

HCR 244,
HD1

LINDA LINGLE
Governor



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TESTIMONY OF SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
TUESDAY, APRIL 22, 2008
9:30 A.M.
ROOM 414

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 244, H.D. 1
URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO ADOPT RULES CONSISTENT
WITH FEDERAL LAW TO PROHIBIT THE MEAT PACKING INDUSTRY AND MEAT
OR MEAT PRODUCT RETAILERS FROM USING GAS OR OTHER TECHNOLOGY
TO EXTEND THE EXPIRATION DATE OF MEAT SOLD IN THE STATE

Chairperson Tokuda and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on House Concurrent Resolution 244, H.D.1 urging the Department of Agriculture to adopt rules consistent with Federal law to prohibit the meat packing industry and meat or meat product retailers from using gas or other technology to extend the expiration date of meat sold in the state.

The Department of Agriculture (HDOA) defers to the Department of Health as this subject falls under their jurisdiction. While there remains under HDOA a statute on meat inspection, the department no longer has such a program as it stopped doing inspection for the federal government many years ago. We understand that this issue falls under the Department of Health's jurisdiction over food adulteration covered under chapter 328, the State's version of the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act.

While it may be generally accepted that treating meat with safe levels of carbon monoxide is not harmful, this resolution addresses the issue that there are other concerns surrounding the treatment of meat in this manner. The red meat color

resulting from the gas treatment may deceive the consumer into thinking that the meat is fresher than it is. It is possible for the meat to appear fresh but to have high bacterial levels indicative of spoilage even though the meat is within the labeled 'use, sell or freeze by' date listed on the package.