HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TWENTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2006
STATE OF HAWAII

H.C.R. NO. 106 H.D. 1

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY ON PREVENTING AN AVIAN INFLUENZA PANDEMIC.

WHEREAS, since autumn 2003, a highly pathogenic avian influenza virus strain known as "Influenza A" (H5N1) spread throughout Asia and the Asian Pacific region, infecting poultry and in still rare instances, humans, creating fast growing and in some areas devastating effects on public health and overall global well-being; and

WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, avian influenza A viruses usually do not infect humans, however, more than 180 confirmed cases of human infection with avian influenza viruses have been reported since 1997; and

WHEREAS, even though most cases of avian influenza infection in humans so far are thought to have resulted from direct contact with infected poultry or contaminated surfaces, it is not known how the various strains might impact the health risk to humans; and

WHEREAS, because of concerns about the potential for more widespread infection in the human population, public health authorities closely monitor outbreaks of human illness associated with avian influenza even though to date, human infections with avian influenza A viruses detected since 1997 have not resulted in sustained human-to-human transmission; and

WHEREAS, in comparisons with the 1918-1919 outbreak of Spanish flu, "the mother of all pandemics", if the avian flu did mutate to a strain that could pass from human to human and affected humans the way the Spanish flu did, the proportionate number of human fatalities would be 150 million worldwide, approximately two to three percent of the world's population ; and

WHEREAS, the H5N1 virus, which has caused illness and death in Asia, is resistant to amantadine and rimantadine, two common antiviral medications often used to treat influenza; and

WHEREAS, an avian flu pandemic spreading throughout our islands and the continental United States could present a grave threat to Hawaii's public health and well-being, and our country's national security; and

WHEREAS, the state is known to have a significant population of wild, unmanaged, ownerless feral chickens roaming the countryside; and

WHEREAS, feral chickens are rapidly reproducing and expanding their range in the state and while many of these birds were initially brought into areas to be kept and cared for as pets or for producing food, those that are not managed responsibly and that return to a feral existence may prove to be a serious vector for the spread of H5N1 to humans; and

WHEREAS, Hawaii's geographic location and the large population of tourists who visit this state from around the world make Hawaii a possible launch-pad for the introduction of this potentially dangerous virus to the continental United States; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2006, the Senate concurring, that the Legislature urges the Department of Health (DOH) to convene a working group of scientists, health experts, and stakeholders to conduct a scientific study on the feasibility and effectiveness of various methods of curtailing H5N1; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested to discuss and present to the Legislature, among other things:

(1) The development and use of a color-coded, avian influenza activity scale of infected feral chickens, similar to the United States Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Flu Activity Map, representing the following five threat condition levels and corresponding colors:

(A) Red, indicating "widespread";

(B) Blue, indicating "regional";

(C) Purple, indicating "local activity";

(D) Green, indicating "sporadic"; and

(E) Yellow, indicating "no activity";

(2) An algorithm to create a computer software model that can calculate various infection scenarios occurring in the Hawaiian Islands resulting from feral chickens infected with H5N1;

(3) Coordination of planning and preventative measures to protect Hawaii from an avian flu epidemic;

(4) The establishment of a response system; and

(5) A variety of methods for the control of feral chickens;

and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested to request assistance from and collaborate with the following organizations in conducting this feasibility and effectiveness study:

(1) The USDHHS CDC;

(2) The United States Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases (USAMRIID);

(3) The United Nations World Health Organization (WHO);

(4) The University of Hawaii (UH);

(5) The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA);

(6) The Hawaiian Humane Society (HHS);

(7) The Hawaii Game Breeders Association (HGBA); and

(8) Any other organization or individual that DOH deems relevant;

and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group is requested to submit a report to the Legislature no later than 20 days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2007; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Director of Health, Director of USDHHS Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Commanding Officer of USAMRIID, Director of WHO, Board of Regents of UH, Board of Trustees of OHA, Director of HHS, and President of HGBA.