.

Animals are simply trying to survive, just as we all are. When they forage, seek food, or take shelter, they are responding to basic needs for survival in environments that have often changed due to human activity. Punishing people who encounter or assist these animals does not address the root causes of the issue.

In Hawai‘i, community members frequently step in to help abandoned, neglected, or displaced animals—particularly chickens and chicks who are often left without care. These individuals provide food, temporary shelter, and rescue support to prevent suffering and death. In many cases, they are the only safety net these animals have.

However, this bill could discourage that kind of humane intervention by imposing strict liability on anyone who keeps, harbors, or even feeds animals that may later be associated with property impacts. This creates a chilling effect where people may feel they cannot help animals in need without risking legal or financial consequences.

There is an important difference between negligent or intentional harm and compassionate, good-faith efforts to care for vulnerable animals. Public policy should not treat these situations the same. We should not discourage people from helping animals simply trying to survive.

If there are legitimate concerns about property damage, they should be addressed through narrowly tailored solutions that focus on intentional or negligent conduct, not broad strict liability that may unintentionally increase suffering.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge this body not to pass this legislation in its current form and instead pursue solutions that protect both property rights and humane treatment of animals.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Alexis B.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 10:29:23 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jason, and I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to this proposal.

I understand the concern behind addressing property damage connected to animals, but this bill casts too wide a net and would likely create harm in areas it was never intended to touch, especially when it comes to animal welfare and community based care.

In Hawai‘i, many animals, particularly chickens and chicks end up without proper care due to abandonment, overbreeding, or irresponsible ownership. When that happens, it is often everyday residents who step in to help. They provide food, shelter, and sometimes medical attention simply to keep these animals alive and prevent unnecessary suffering.

It is important to recognize that animals are not acting with intent to cause problems. They are trying to survive in the only way they know how, responding to basic needs for food and shelter. Human responses to these situations should take that reality into account.

Under this bill, individuals who try to help or temporarily care for animals could be held strictly liable if those animals are later associated with property impacts. That kind of standard may discourage people from stepping in at all, even when animals are injured, abandoned, or in urgent need of assistance. This would create an even larger problem than the many issues that already exist on the island.

There is a clear difference between careless or intentional wrongdoing and compassionate efforts to care for vulnerable animals. This legislation risks treating those very different situations the same, which could reduce humane intervention and ultimately increase animal suffering.

If property concerns exist, they should be addressed through more targeted approaches that focus on intentional or negligent conduct, rather than broad liability that may unintentionally punish those trying to help.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee not to move forward with this bill and instead consider solutions that both protect property interests and allow humane rescue efforts to continue.

Sincerely,
Jason B.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 10:36:20 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Evelyn, and I respectfully oppose this proposal.

This measure seeks to create strict liability for individuals who keep, harbor, or feed certain animals if those animals are later connected to property damage. While I understand the goal of addressing damage concerns, this approach is overly expansive and does not adequately account for the many situations in which people interact with animals responsibly and out of necessity.

In Hawai‘i, animals are frequently abandoned, neglected, or left to multiply without proper oversight. As a result, community members often step in, not to create a nuisance, but to prevent suffering. Providing food or temporary care is, in many cases, an immediate response to animals that would otherwise be injured, starving, or left without any protection.

Animals act out of basic survival needs. They search for food and shelter because they must, not because they are intentionally causing harm. Imposing automatic liability on individuals who simply feed or care for them ignores this reality and places an unfair burden on those who are trying to help.

By holding people responsible regardless of intent, this proposal risks discouraging even minimal acts of compassion. Individuals may feel they cannot safely assist animals without exposing themselves to legal or financial consequences. That hesitation could lead to more animals being left in dangerous or neglectful conditions.

There is a clear difference between someone who is negligent or reckless and someone who is making a good-faith effort to care for vulnerable animals. Legislation should be carefully tailored to address actual misconduct, not broadly applied in a way that may unintentionally penalize responsible and humane actions.

For these reasons, I urge the Committee to reconsider this proposal and pursue more balanced solutions that address property concerns without discouraging necessary and compassionate care for animals.

Sincerely,
Evelyn F.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 10:52:38 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Rob, and I respectfully submit testimony in opposition to this measure.

I understand and respect the intent of this bill, which is to address legitimate concerns regarding property damage caused by animals. Impacts to agricultural, commercial, public, and private property, including crops, landscaping, infrastructure, and shared spaces, are real issues that deserve thoughtful attention and effective solutions.

At the same time, it is important to recognize that many of the animals involved in these situations are not present due to any intentional wrongdoing by individuals offering assistance. In Hawai'i, animals including chickens, are frequently found outside of managed care due to abandonment, overpopulation, or lack of responsible oversight. These animals are simply trying to survive in the environments available to them, following instinct in search of food and shelter.

In response, many community members act out of compassion. Providing food or temporary care is often done to reduce suffering, prevent harm, or give vulnerable animals a chance at survival. Citizens also spend money out of their own pockets to spay and neuter these animals, to help the issue. These actions reflect a humane instinct to help living beings in distress.

This proposal raises concern because it imposes strict liability on individuals who keep, harbor, or feed animals if property damage occurs. That approach risks holding people accountable for outcomes they did not cause or control, while the animals themselves continue to move freely based on survival needs.

There is also concern that this framework could discourage compassionate action altogether. If individuals believe they may be penalized for assisting animals in need, many may choose not to intervene, leaving more animals without care and potentially worsening existing conditions. The overall issue is that there are not harsh enough laws towards animal abusers, an issue that should be recognized and addressed. I will also add that some of the justice department seems corrupt towards this abuse issue and should be addressed as well. I personally know that some police officers on the island partake in illegal cockfighting.

Hawai'i is often described as a place that values aloha, a spirit of compassion, care, and respect not only for people, but for all life. It is important that our laws reflect that broader sense of

responsibility. When policy appears to place all weight on property concerns without adequately recognizing the role of humane treatment and care for animals, it can feel out of step with that shared value.

Compassion and responsible governance can coexist. It is possible to protect property while also preserving space for humane action toward animals who are simply trying to survive.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to reconsider this proposal and pursue a more targeted solution that addresses property concerns without discouraging compassionate care.

Sincerely,
Rob B.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/15/2026 11:10:28 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Chair and Members of the House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

Friday, April 17, 2026 at 10:30 a.m.

Re: SCR 71 / SSCR 3415 – IN OPPOSITION

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Jessica Coombes, and I am a resident of Hawai‘i. I am writing to express my opposition to SCR 71 / SSCR 3415, which proposes creating strict liability for people who keep, harbor, or feed certain animals if property damage occurs.

While I understand the concerns this resolution is trying to address, I believe it oversimplifies a set of very different issues and does not get at the real reasons these problems exist in the first place.

For example, the feral chicken population in Hawai‘i is widely known to be tied to the cockfighting industry and a lack of consistent enforcement. Blaming individuals who feed birds does not address that root cause and risks shifting focus away from more effective solutions.

The same is true for free-roaming cats. Their numbers are largely driven by abandonment and unspayed or unneutered pets breeding outdoors. Humane management strategies like trap-neuter-return (TNR) rely on feeding as part of the process to safely trap, treat, and monitor these animals. Penalizing people who participate in or support these efforts could actually make the problem worse by disrupting proven methods that help control population growth over time.

Feral ungulates such as pigs and goats are also the result of long-term mismanagement and abandonment. This resolution would place the burden on individuals who are often trying to help, rather than addressing the larger systemic issues that created these populations.

Measures like this have been introduced before, and they tend to fall short because they do not reflect the complexity of these situations or the practical realities in our communities. A broad, punitive approach like strict liability is unlikely to produce the outcomes it intends.

I respectfully ask the Committee to oppose SCR 71 / SSCR 3415 and instead consider approaches that focus on root causes, support humane and effective management practices, and involve community-based solutions.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Jessica Coombes
(808) 779-3720

Jessica.coombes@gmail.com

April 17, 2026

Jon N. Ikenaga, Esq.
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822

SCR71: URGING THIS BODY TO INTRODUCE AND PASS LEGISLATION TO ESTABLISH STRICT LIABILITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO KEEP, HARBOR, OR FEED CERTAIN ANIMALS IN A MANNER THAT RESULTS IN DAMAGE TO PROPERTY¹

Chair Chun, Vice Chair Kusch and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems:

I am urging the Committee Members to oppose SCR71 for the following reasons.

- 1) **SCR71 would support legislation that would counteract the efforts of rescue groups and individuals who are seeking to address the feral chicken population issue.**

The imposition of strict civil liability is inherently unfair as it holds persons liable regardless of fault, intention or precautions taken. Even persons who make good faith efforts to comply and who take reasonable, prudent precautions are liable simply because they commit the prohibited act.

In the context of SCR71, a group or person who keeps, harbors, or feeds feral chickens would be liable for damages caused by them regardless of whether they took reasonable precautions to prevent the chickens from causing damages or not. This means that organizations such as the Hawaiian Humane Society, OSPCA, or Aloha Animal Sanctuary could be held civilly liable for performing acts of rescue, rehabilitation or compassion. Similarly, individuals who are engaged in chicken rescue, rehabilitation or removal could be held liable for their acts which seek to address the feral chicken population issue. Farmers also allow feral chickens on their properties as a natural means of pest control. Under SCR71, these farmers could be held civilly liable simply for allowing these chickens to roam on their premises.

Currently, HRS § 663-9 imposes strict liability on animal owners where those animals are “known by its species or nature to be dangerous, wild, or vicious.” Examples of such

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.*

animals would be large predators such as wolves, lions, tigers or other large and dangerous animals. SCR71 would seek to impose the same strict liability on person who feeds feral chickens that dig up their neighbor's garden as a person who keeps a large, dangerous animal that mauls a neighbor. The reason that it is viewed as fair to impose strict liability on owners of dangerous, wild and vicious animals is because such animals are inherently dangerous. There is no similar reason to impose strict liability on a senior citizen who feeds feral chickens on their property not knowing that those chickens are damaging their neighbor's garden. This does not mean that persons who sustain damages from kept feral chickens are without recourse. They can still seek damages where other persons negligently cause damage to their property.

Instead of supporting efforts to address the feral chicken population, SCR71 would discourage groups and individuals from taking actions to address the issue. If actions taken by these groups involve keeping, harboring or feeding chickens in the course of their rescue, rehabilitation or population reduction efforts, groups and individuals would be discouraged, rather than encouraged, from addressing the feral chicken population issue.

It is significant to point out that in the Senate, Senators Keohokalole, McKelvey, San Buenaventura and Rhoads all voted against SCR71 and all are attorneys. Their votes likely reflect their knowledge of the problems caused by the imposition of strict civil liability and that it can hold persons liable even if they make good faith efforts to comply and take reasonable, prudent precautions to prevent others from being affected by their actions.

2) SCR71 is culturally offensive to Native Hawaiians.

One of the most significant issues raised during testimony on other feral chicken bills was the cultural significance of the moa (wild chicken) 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.

SCR71 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. 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 Hawai'i by European and Western settlers in the late 18th century.² 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."³

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.[⁴]

² "Why Are There So Many Wild Chickens in Hawaii?" Scienceinsights (<https://scienceinsights.org/why-are-there-so-many-wild-chickens-in-hawaii/>)

³ 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>)

⁴ Id.

SCR71 directs the Hawai'i Invasive Species Council to conduct a study to determine whether feral chickens should be classified as an invasive species. As the moa were brought by the Polynesian voyagers to Hawai'i, it would be culturally impossible to declare them as an invasive species.

3) SCR71 and legislation designed to eradicate feral chickens does not have public support.

It is abundantly clear that the majority of people in Hawai'i oppose any efforts to eradicate feral chickens. Coincidentally, the City and County of Honolulu posted a feral chickens fact sheet on its Facebook page and described them as "nuisances." The comments in response to the post were overwhelmingly in opposition to designating feral chickens as nuisances. People noted that feral chickens control centipedes, scorpions and, most significantly, Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle larvae.

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1As9WPUudt/>



These comments are in direct opposition to the Department of Customer Services testimony. In fact, the DCS has never provided statistics on the number of complaints they've received, where those complaints originated and whether they have the ability to ensure that multiple complaints from a single individual are not counted as multiple complaints.

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/18CXpNcEcms/>

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>



4) 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.⁵ Feral chickens have been described as a “memorable cultural symbol” and part of Hawai'i’s living cultural landscape.⁶ The unchecked and cruel killing of feral chickens

⁵ <https://www.honolulumagazine.com/afterthoughts-chickens-are-taking-over-hawaii/>

⁶ <https://nszipline.com/blog/hawaii-chickens/>; <https://www.oreateai.com/blog/the-curious-case-of-hawaiis-chickens-a-feathered-legacy/2462bd1f9ca6bb51b875b95615b4b27a>;

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

Conclusion:

Trooper's Chicken Rescue and other animal advocacy groups are prepared to work with legislators to develop legislation regarding feral chicken population issues which is humane, culturally sensitive and which will effectively address the issue. SCR71 would work counter to these efforts and actually discourage efforts by groups and individuals to assist the State in addressing the feral chicken population issue. I urge the Committee members to oppose SCR71.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jon N. Ikenaga, Esq.

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 aumākua (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 'āina.

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 'āina.

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 mālama this 'āina. 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.

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

In Aloha,

Kealoha Pisciotta
President, Mauna Kea Anaina Hou and Founder, Kai Palaoa



Would you be willing to submit testimony on this bill when it is set for hearing? If you email me information I can also attach it to my testimony if you do not wish to submit testimony directly.

I am opposing this bill as it allows feral chickens and moa to be indiscriminately exterminated. I belong to rescue organizations that have offered to collaborate with government agencies to develop strategies that do not involve mass slaughter of feral chickens and moa. Your testimony as a Native Hawaiian cultural expert and animal rights advocate would be very important in educating the legislators on the

cultural issues with allowing the government to kill chickens without taking into account Native Hawaiian culture.

Thank you so much for your time!

Jon N. Ikenaga

Public Defender

State of Hawai'i, Office of the Public Defender

Phone: (808) 586-2090

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SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 12:20:40 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I oppose SCR71. I am a licensed, practicing veterinarian in the State of Hawaii. This resolution would encourage legislation which would hinder, not help, groups and individuals who would work with state and county agencies to assist with the feral chicken population issue. Legislation can be submitted next session without a resolution which ignores Native Hawaiian cultural considerations and which will make it harder for groups and individuals to work together with the government. Please vote no on SCR71.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 12:25:50 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I oppose SCR71. As a lawyer, I am aware of the issues that are created when strict liability is imposed. Strict liability penalizes people who are acting in good faith or who make efforts to ensure that their actions do not affect others. People who are harmed by the actions of others can already seek damages without the imposition of strict liability. I am also concerned by other testimony that highlights Native Hawaiian cultural considerations. This resolution does not address cultural considerations. How can feral chickens be designated as an invasive species if they were brought to the islands by Polynesian voyagers? Before any actions are taken which affect feral chickens the Legislature must consult with Native Hawaiian cultural experts to ensure that they are sensitive to their culture and beliefs. Please vote no on SCR71.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 12:40:37 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gretchen Savedra	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Gretchen Savedra and I am a resident of Oahu. I am writing to strongly **OPPOSE** SCR71.

While property damage is a concern, I believe this resolution is problematic because:

- **Vague Definitions:** The term "harboring" or "feeding" could unfairly penalize compassionate residents who are not the owners of these animals.
- **Unfair Burden:** Establishing "strict liability" places an extreme legal burden on individuals for the actions of semi-wild animals they do not control.
- **Discourages Humane Care:** This may lead to the abandonment of community-supported Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) programs for cats, which are essential for population control.

I respectfully ask the committee to hold this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Gretchen Savedra

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 1:10:04 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I VEHEMENTLY OPPOSE THIS RESOLUTION!

1) This resolution is based on the misinformed assumption that the feeding of chickens is the reason for the infestations statewide. On what facts is this based?

The reason our neighborhoods are inundated with chickens is because of COCK FIGHTING. Their numbers multiply because of the incessant continual dumping of unwanted chickens by cock fighters. The roosters test positive by the Hawaiian Humane Society for a common steroid injected into roosters by cock fighters. Thus, cock fighters are the liability for any property damage.

2) This bill is redundant because laws already exist to eradicate chickens, which has never worked, while cock fighting has increased exponentially because of the lack of police enforcement. Boys as young as five now cock fight on school campuses or any hidden lot when empty.

An identical bill HB2561 in regard to killing chickens, with the same prohibitions and punitive stance, was defeated just last month on March 20, by overwhelming outrage from 135 testimonies in opposition, to only 6 in support. These numbers more accurately represent the 1.5 million constituents in our state who are offended by the unconscionable killing of abandoned animals. Because of damaged gardens and landscaping you want to spend how much in tax payer money to kill animals, and ignore how disturbing and reprehensible such violence affects the voiced majority of constituents?

In regard to the chickens, this resolution also violates our native Hawaiian spiritual and cultural beliefs. Kealoha Pisciotta, a renowned Native Hawaiian Cultural Practitioner, President of Mauna Mea Anaina Hou, and Founder of Kai Palaoa, testified on March 20 in opposition to the killing of chickens as follows:

"For Native Hawaiians, the chickens seen across our islands today are not merely a nuisance species to be eliminated. In our traditions, the moa holds cultural and spiritual significance. They were 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. Because of this relationship, decisions about the treatment of these animals can not be reduced to convenience or nuisance management. They require cultural understanding, consultation, and respect."

2) Many who testified urged law makers to produce a bill instead to eliminate cock fighting. Eradicating chickens will only be replaced by more chickens as long as cock fighting is allowed to proliferate. What is needed is a bill to fund a police task force to raid cock fights and dismantle rooster farms, which concomitantly will end the chicken infestations. Once a rooster no longer has monetary value to those that illegally exploit them, the indiscriminate dumping of chickens in our neighborhoods statewide will cease.

3) The unsubstantiated claims that chickens are disease vectors, or that their droppings create a public health hazard, are not supported by scientific facts. The DOH does not classify chickens as vectors. There has never been a documented case here where a human was infected by a chicken or it's droppings. The avian flu is more likely to be spread by wild birds, whose numbers significantly exceed pockets of abandoned chickens. There are over 350 species of wild birds in Hawaii. Same with abandoned cats, not a single case of toxoplasmosis transmission to a human. Residents are more likely to be infected by eating raw fish - sashimi or poke.

4) Laws already exist that farmers can and DO implement to mitigate crop damage. The DLNR allows hunters, ranchers, farmers, to kill goats, sheep, pigs, chickens, etc. Again, redundant, and a total waste of tax payer money.

5) This resolution claims that cickens in urban areas are invasive species. To what?! They eat roaches, centipedes, slugs, spiders, coconut beetles, maggots, fly larvae, small mice. Again, a total waste of tax payer money for a study that would cost tens(?), hundred(s?) of thousands, while most of us can't even afford the spiraling costs of rent, gas, and food? Why not do something about THAT?!

VOTE NO on this total waste of legislative time and tax payer money!

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 1:25:23 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gordon L. Bethel	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Gordon L. Bethel and I have been a caregiver for free roaming cat colonies in Kaka'ako for 15 years now. I do not understand how punishing caregivers is going to solve the problem. Pet owners need to be held responsible for their animals. Dogs and cats need to be micro chipped and registered, so owners can be tracked. Fear of heavy fines should help remedy the problem

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 2:02:45 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
D M Cheney	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill! The wording is too broad and leaves too many unknowns.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 2:11:54 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

This is the most ridiculous bill ever! How is an accuser going to prove in a court of law that anyone feeding chickens in a wooded area two blocks away is liable for his flower bed being unearthed? And, which chicken exactly is the culprit? Does his neighbor next door also own chickens? Maybe it was his neighbor's chicken, and not the feral chicken? And, what if several other neighbors also feed the feral chickens? You want the police to arrest children and grandpa for your plants being uprooted?! Should you arrest all the feeders if there's more than one? Don't you think the police have more urgent matters to respond to than your complaints about your landscape? And, you better be sure of who you blame because YOU might get sued instead!

This bill is so ridiculous it is laughable!!!! PLEASE VOTE NO!!!!

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 3:09:33 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Representative Chun, Vice Chair Representative Kusch and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems.

Please oppose SCR 71/SSCR 3415. It's my understanding that this resolution seeks to punish humane, helpful people like the individuals who assist with reducing the free roaming cat population, and fails to address the issues to which these humane, helpful people are responding.

Mahalo.

Jennifer Chiwa

Makiki and life long resident of Oahu

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 4:54:16 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shelley Dunbar	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the Maui Humane Society (MHS) and a resident of Maui who actively volunteers in Trap-Neuter-Return-Manage of free-roaming cats. I'm writing in strong opposition to SCR 71 / SSCR 3415.

This resolution applies a one-size-fits-all approach to three distinct free-roaming animal populations—feral chickens, free-roaming cats, and feral ungulates—each of which exists for different reasons and requires a different, evidence-based response. By treating these populations as interchangeable and directing legislation at the people who feed or care for animals, SCR 71 / SSCR 3415 misidentifies the problem and will worsen the very conditions it claims to address.

Feral Chickens

The feral chicken population in Hawai'i is a direct consequence of cockfighting—an illegal industry that has long operated with impunity in our state. Addressing the root cause means stronger enforcement against illegal cockfighting, not penalizing community members who provide supplemental feeding to wild birds. While public education about the unintended harms of feeding wildlife is warranted, those individuals are not responsible for establishing these populations in the first place.

Free-Roaming Cats and Trap-Neuter-Return-Manage (TNRM)

Free-roaming cat populations stem from pet abandonment and the outdoor breeding of unsterilized cats. The most effective and humane solution is Trap-Neuter-Return-Manage (TNRM)—an approach backed by decades of research and adopted by animal welfare organizations nationwide.

TNRM depends on the ability of trained caregivers to feed managed colonies. Feeding is not incidental to this work—it is essential. It builds the trust needed to trap cats, allows caregivers to monitor colony health, and enables the humane sterilization that stops population growth. Colonies with high sterilization rates produce fewer litters, stabilize over time, and ultimately decline. The downstream benefits are significant: reduced shelter intake, lower euthanasia rates, fewer nuisance complaints, and less cat dumping.

Legislation that interferes with managed colony caregiving—as this resolution calls for—would not reduce the free-roaming cat population. It would increase it, by dismantling the infrastructure

of TNRM before sterilization can take effect. This is precisely the opposite of what good public policy should accomplish.

Feral Ungulates

Feral ungulate populations are the result of historical abandonment and inadequate land management—not the actions of individuals trying to help animals in need. Penalizing compassionate community members does nothing to address these systemic failures and diverts attention from the policy interventions that would actually make a difference.

A Recurring Pattern — and a Call for Lasting Solutions

Isn't it time that measures of this kind which have been introduced repeatedly in the legislature, session after session, and have been rejected each time—be a thing of the past? Such legislation would not solve the problems it identifies. It would instead undermine the humane, community-based solutions that are already working.

I respectfully urge this committee to oppose SCR 71 / SSCR 3415 and to instead support evidence-based, community-centered approaches to animal population management—approaches that address root causes, protect the work of dedicated caregivers, and reflect the values of aloha that define our islands.

Thank you for consideration,

Shelley Dunbar

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 6:50:09 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

With respect, I strongly oppose the proposed bill that would limit the ability of community members to care for community and feral cats. As a resident of Maui for nearly 40 years I have seen the success of trap-neuter-return (TNR) programs to stabilize cat populations. Trying to eradicate the cats is inhumane and ineffective. Removing the cats from an area creates a vacuum which other cats fill almost immediately.

Cat colonies do not disappear when care is restricted. Without responsible community involvement, these populations often grow unchecked, leading to more suffering, more public health concerns, and greater strain on already overburdened animal control systems.

Community-based care—especially when it includes feeding, monitoring, and participation in TNR programs—is widely recognized as one of the most effective and humane ways to stabilize and gradually reduce feral cat populations. Removing the ability for compassionate individuals to participate in this process risks worsening the very issues the bill may be trying to address.

I urge you to consider solutions that support humane, evidence-based approaches—such as expanding access to spay/neuter services, supporting TNR programs, and partnering with local rescue organizations—rather than limiting the ability of citizens to help.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope you will stand for policies that reflect both compassion and practical effectiveness.

Sara Patton, 160 River Road, Wailuku, Maui

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 6:56:03 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ginny tiu	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha The Honorable Senator Ron Kouchi and Committee Members,

While I understand the need to address problems in our community, I urge you to please find viable and humane solutions. This proposal to destroy animals and/or punish those who are trying to help reduce the population, is not the pono thing to do, and is not effective. Sterilization is the most effective way to curb and reduce the population, and discouraging or penalizing people who are trying to trap them and get them sterilized, is contrary to achieving the result we want, which is less feral animals on our landscape.

The effective and humane way to accomplish this is to discourage activities that create this problem- breeders who breed for selfish reasons- to line their own pockets, either through cock fighting or selling dogs and cats, or who dump them. There should be penalties for this kind of irresponsible and inhumane behavior.

Whether we like them or not, the fact is that these are living creatures, who feel everything we feel and suffer as we do. They are just being what God created them to be, and it would be wrong to punish them for something they had no say in.

Mahalo nui loa for your kind consideration to OPPOSE Bill SCR 71/SSCR3415.

Aloha,

Ginny Tiu

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 7:08:36 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laurie Pottish	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose SCR 71. If passed this legislation will not solve the problem it was intended to address. Feeding bans have proven to be ineffective and hugely unpopular.

Laurie Pottish

Makawao, HI 96768

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 7:09:43 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I write to **OPPOSE** SCR 71. Instead of creating punitive measures that penalize residents, the legislature should focus on science-based, humane management plans. Penalizing feeders does not address the existing large populations of feral chickens. I urge this body to support funding for non-lethal population control, such as fertility management or state-organized rehoming programs, which have proven more effective and ethical than simply declaring animals a nuisance.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 7:12:03 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thomas parr	Concerned citizens of Hawaii	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Myself and our large TNR group are strongly opposed to this measure. It amounts to animal cruelty which is against the law in Hawai'i. This bill doesn't address the fact that the majority of so-called feral cats are instead colony cats that have been abandoned by their owners. Colony cat volunteers at their own great expense and time strive to reduce the amount of free roaming cats by live capture and TNRV ,thus reducing disease and free roaming cats to surrounding neighborhoods.

I suggest instead of punishing these abandoned cats that you as our representatives create a task force and guidelines for the management of colony cats. This will help insure guidance and cooperation of colony workers and hopefully educate the public to show cooperation with spay and neuter programs. Thank you Thomas Parr

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 7:20:12 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
carole richelieu	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly oppose for reasons stated by HHS:

The feral chicken population is a result of the cock fighting industry being allowed to operate with impunity in our state. People who feed wild birds need to be educated about the harm they are doing, but they are not the reason these populations exist.

The Free-Roaming cat population is a result of pets being abandoned and fertile cats breeding outdoors. The legislation called for by this resolution would result in further growth of that population by interfering with humane management. The trap-neuter-return-manage strategy requires feeding to build trust with the cats, lure them into traps and maintain the ongoing health of the animals.

Feral ungulates are a result of abandonment and mismanagement, yet this measure seeks to punish people for trying to help animals rather than address the root causes.

Hawaii Kai voter

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 7:25:36 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mia Klein	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My testimony:

I am writing to respectfully oppose the proposed bill that would limit the ability of individuals and community members to care for feral cats.

For many of us, caring for these animals is not a casual act—it is a humane response to a situation that already exists. Feral cat populations do not disappear when care is restricted. Without responsible community involvement, these populations often grow unchecked, leading to more suffering, more public health concerns, and greater strain on already overburdened animal control systems.

Community-based care—especially when it includes feeding, monitoring, and participation in trap-neuter-return (TNR) programs—is widely recognized as one of the most effective and humane ways to stabilize and gradually reduce feral cat populations. Removing the ability for compassionate individuals to participate in this process risks worsening the very issues the bill may be trying to address.

Beyond the practical implications, this bill raises a deeper concern about how we, as a society, choose to treat vulnerable animals. Many caregivers invest significant personal time and resources to ensure these cats are not suffering. Penalizing or restricting that care discourages responsible stewardship and may unintentionally lead to neglect, abandonment, or increased euthanasia rates.

I urge you to consider solutions that support humane, evidence-based approaches—such as expanding access to spay/neuter services, supporting TNR programs, and partnering with local rescue organizations—rather than limiting the ability of citizens to help.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope you will stand for policies that reflect both compassion and practical effectiveness.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 7:38:16 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elissa Abella	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members,

I respectfully oppose SCR 71 because it conflicts with the Hawaiian value of **Live Pono**—to live with balance, fairness, and responsibility.

Individuals who feed abandoned or feral cats are often acting out of compassion in response to irresponsible pet ownership and a lack of adequate animal welfare resources. Punishing these individuals through strict liability shifts blame away from the root causes and creates imbalance. That is not pono.

Live pono calls on us to **restore balance**, not criminalize community members who are trying to help. A more pono approach would focus on education, spay and neuter programs, and accountability for abandonment—not punishment for acts of kōkua.

For these reasons, I urge this body to reject SCR 71 and pursue solutions that align with pono values.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Lisa Abella

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

SCR 71 / SSCR 3415

This resolution applies a one-size-fits-all approach to three distinct free-roaming animal populations—feral chickens, free-roaming cats, and feral ungulates—each of which exists for different reasons and requires a different, evidence-based response. By treating these populations as interchangeable and directing legislation at the people who feed or care for animals, SCR 71 / SSCR 3415 misidentifies the problem and will worsen the very conditions it claims to address.

Feral Chickens

The feral chicken population in Hawai'i is a direct consequence of cockfighting—an illegal industry that has long operated with impunity in our state. Addressing the root cause means stronger enforcement against illegal cockfighting, not penalizing community members who provide supplemental feeding to wild birds. While public education about the unintended harms of feeding wildlife is warranted, those individuals are not responsible for establishing these populations in the first place.

Free-Roaming Cats and Trap-Neuter-Return-Manage (TNRM)

Free-roaming cat populations stem from pet abandonment and the outdoor breeding of unsterilized cats. The most effective and humane solution is Trap-Neuter-Return-Manage (TNRM)—an approach backed by decades of research and adopted by animal welfare organizations nationwide.

TNRM depends on the ability of trained caregivers to feed managed colonies. Feeding is not incidental to this work—it is essential. It builds the trust needed to trap cats, allows caregivers to monitor colony health, and enables the humane sterilization that stops population growth. Colonies with high sterilization rates produce fewer litters, stabilize over time, and ultimately decline. The downstream benefits are significant: reduced shelter intake, lower euthanasia rates, fewer nuisance complaints, and less cat dumping.

Legislation that interferes with managed colony caregiving—as this resolution calls for—would not reduce the free-roaming cat population. It would increase it, by dismantling the infrastructure of TNRM before sterilization can take effect. This is precisely the opposite of what good public policy should accomplish.

Feral Ungulates

Feral ungulate populations are the result of historical abandonment and inadequate land management—not the actions of individuals trying to help animals in need. Penalizing compassionate community members does nothing to address these systemic failures and diverts attention from the policy interventions that would actually make a difference.

I respectfully urge this committee to **oppose** SCR 71 / SSCR 3415 and to instead support evidence-based, community-centered approaches to animal population management—approaches that address root causes, protect the work of dedicated caregivers, and reflect the values of aloha that define our islands.

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SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 7:53:22 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Renee Rabb	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am testifying in strong opposition to SCR 71 by Senator Richards. The first resolved clause is vague, and on its face unenforceable. When you say, “pass legislation that results in establishing strict liability for individuals, who keep, harbor, or feed chickens, ungulates, or felids in a manner that results in the animals damaging the property of another individual”, let’s be clear. You are talking about chickens, horses, sheep, cows, pigs, and cats. When my neighbor’s pig, Lonnie, roots under my fence and knocks it over, my neighbor is already liable for the damage. That is already existing law. So, if a pig is moseying down the road who belongs to no one discernable and roots under my fence, we are supposed to look for any person who may have fed this pig at some point? This is patently absurd.

Have you considered whether damage to the property of another individual includes reduction in property values? I live in Hawaiian Paradise Park on Big Island. Rooster farms abound. If someone builds a rooster farm next to me, can I claim that they are keeping, harboring, or feeding chickens in a manner that damages my property?

I question the legal premise that Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council can declare feral chickens an invasive species because of harm to property. It would seem that as per the USDA’s [Executive Order 13112 \(Section 1. Definitions\)](#) an "invasive species" is a species that is:

- 1) non-native (or alien) to the ecosystem under consideration and,
- 2) whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.

The operative definition is “chicken”. If chickens are an invasive species, then what should be done about the entire poultry industry of Hawai‘i?

While I can appreciate that the legislature may be frustrated with idea that human beings may keep, harbor and feed animals and that some other people don’t like that, this is the nature of rural life. It is also a sign of a compassionate society.

Perhaps the Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council could better use its scarce resources fighting the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle, the Little Fire Ant, the Albizia tree, and things that have a more profound effect on our local farmers.

Renee Rabb

Keaau, HI 96749

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 8:14:48 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
sarah haynes	Kitty Charm Farm	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

SCR 71 / SSCR 3415

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Feral ungulate populations are the result of historical abandonment and inadequate land management—not the actions of individuals trying to help animals in need. Penalizing compassionate community members does nothing to address these systemic failures and diverts attention from the policy interventions that would actually make a difference.

A Recurring Pattern — and a Call for Lasting Solutions

The Maui Humane Society also wishes to note that measures of this kind have been introduced repeatedly in the legislature, session after session, and have been rejected each time—a reflection of the compassion and good judgment of this body and the communities we serve. If passed, such legislation would not solve the problems it identifies. It would instead undermine the humane, community-based solutions that are already working.

We respectfully urge this committee to oppose SCR 71 / SSCR 3415 and to instead support evidence-based, community-centered approaches to animal population management—approaches that address root causes, protect the work of dedicated caregivers, and reflect the values of aloha that define our islands.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 8:19:37 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Linda Patton	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 8:21:37 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maria Ginnebaugh	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This measure takes a one-size approach to complex issues and ignores their different underlying causes.

The feral chicken population is a result of the cock fighting industry being allowed to operate with impunity in our state. People who feed wild birds need to be educated about the harm they are doing, but they are not the reason these populations exist.

The Free-Roaming cat population is a result of pets being abandoned and fertile cats breeding outdoors. The legislation called for by this resolution would result in further growth of that population by interfering with humane management. The trap-neuter-return-manage strategy requires feeding to build trust with the cats, lure them into traps and maintain the ongoing health of the animals.

Feral ungulates are a result of abandonment and mismanagement, yet this measure seeks to punish people for trying to help animals rather than address the root causes.

I am opposing the Legislature and their continuation of a pattern of bills introduced session after session that fail, thanks to the compassion of our community, and would not address the issues they claim to be concerned with if they did pass.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 8:31:20 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Serena Stefanic-Phillip	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose Bill SCR71.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 8:35:39 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jocelyn C	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

There are bigger issues to focus on in Hawaii. Chickens are the least of the issue. Chickens are a part of the Hawaiian culture, why are we so fixated on KILLING them? We are trying so hard to change Hawaii to please the people who are moving to Hawaii and are NOT the LOCALS of Hawaii. Keep Hawai'i as HAWAII. The chickens are a part of our culture, they pose no harm. Let's focus on the real harm and danger - homelessness. Where's the real solutions in Hawaii's REAL problems?

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 8:40:58 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judy Patterson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I absolutely oppose this bill. Humans created this population of feral cats situation by not being responsible in spaying or neutering. This is inhumane and definitely not within the Aloha spirit that the Hawaiian islands so profoundly claim to have. It is so very disappointing to be a resident of Maui and see the government act in such inhumane ways especially when it pertains to cats. There are many people on this island who give of their time and money to care for the cats and this government should recognize them for doing so not destroy their efforts.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 8:56:22 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Valéry Atkinson, and I am a resident of O‘ahu and an active chicken rescuer. I am writing in **strong opposition to SCR71**.

While I understand and respect the concerns regarding property damage caused by feral animals, I am deeply concerned that the language of this measure is overly broad and may create unintended consequences for individuals who are actively trying to help animals, not harm communities.

As someone who has spent years rescuing injured and abandoned chickens, I regularly encounter birds that have been severely harmed, many of which are victims of organized fighting. These animals are often left to suffer or die in public spaces. Community members and rescuers step in to provide food, temporary care, and transport to safety.

Under the language of this measure, individuals who “keep, harbor, or feed” chickens could be held strictly liable for property damage, regardless of intent . This creates a serious risk that:

- Good Samaritans may be penalized for helping injured animals
- Community members may stop assisting suffering animals out of fear of liability
- Rescue efforts across the island may be discouraged or reduced

This is especially concerning given the scale of animal cruelty issues on O‘ahu. Many of the chickens being “harbored” or “fed” are not pets, but abandoned or injured animals in need of immediate care.

I respectfully ask that the Legislature consider narrowing the language of this measure to ensure that it does not unintentionally penalize rescuers, volunteers, and compassionate residents who are trying to address an existing problem.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 8:56:48 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Kashiwabara	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

These animals need help. Not to be starved to death. The reason there are so many animals is created by humans.

the pigeons are abandoned by those who gamble on them to fly between the islands and this that can't make it are just left behind. The chickens are due to cock fighting and the cats are due to lack of pet friendly housing. There may also be dogs in the valleys that have been left by hunters when they don't come back from the chase.

starvation is cruel. Maybe help the private vets by subsidizing spay/ neuter as the humane society is impossible to to get an appt. The feeders are taking all the appts to fix the abandon cats. That's a good thing but I have had 6 cats I paid out of pocket to fix as they just showed up on my property.

I feed them 2X daily and they do not kill the birds or the chickens.

please do not prevent the feeders from doing this. You need to help them

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 8:58:18 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Karie Haider	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose SCR71. The ability to feed feral cats is a measure to establish trust with these animals. This is an extremely important step in the TNR process. If we are unable to trap and neuter the feral cats, they will continue to multiply which only adds to the over population issue.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 9:00:21 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kawailehua Atkinson, and I am writing in **opposition to SCR71**.

I am concerned that this measure, as currently written, may unintentionally impact individuals who are trying to help animals rather than contribute to community issues.

The language establishing strict liability for individuals who “keep, harbor, or feed” chickens **is very broad**. In practice, this could include people who: provide food or water to injured or abandoned birds, temporarily care for animals while arranging rescue, assist in removing animals from unsafe situations

On O‘ahu, many chickens are not owned but are part of a larger wild population. When these animals are injured or in distress, community members often step in because there are limited resources available for immediate response.

This measure could discourage people from helping these animals due to fear of liability, which may ultimately lead to more suffering and fewer humane outcomes.

I respectfully urge the Committee to reconsider or amend this measure to ensure that it does not penalize individuals acting in good faith to care for vulnerable animals.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 9:09:52 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terri Bauer-Rizzo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

SCR 71 / SSCR 3415

This resolution applies a one-size-fits-all approach to three distinct free-roaming animal populations—feral chickens, free-roaming cats, and feral ungulates—each of which exists for different reasons and requires a different, evidence-based response. By treating these populations as interchangeable and directing legislation at the people who feed or care for animals, SCR 71 / SSCR 3415 misidentifies the problem and will worsen the very conditions it claims to address.

Feral Chickens

The feral chicken population in Hawai‘i is a direct consequence of cockfighting—an illegal industry that has long operated with impunity in our state. Addressing the root cause means stronger enforcement against illegal cockfighting, not penalizing community members who provide supplemental feeding to wild birds. While public education about the unintended harms of feeding wildlife is warranted, those individuals are not responsible for establishing these populations in the first place.

Free-Roaming Cats and Trap-Neuter-Return-Manage (TNRM)

Free-roaming cat populations stem from pet abandonment and the outdoor breeding of unsterilized cats. The most effective and humane solution is Trap-Neuter-Return-Manage (TNRM)—an approach backed by decades of research and adopted by animal welfare organizations nationwide.

TNRM depends on the ability of trained caregivers to feed managed colonies. Feeding is not incidental to this work—it is essential. It builds the trust needed to trap cats, allows caregivers to monitor colony health, and enables the humane sterilization that stops population growth. Colonies with high sterilization rates produce fewer litters, stabilize over time, and ultimately decline. The downstream benefits are significant: reduced shelter intake, lower euthanasia rates, fewer nuisance complaints, and less cat dumping.

Legislation that interferes with managed colony caregiving—as this resolution calls for—would not reduce the free-roaming cat population. It would increase it, by dismantling the infrastructure of TNRM before sterilization can take effect. This is precisely the opposite of what good public policy should accomplish.

Feral Ungulates

Feral ungulate populations are the result of historical abandonment and inadequate land management—not the actions of individuals trying to help animals in need. Penalizing compassionate community members does nothing to address these systemic failures and diverts attention from the policy interventions that would actually make a difference.

A Recurring Pattern — and a Call for Lasting Solutions

The Maui Humane Society also wishes to note that measures of this kind have been introduced repeatedly in the legislature, session after session, and have been rejected each time—a reflection of the compassion and good judgment of this body and the communities we serve. If passed, such legislation would not solve the problems it identifies. It would instead undermine the humane, community-based solutions that are already working.

I respectfully urge this committee to oppose SCR 71 / SSCR 3415 and to instead support evidence-based, community-centered approaches to animal population management—approaches that address root causes, protect the work of dedicated caregivers, and reflect the values of aloha that define our islands.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 9:11:35 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leslee-Ann Barclay	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

SCR 71 / SSCR 3415

This resolution applies a one-size-fits-all approach to three distinct free-roaming animal populations—feral chickens, free-roaming cats, and feral ungulates—each of which exists for different reasons and requires a different, evidence-based response. By treating these populations as interchangeable and directing legislation at the people who feed or care for animals, SCR 71 / SSCR 3415 misidentifies the problem and will worsen the very conditions it claims to address.

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The Maui Humane Society also wishes to note that measures of this kind have been introduced repeatedly in the legislature, session after session, and have been rejected each time—a reflection of the compassion and good judgment of this body and the communities we serve. If passed, such legislation would not solve the problems it identifies. It would instead undermine the humane, community-based solutions that are already working.

I respectfully urge this committee to oppose SCR 71 / SSCR 3415 and to instead support evidence-based, community-centered approaches to animal population management—approaches that address root causes, protect the work of dedicated caregivers, and reflect the values of aloha that define our islands.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 9:14:18 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jane E Arnold	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Jane Arnold and I live in Kaimuki. I am submitting testimony in STRONG OPPOSITION to SCR71, which would penalize people who feed and manage free-roaming cats. The free-roaming cat population is a result of people abandoning pet cats and the fact that many of these cats are not spayed/neutered. The people who feed these cats also trap/neuter/return them, thereby controlling the population. This bill would do NOTHING to address the cause of the problem and would only make the problem worse.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 9:15:55 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joann Sy	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am submitting testimony in opposition to SCR 71, which proposes establishing strict liability for individuals who keep, harbor, or feed certain animals that may cause property damage. While this resolution addresses a range of feral animals, my testimony focuses specifically on feral chickens and their role in our communities.

I oppose this resolution because it frames feral chickens primarily as a nuisance and encourages punitive approaches rather than humane, balanced, and evidence-based solutions. I also oppose the proposed strict liability framework, which would automatically hold individuals responsible for property damage caused by these animals, as these situations are often shaped by broader community and environmental factors rather than the actions of any one person alone.

In many cases, these chickens are part of the natural environment in Hawaii. They forage, remain largely non-disruptive, and also help control pests such as roaches and centipedes.

From my observations, issues often arise not from the chickens themselves, but when other animals, including domestic pets, chase them. This highlights the importance of responsible pet ownership and consistent enforcement of existing animal control laws. There are also other ongoing quality-of-life concerns, such as noise and safety issues, that have a greater daily impact and deserve equal attention.

These chickens also provide value that is often overlooked. They are social animals that look out for one another, alert their flock to danger, and generally avoid conflict. In a busy world, their presence can serve as a reminder of Hawaii's connection to nature and the environment.

I believe more constructive solutions should be considered, including community-based programs or designated spaces for responsible care, greater flexibility for humane stewardship by residents, increased public education, and other coexistence-focused approaches that recognize these animals are already part of our environment.

I am also concerned by the tone used in discussing this issue, particularly when harm toward these animals is mentioned casually. Regardless of the challenges involved, policy should reflect humane and respectful treatment of all living beings.

I encourage the Legislature to consider balanced approaches that reflect both community concerns and the ecological reality and value of these animals in Hawaii.

Mahalo,
Joann S.
Honolulu, HI 96814

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 9:15:56 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Senate Members,

Sad to say, here we go again. Hawaii villianizing good people trying to take care of everyone else's problems. Seems like the animal haters will try every angle to break these community members' spirits.

This bill seems very broad and open to loopholes, don't you think?

I am writing to express my strong opposition to **SCR 71**. While I recognize that feral animals—particularly chickens, ungulates, and community cats—can cause property damage and frustration for residents, the establishment of "strict liability" for individuals who merely feed or harbor these animals is an overreaching and impractical solution that creates more problems than it solves.

I oppose this resolution for the following reasons:

1. **Legal Overreach of "Strict Liability":** Strict liability is a high legal standard usually reserved for the owners of inherently dangerous items or pets. Applying this to feral animals—which are, by definition, unowned and wild—is a misapplication of the law. It is legally unreasonable to hold a private citizen automatically responsible for the behavior of a wild animal they do not own and cannot control.
2. **Vague and Punitive Definitions:** The resolution targets **anyone who "harbors" or "feeds" these animals. This definition is dangerously broad.** Under this language, a resident who leaves water out on a hot day or fails to aggressively haze a feral chicken off their property could be held liable for thousands of dollars in damages caused by that animal elsewhere in the neighborhood.
3. **Disincentivizing Animal Welfare and TNR:** This measure would effectively **criminalize compassion.** Hawaii relies heavily on volunteer "colony caretakers" who participate in Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) programs to manage cat populations. SCR 71 would force these volunteers to stop their work to avoid massive legal risk, leading to an explosion in the feral cat population and *more* property damage in the long run.
4. **Enforcement and Evidentiary Burdens:** SCR 71 creates an administrative nightmare. **Proving that a specific animal caused damage—and then proving that a specific neighbor provided "harbor" to that exact animal—is an impossible standard that will clog our small claims courts with neighborhood disputes.**

5. **Focus on Management, Not Litigation:** Rather than encouraging lawsuits between neighbors, the State should focus on funding statewide solutions for feral chickens such as "birth control" feed, keeping hens as free range egg layers and supporting spay/neuter initiatives to address the root cause (I can tell you without a study, that the root cause is people) of the population growth for feral cats..

SCR 71 is an unfair burden on residents and a misuse of strict liability doctrine. I respectfully urge the committees to not pass this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 9:16:41 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I strongly oppose Bill SCR 71. Many community members are helping to responsibly care for the animals that have been abandoned and neglected in our community. People being a solution should never be punished for doing the right thing. The problem is due to irresponsible people dumping and not fixing their animals which puts a burden on everyone. It is inhumane and cruel to starve animals and the people picking up the slack by doing trn and feeding should never be illegal. The state needs to create bills that punish people who dump animals and create a pathway to more trn and colony management. It is also against the law to starve and neglect animals who are dependent on caretakers for survival. Thank you, Thank you, Kelli Medeiros

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 9:20:58 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Xavier Burns	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and members of the Committee,

My name is Patricia, and I am writing in strong opposition to SCR 71.

SCR 71 urges the creation of strict liability for anyone who “keeps, harbors, or feeds” animals that cause property damage.

While this may sound reasonable on the surface, the language is dangerously broad and would have serious unintended consequences across Hawai‘i.

Under this proposal, everyday compassionate actions, like leaving out water during a drought, feeding an abandoned animal, rescuing an injured or sick animal or temporarily caring for an animal in need, could expose individuals to legal liability. There is no clear definition of what it means to “harbor” or “feed,” nor any reasonable limit on responsibility.

This creates a chilling effect on humane behavior. It discourages and punishes people from helping animals in distress and shifts responsibility away from systemic issues, like abandonment, illegal dumping, cruelty and lack of enforcement, and onto everyday residents trying to help. As we've heard our whole lives, "The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated"

We already have laws that address property damage caused by owned animals. This resolution goes far beyond that, suggesting that even indirect or minimal interaction with an animal could result in liability. As others have pointed out, this raises serious concerns about enforceability and fairness.

From what we see on the ground, the real issue is not compassionate residents, it is the ongoing cycle of abandonment and neglect. We regularly respond to dumped flocks, injured birds from cockfighting, and animals left without care. Penalizing those who step in to help will only make this crisis worse.

If passed into law, this approach could reduce rescue efforts, increase animal suffering, and ultimately place a greater burden on already overwhelmed communities and organizations.

We should be investing in humane solutions, stronger enforcement against cruelty, and community-based support, not policies that punish compassion.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to reject SCR 71.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Patricia

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 9:21:41 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ute K Finch	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As residents of Hawaii we are called to be good stewards of the land. That includes the people and animals who inhabit the land.

This bill tries to address all feral animals, yet there are different approaches for each species. Allow the experts and the public decide how to humanely manage each of these animal groups.

Absolutely, something needs to be done to control over populations...but allow there to be task forces who can humanely address each group.

Mahalo for your consideration.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 9:22:54 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gina Jones	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Cruel animal torture that does not solve any problems.

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

I am writing to express my **strong opposition** to SCR 71. This measure is fundamentally flawed and should be held by this committee.

It Punishes Compassion: Hawaii is a community built on aloha. This resolution seeks to turn basic human kindness—like helping a suffering animal—into a legal liability. We should never pass laws that encourage people to ignore an animal in pain or distress.

It Harms Our Children: We are already struggling with a lack of empathy among our youth, a trend that is directly linked to future cycles of violence. SCR 71 sends a message to our children that showing mercy to the vulnerable is a "mistake" that leads to punishment. We should be protecting the moral development of our youth, not teaching them to be indifferent to suffering.

It is a Lawsuit Magnet: By introducing "strict liability," this resolution will trigger a wave of frivolous lawsuits between neighbors. It turns every wandering feral animal into a potential legal battle, clogging our court systems and destroying neighborhood peace.

It is Unenforceable: There is no practical way to prove who "maintained" a feral animal. This will lead to inconsistent enforcement, profiling, and unfair targeting of residents based on hearsay.

SCR 71 is a solution in search of a problem that will only result in less compassion and more litigation in our islands. **I respectfully urge the committee to hold this measure.**

With aloha,
Megan
A Resident of Ewa

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 9:40:51 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Helene Navaro	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly oppose this bill SCR71. This bill will create more tension between neighbors and create a bigger conflict. We need more education on the subject of feeding the birds. We need bill that addresses the people that abandoned their unfixed pets. Current abandonment law is not being enforced to the fullest. Please don't penalize the kind and compassionate people. Your consideration is greatly appreciated. Mahalo Nui Loa.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 9:43:09 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amanda Funkhouser	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill. Enacting this legislation will not solve the problems it intends, but rather make them worse. All of these animals are in this situation because of human neglect, and we are not going to solve the problems by criminalizing helping animals. Instead of wasting time passing this bill, we should be focused on finding long-term sustainable solutions to manage the homeless animal populations.

Committee: House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems
Bill Number: SB2166/SCR71, RELATING TO ANIMALS
Hearing Date & Time: Friday, April 17, 2026 at 10:30 am
Re: Testimony of Malia Wisch **in Opposition of SCR71**

Aloha Chair Chun, Vice Chair Kusch, and members of the House Committee on Ag & Food Systems,

My name is Malia Wisch, I am a partner and creative director of the local branding and design agency Wall to Wall Studios. I am a third-generation Kailua resident and graduate of Hawaii's public schools.

I am writing in strong opposition to SCR71. While I understand the frustration that property damage from feral and free-roaming animals can cause, this resolution urges legislation that punishes the very people working the hardest to humanely reduce nuisance populations for the long term. In practice, it will complicate and further disincentivize the management of free-roaming cat populations humanely through Trap-Neuter-Return-Manage (TNRM) programs and community feeding arrangements.

Punishing and preventing humane management efforts will result in *increasing* populations of nuisance animals, which only increases the poisoning, shooting and drowning of animals who could otherwise be managed through non-lethal means.

Humane, non-lethal population management is both more ethical and, in the long run, **more effective**. TNRM programs have a demonstrated track record of stabilizing and reducing feral cat and chicken populations over time. Lethal removal, by contrast, often triggers a 'vacuum effect' where new animals move into the vacated territory, making the problem worse.

A growing group of organizations and volunteers are championing and executing on a multi-pronged strategy, including

1. Spay/neuter of owned pets,
2. Resources to help struggling families keep and feed their pets,
3. Advocating for better access to pet-friendly housing,
4. Trap-Neuter-Manage* of unsocialized stray cats in urban and residential areas,
5. A large-scale cat sanctuary for cats that cannot stay where they are and are not friendly enough for a traditional shelter setting, which will help to...
6. Ensure ample shelter space in our communities for friendly homeless cats.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge this body to oppose SCR71.

Sara Malia Wisch
629 Hanale Place, Kailua HI 96734
malia@wisch-design.com

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 9:54:36 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Carol Stark and I am a longtime resident in Kakaako.

I am respectfully submitting my testimony in opposition to SCR 71. Because I believe that ALL LIVES MATTER, I'm requesting that this proposal be given fair and serious consideration. The abandoned cats need our help!!

We, as mortals are not perfect! Let's not judge and make hasty decisions that are not what "Malama Pono" is all about in our beautiful Hawai'i. The cats who are abandoned don't deserve to suffer the end result of this proposed legislation! The volunteers who now spend their own money and their time to manage the cat population should be commended for their community involvement. It's about doing "what is Right"!!

it involves educating the community about sterilizing their cats and to NOT abandon them when they no longer want them. That, in itself, is Animal Cruelty!! Our organization of Cat Population Management volunteers believe in TNR. I respect all of you who are making this decision to do the RIGHT Thing! Let us be "inclusive of all living creatures". Check your conscience before you make a decision that maybe more harmful than helpful in our communities!!

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Stark

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 10:09:12 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hyades Leialoha Silva	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Born /raised on Maui, moved, came back, moved. I've worked with colony

caregivers. Please help us care for animals that don't have voices. There are

many lost animals from the fires and flooding. Even abandoned and not by choice. Some animals that can't find their owners. I've had an instance that I found a cat that you could tell was not feral. She got hurt and needed help to find her owner. So, I worked with a caregiver that took them to the Humane Society and found their Lahaina family lost from the fire. We do try to find their families, then if not TNR. We even try to help them find fosters too. I've help with many colonies when people were sick, had to trade off for feedings. Caregivers take care of the colonies like family. I know you've heard many testimonies. The teachings and old time ways I got from my grandparents were you help anyone, animals included. They would give their shirts off their back. Please don't take away the love, kindness and respect we were taught by our Tutu's. People are being scolded and berated by helping animals. I don't understand that. In this world today some people feel anything can be replaced. Statistics do show that TNR works. It's not instant, but gradually it does.

In closing, please work with us to share our Hawaiian culture that makes us different from other cultures. I'm just saying ohana includes animals. They are precious to us too. Thank you for your time.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 10:09:12 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Victoria Cheromcka	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is a misguided and inhumane solution to the feral cats population in Hawai'i. The volunteers who care for these colonies not only feed the cats which greatly reduces their hunting but they provide vital neutering which is the only ultimate solution to the problem. They monitor health which prevents a lot sick cats and have been increasingly successful in reducing new kittens.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 10:09:21 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeanne Cooper	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kākou,

My name is Jeanne Cooper and I serve as president of the board of Hawaii Island Humane Society, the largest and oldest animal welfare organization on Hawai'i Island. I am testifying in opposition to this bill, which punishes compassionate individuals responding to the largely human-caused problem of animal overpopulation and unhoused companion animals.

It is well-documented that trap-neuter-release-manage programs control and reduce free-roaming cat populations, but these programs require feeding for the "trap" portion to be successful. Some of these cats and kittens have also been able to be adopted into homes after their surgeries, which again would not have happened without the initial feeding or other caretaking.

Hawaii Island Humane Society is actively working to reduce the number of abandoned and unaltered kittens and cats by providing low-cost spay/neuter surgeries and free or very low cost veterinary care for pets of low-income individuals. Other animal welfare groups on our island are doing the same and one is working to build a sanctuary for free-roaming cats similar to Lāna'i Cat Sanctuary. It's hard work, as every day the lack of pet-friendly housing, the high cost of living, and a lack of education about, and access to, spay/neuter services leads to more abandoned and free-roaming kittens and cats.

Please do not penalize those who are also seeking to manage and reduce the free-roaming cat population through this legislation. Mahalo.

Jeanne Cooper

Kamuela, HI

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 10:16:39 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lynn Fujimoto	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly **Oppose** bill **SCR71**.

The public needs more education and support. We currently have many laws but not enforceable due to lack of resources. Such as animal abandonment laws.

We need compassionate approaches.

Mahalo for your consideration.

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SCR71

Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems (AGR)

DATE: Friday, April 17, 2026
TIME: 10:30 AM
PLACE: Conference Room 325
& VIDEOCONFERENCE
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

From: Gregory Misakian (as an individual)

Submitted: 4/16/26

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

I am in strong opposition to SCR71 and also to SB2892, 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
- ❖ Participating Member, Good Government 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. I am strongly opposed to the harming of any animal, and also to punish those who foster a love of animals and choose to care about them and provide nourishment. SCR71, as written, is not only mean-spirited and goes against the beliefs of the Hawaiian people (please read on), but is unenforceable and will create many more problems. SB2892 would allow for the “humane disposition” of chickens. For our legislators that don’t know what this means, currently any chickens that are caught by pest control companies or brought to them, can be and are killed by a gas chamber. Do our legislators believe this is a humane way to die? If your answer (and vote) is yes, then I hope that the voters who are animal lovers and who care, remember your vote at election time (when they vote).

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 AGR Committee vote with Aloha, vote with compassion, and vote with the understanding of the cultural importance of chickens in Hawaii. Please vote no on SCR71 and SB2892.

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

Respectfully,

Gregory Misakian

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 10:29:27 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Malia Otto	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

SCR71, as written, is not simply a regulatory measure — it is a punitive and deeply misguided response to a management situation that has been overstated and mischaracterized.

Chickens do not “damage property” in the way this bill implies. They do not destroy structures nor create lasting harm. At most, they disturb landscaping and leave droppings — inconveniences, yes, but not offenses that warrant criminalization. If nuisance is the threshold for criminal law, we must ask why this bill singles out compassion toward animals while ignoring far more disruptive and intentional acts between neighbors that remain unenforced.

This bill does something more troubling than overreach — it misnames and, in doing so, grossly misunderstands. The birds in question are not 'feral.' They are descendants of the red jungle fowl, brought to these islands by Polynesian voyagers centuries ago. They are not intruders. They are part of Hawai‘i’s living history — more rooted here than some humans.

To call them 'feral' is to erase their lineage. 'Feral' signifies abandonment, something once owned and then discarded. But these birds were never merely abandoned property — they have been naturalized for hundreds of years, and have adapted, and endured. Now some may say that they are not pure gallus gallus (that's the Latin name for red jungle fowl), because some may have interbred to some degree with certain domesticated birds. While this is true, if hybridization alone disqualifies a being from belonging, then what does that say about us? Hawai‘i is a place for blending, a place of sometimes very deeply layered ancestry, and a place of coexistence. We do not strip our identity simply because of evolution.

And yet, SCR71 proposes to criminalize not harm, but kindness. It targets those who feed, observe, and coexist with these animals — people choosing care over cruelty. Meanwhile, there is no comparable urgency directed at those who abuse these animals, who steal them for fighting, or who deliberately harm them for fun. The imbalance is both stark and revealing.

This is not just about chickens. It is about what we choose to punish.

In a place known as the extinction capital of the world, we should be cautious about policies that further disconnect people from the living beings around them. Stewardship begins with relationship. Relationship begins with recognition.

SCR71 does not foster responsibility — just fear. It tells people that to care is to risk becoming a criminal.

We can do better.

We can address nuisance without criminalizing compassion. We can manage coexistence without erasing history. And we can choose laws that reflect not only order, but humanity.

Reject SCR71.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 10:29:34 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lana Rapoza	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose SCR 71.

To:

Respected House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems.

All over the island, there are people whom on a daily basis damage private, federal, state, county & public properties. These damages, includes, but not limited to, trespassing, defacing property, scattering, stacking, make shift builds using trash, clothes, fabric materials, furniture, metal, glass, plastic & wood items. There's human urination, defecation & other human bodily fluids on a property & in containers. What's also sad some have animals locked up in tiny cages w/ no food/water, breeding & animal abuse. Major eye sore, biohazard & heartbreaking.

I believe the above scenario mentioned be considered when making any decisions regarding an animals role in alleged property damage. There are laws that govern chicken fighting. As for hoarding animals, further discussion is requested.

I kindly oppose SCR71. Protecting property's from being damaged by chickens, cats, and/or dogs, which humans are rescuing by feeding, trying to minimize more births & showing compassion in a world full of hate & disdain towards animals. I don't believe these animals do damage that justify' this type of concern.

Private property owners, businesses, etc. should consider implementing a liability waiver which animal rescuers must sign in order to go property legally to feed/care or rescue animals. Rescuers could consider as well, help by upkeeping property by cleaning the area. Cleaning shouldn't be mandatory. However, I believe we rescuers need to meet the property owners half-way, a win-win situation. Rescuers would practice safety while on property.

If cats are hungry, they kill to eat. Many times I see cats hanging out with chickens, rabbits, ducks because humans feed the cats so its not hungry. After church I was driving out from Wahiawa Middle School, a cat was laying down around with the chickens. Mongoose, big rats & the loose big lizard types that some had as pets that got away or released into the forestry eats birds & other small species.

Animals do not destroy, it's some humans that destroy the good things that other humans do to make the world great.

I strongly oppose SCR 71.

E Kala mai for the grammatical errors.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Mrs. Lana Rapoza

Wahiawa, HI

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 10:31:16 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anne Canha	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

SCR 71 / SSCR 3415

This resolution applies a one-size-fits-all approach to three distinct free-roaming animal populations—feral chickens, free-roaming cats, and feral ungulates—each of which exists for different reasons and requires a different, evidence-based response. By treating these populations as interchangeable and directing legislation at the people who feed or care for animals, SCR 71 / SSCR 3415 misidentifies the problem and will worsen the very conditions it claims to address.

Feral Chickens

The feral chicken population in Hawai‘i is a direct consequence of cockfighting—an illegal industry that has long operated with impunity in our state. Addressing the root cause means stronger enforcement against illegal cockfighting, not penalizing community members who provide supplemental feeding to wild birds. While public education about the unintended harms of feeding wildlife is warranted, those individuals are not responsible for establishing these populations in the first place.

Free-Roaming Cats and Trap-Neuter-Return-Manage (TNRM)

Free-roaming cat populations stem from pet abandonment and the outdoor breeding of unsterilized cats. The most effective and humane solution is Trap-Neuter-Return-Manage (TNRM)—an approach backed by decades of research and adopted by animal welfare organizations nationwide.

TNRM depends on the ability of trained caregivers to feed managed colonies. Feeding is not incidental to this work—it is essential. It builds the trust needed to trap cats, allows caregivers to monitor colony health, and enables the humane sterilization that stops population growth. Colonies with high sterilization rates produce fewer litters, stabilize over time, and ultimately decline. The downstream benefits are significant: reduced shelter intake, lower euthanasia rates, fewer nuisance complaints, and less cat dumping.

Legislation that interferes with managed colony caregiving—as this resolution calls for—would not reduce the free-roaming cat population. It would increase it, by dismantling the infrastructure

of TNRM before sterilization can take effect. This is precisely the opposite of what good public policy should accomplish.

Feral Ungulates

Feral ungulate populations are the result of historical abandonment and inadequate land management—not the actions of individuals trying to help animals in need. Penalizing compassionate community members does nothing to address these systemic failures and diverts attention from the policy interventions that would actually make a difference.

A Recurring Pattern — and a Call for Lasting Solutions

The Maui Humane Society also wishes to note that measures of this kind have been introduced repeatedly in the legislature, session after session, and have been rejected each time—a reflection of the compassion and good judgment of this body and the communities we serve. If passed, such legislation would not solve the problems it identifies. It would instead undermine the humane, community-based solutions that are already working.

We respectfully urge this committee to oppose SCR 71 / SSCR 3415 and to instead support evidence-based, community-centered approaches to animal population management—approaches that address root causes, protect the work of dedicated caregivers, and reflect the values of aloha that define our islands.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 10:37:48 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Parr	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I firmly believe that by passing this law. It will not address where the problems arrive from. Educating the public on where feral animals come from is the answer. . And that is irresponsible adults are needed to learn. By punishing caregivers especially colony feeding and watering cats , rescue ,trap ,vaccinate and remain feeding and watering them should not be the crime. The crime is pet owners not spaying and neutering their cats and dogs. Then they are not being punished by dropping off unwanted pets to neighboring homes and parks. Aloha. But I think you have lost your Hawaiian Aloha if you pass this bill. It is also inhumane, what other homeless animals will you not want to feed. Next weill it be humans? Will you come and punish caring feeders of all the homeless

8082508978

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 10:41:34 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Renee Rozsa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is a bad idea and it will create suffering

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 10:45:30 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tracey Viar	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I think we need to be more concerned with creating bills that stop breeding of cats and dogs and not creating bills to starve cats or kill chickens when so much cruelty exists here. All animals should be spayed and neutered unless has a special license to do so. Our islands need a break NOW from creating more unwanted animals bit Thai is not the way. Humans have created this problem and this approach with this bill will create more anger towards this government. Schools should be educating keiki about showing kindness to all living life, not throwing rocks at chickens and cats and shooting cats and chickens. We need harsher animal cruelty laws to prevent cruelty, now that is a bill I can get behind!

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 11:00:07 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christine Rosewood	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE

REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

Rep. Cory M. Chun, Chair

Rep. Matthias Kusch, Vice Chair

Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa Rep. Sean Quinlan

Rep. Nicole E. Lowen Rep. Lauren Matsumoto

Rep. Amy A. Perruso

NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Friday, April 17, 2026

TIME: 10:30 AM

VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

PLACE: Conference Room 325

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

My name is Christine Rosewood and I am testifying in OPPOSITION to the Bill SCR71 due to its potential affects on the care and feeding of the Free-roaming cats on the islands. As a cat colony feeder on Maui, I see and experience first hand the heartbreaking issue that exists regarding our many homeless cats. An issue that would not even exist if the state's residents, communities, and legislation took a more proactive stance to care for its pets. This bill does not solve the issue of the many cats that are dumped on the streets daily due to careless individuals, and those who cannot find pet-friendly housing. Instead, it will likely impede the efforts of well meaning people like me who are spending our own time and money to respond to an issue we did not create. If we ever want to see a reduction in the amount of Free-roaming cats, steps need to be taken to educate the public on the importance of spay and neutering, offer more pet-friendly housing, and create more affordable/free pet spay/neuter options. Additionally, we need legislation to better support those who care for the homeless cats and work to TNR (Trap/Neuter/Release). We need the help and support of legislation, not laws to impede the work we do. Because the problem will not go away on its own. It will only get worse.

Thank you for your time,

Christine Rosewood

cmrosewood@gmail.com

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 11:04:11 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

SCR 71 / SSCR 3415

This resolution applies a one-size-fits-all approach to three distinct free-roaming animal populations—feral chickens, free-roaming cats, and feral ungulates—each of which exists for different reasons and requires a different, evidence-based response. By treating these populations as interchangeable and directing legislation at the people who feed or care for animals, SCR 71 / SSCR 3415 misidentifies the problem and will worsen the very conditions it claims to address.

Feral Chickens

The feral chicken population in Hawai‘i is a direct consequence of cockfighting—an illegal industry that has long operated with impunity in our state. Addressing the root cause means stronger enforcement against illegal cockfighting, not penalizing community members who provide supplemental feeding to wild birds. While public education about the unintended harms of feeding wildlife is warranted, those individuals are not responsible for establishing these populations in the first place.

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A Recurring Pattern — and a Call for Lasting Solutions

The Maui Humane Society also wishes to note that measures of this kind have been introduced repeatedly in the legislature, session after session, and have been rejected each time—a reflection of the compassion and good judgment of this body and the communities we serve. If passed, such legislation would not solve the problems it identifies. It would instead undermine the humane, community-based solutions that are already working.

We respectfully urge this committee to oppose SCR 71 / SSCR 3415 and to instead support evidence-based, community-centered approaches to animal population management—approaches that address root causes, protect the work of dedicated caregivers, and reflect the values of aloha that define our islands.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 11:43:40 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Canha	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill to make it illegal for feeding of feral cats in TNR colonies such as on Maui or other Hawaiian islands.

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 11:57:51 AM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nikki Russell	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

SCR 71 / SSCR 3415

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I respectfully urge this committee to oppose SCR 71 / SSCR 3415 and to instead support evidence-based, community-centered approaches to animal population management—approaches that address root causes, protect the work of dedicated caregivers, and reflect the values of aloha that define our islands.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Nikki Russell

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 12:18:22 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Monika Ramirez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Monika Ramirez, and I respectfully submit testimony in opposition to SCR 71, which urges the establishment of strict liability for individuals who keep, harbor, or feed certain animals in a manner that results in property damage.

While I understand and support the intent to address property damage and community concerns, I have significant concerns about the breadth, unintended consequences, and practical implications of this resolution.

First, the proposed approach of strict liability is overly punitive and lacks nuance. It removes the need to consider intent, reasonable care, or situational context. Individuals who act compassionately-such as feeding stray or abandoned animals-could be held liable even when they are attempting to mitigate suffering or fill gaps in public animal control systems. This creates a chilling effect on humane behavior and discourages community members from assisting vulnerable animals.

Second, this measure risks penalizing responsible caregivers and volunteers, including those who support trap-neuter-return (TNR) efforts or collaborate with local rescue organizations. These individuals often contribute positively to reducing overpopulation and long-term nuisance issues. Imposing strict liability may undermine these community-based solutions rather than strengthen them.

Third, the resolution does not sufficiently define what constitutes “feeding” or “harboring,” which introduces legal ambiguity and enforcement challenges. Without clear definitions and thresholds, enforcement may become inconsistent, subjective, and potentially discriminatory.

Fourth, this approach does not address the root causes of animal-related property damage, such as lack of accessible spay/neuter services, insufficient animal control resources, or gaps in public education. A more effective strategy would focus on preventive, evidence-based interventions, including:

- Expanding low-cost spay/neuter programs
- Supporting humane population management (e.g., TNR)
- Increasing public education on responsible pet ownership
- Strengthening targeted enforcement for clearly negligent behavior

Finally, Hawai‘i has a strong cultural value of compassion (aloha and mālama) toward both people and animals. Policies should reflect a balanced approach that protects property rights while also supporting humane and community-driven solutions.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to defer or reject SCR 71 and instead pursue more targeted, balanced, and effective measures.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Mahalo,

Monika Ramirez

LATE

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 12:32:16 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tara Weikum	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

SCR 71 / SSCR 3415

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Free-Roaming Cats and Trap-Neuter-Return-Manage (TNRM)

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Legislation that interferes with managed colony caregiving—as this resolution calls for—would not reduce the free-roaming cat population. It would increase it, by dismantling the infrastructure

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Feral Ungulates

Feral ungulate populations are the result of historical abandonment and inadequate land management—not the actions of individuals trying to help animals in need. Penalizing compassionate community members does nothing to address these systemic failures and diverts attention from the policy interventions that would actually make a difference.

A Recurring Pattern — and a Call for Lasting Solutions

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LATE

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 1:24:49 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leslie Freimuth	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose SCR 71

LATE

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 1:33:38 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephanie Costanzo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This resolution applies a one-size-fits-all approach to three distinct free-roaming animal populations—feral chickens, free-roaming cats, and feral ungulates—each of which exists for different reasons and requires a different, evidence-based response. By treating these populations as interchangeable and directing legislation at the people who feed or care for animals, SCR 71 / SSCR 3415 misidentifies the

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LATE

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 1:34:22 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Yevgeniya Sadovnyk	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

SCR 71 / SSCR 3415

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LATE

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 1:48:39 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kara Hart	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Subject: Opposition to SCR71 and SSCR3415

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

I am writing to express my strong opposition to SCR71 and SSCR3415, particularly due to provisions or implications that would restrict or ban the feeding of feral (community) cats.

Feeding feral cats is not simply an act of compassion—it is a critical component of humane and effective population management. Caregivers who feed these cats are often the same individuals who participate in or support trap-neuter-return (TNR) efforts, which are widely recognized as the most effective and humane way to stabilize and gradually reduce feral cat populations.

Banning or restricting feeding would have several unintended consequences. Without reliable food sources, feral cats will disperse into new areas in search of sustenance, potentially increasing conflicts with residents and wildlife rather than reducing them. In addition, removing feeding support undermines TNR programs by making it more difficult to monitor, trap, and care for these animals.

Such a policy may also place an unnecessary burden on animal shelters and local governments, as more cats could end up abandoned, in poor health, or requiring intervention. This approach risks shifting the problem rather than solving it.

A more effective path forward would be to support managed care programs, including TNR, community education, and collaboration with local caregivers and animal welfare organizations. These strategies address both animal welfare and community concerns in a balanced and sustainable way.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to reject SCR71 and SSCR3415 or to amend them to ensure that humane management practices like feeding as part of TNR efforts are protected.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,
Kara Hart-Lahaina

LATE

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 1:50:01 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Feral Chickens

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LATE

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 1:52:29 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Betsy Ross Palumbo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this resolution.

LATE

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 1:59:57 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I'm opposed to SCR 71. There are much more humane ways to control the cat populations throughout the islands and people/individuals that take the time and use their own funds to care for and TNR feral cats must be protected. There should be significantly stronger laws to enforce the purposeful abandonment of animals, many of which are cats, by individuals. I support the individual island humane societies to take the lead in curbing feral animal populations and they need to be funded, as such, by the Hawai'i Legislature to meet these goals. Don't blame the problem of overpopulation on the animals. Blame it on irresponsible individuals who treat domestic animals like pieces of trash and your predecessors in the legislature who failed to recognize the potential problem of feral overpopulation and/or the lack of motivation to tackle the problem when it was much smaller. Figure out another way to tackle this issue or table it and let the measure die. Let the measure die, not the animals. Fix the problem by fixing the animals (and the irresponsible people who turn them loose).

LATE

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 2:07:39 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patty Johnson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly opposed this resolution

LATE

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 2:20:33 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I am against SCR71 - It has very broad language and can be manipulated and encroach upon animas rights and welfare

LATE

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 2:54:47 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melissia Brooks	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

SCR 71 / SSCR 3415

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LATE

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 3:05:59 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jo Anne J Winer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a former Maui County Councilmember I was able to better educate myself about TNR and the issues surrounding the feral cat population.

It serves no one to punish the colony caretakers and those who perform the duties that would ordinarily be carried out by humane society personnel.

West Maui has never been adequately served by MHS and as a result we have struggled to keep the population of ferals under control. The homeless population following the Lahaina fire has exploded and many of them refuse to spay or neuter their animals. Many are often violent due to drug use or mental illness and it is a difficult task for feeders to help them understand that raising more kittens or puppies is not a good thing.

Please do not punish those who are doing their best with limited resources by shutting these stations down.

Relocating or euthanizing the cats is also not a solution, so please find a way to address the issue in a manner similar to how the problems have been mitigated on Lanai.

LATE

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 3:14:00 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Valerie Mitchell	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Highly oppose the incredible suffering this bill would cause

LATE

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 3:27:54 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Candice-Lee Glutz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill.

LATE

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 3:54:06 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Collins	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Free-Roaming cat population is a result of pets being abandoned and fertile cats breeding outdoors. The legislation called for by this resolution would result in further growth of that population by interfering with humane management. The trap-neuter-return-manage strategy requires feeding to build trust with the cats, lure them into traps and maintain the ongoing health of the animals.

Feral ungulates are a result of abandonment and mismanagement, yet this measure seeks to punish people for trying to help animals rather than address the root causes.

LATE

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 4:00:58 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

SCR 71 / SSCR 3415

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LATE

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 4:36:31 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sonia Gaudet	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

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LATE

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 4:37:38 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terry Joseph	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this resolution.

LATE

SCR-71

Submitted on: 4/16/2026 4:43:39 PM

Testimony for AGR on 4/17/2026 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vera sredanovic	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly oppose, neutering and feeding cats helps control the population. If this law gets enacted than the problem will grow, as those cats will not be fixed and will kill birds to survive. Fed cats have no need to kill to survive. When fed they can be captured and fixed.