

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

1076

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 27 2009

RE: H.B. No. 1611  
H.D. 2  
S.D. 1

Honorable Colleen Hanabusa  
President of the Senate  
Twenty-Fifth State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2009  
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committee on Water, Land, Agriculture, and Hawaiian Affairs, to which was referred H.B. No. 1611, H.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO LABELING OF MEAT AND FISH PRODUCTS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to require truthful labeling of meat and fish that have been gas-treated.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from one organization and one private citizen. Testimony in opposition to this measure was received from one state agency and one organization. Testimony with comments on this measure was received from one state agency and one organization. Written testimony presented to the Committee may be reviewed on the Legislature's website.

Your Committee finds that the United States Food and Drug Administration has determined that the use of safe levels of carbon monoxide in treating meat is not harmful to human health. However, it is possible for treated meat to appear fresh to the consumer but still contain high bacteria levels indicative of spoilage. It has been suggested that the "use, sell, or freeze by" date listed on packaged meat or fish may sometimes be extended due solely to the color of the contents rather than the actual freshness.



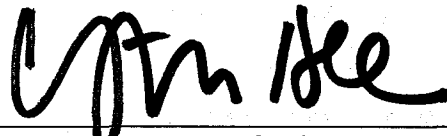
The Department of Health checks for adherence to proper labeling requirements and ensures that products are not offered for sale past their expiration dates through routine food safety inspections and other enforcement mechanisms. However, the Department of Health testified that it focuses most enforcement efforts on the accurate labeling of fish products, relying on the United States Department of Agriculture to enforce regulations for meat labeling. Your Committee notes that this measure is intended to focus primarily on the accurate labeling of meat products sold in Hawaii.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Clarifying that a violation of the labeling requirements contained therein constitutes a misdemeanor offense;
- (2) Making it effective upon approval; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive changes for the purpose of clarity and accuracy.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Water, Land, Agriculture, and Hawaiian Affairs that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1611, H.D. 2, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1611, H.D. 2, S.D. 1, and be referred to the Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Water, Land,  
Agriculture, and Hawaiian  
Affairs,



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CLAYTON HEE, Chair



