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Governor



State of Hawaii
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LATE
TESTIMONY
SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture
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TESTIMONY OF SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY
THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2009
9:30 A.M.
ROOM 309

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 153
HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 123
REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU TO STUDY THE
FEASIBILITY OF CONSTRUCTING A PRISON AT THE STATE QUARANTINE
STATION AT HALAWA, OAHU.

Chairperson Hanohano and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Concurrent Resolution No. 153 and House Resolution No. 123 that requires the Legislative Reference Bureau to study the feasibility of constructing a prison at the site of the Animal Quarantine Station in Halawa. The Department offers comments.

Construction of a prison on the Animal Quarantine Station site must include plans and the cost to relocate and build a new Animal Quarantine facility which addresses these critical considerations below.

The Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA) Animal Quarantine Station in Halawa Valley is utilized to quarantine and evaluate dogs and cats entering the State to prevent the introduction of rabies, newly emerging animal diseases and animal pests, such as ticks. In addition, the facility is also used by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Hawaii Department of Agriculture Plant Quarantine Branch (PQ) for their respective working dog programs.

The U.S. Army Garrison through Morale Welfare and Recreation (MWR) also operates a pet kennel for boarding dogs and cats owned by military personnel on leave and on deployment. The resolutions do not specify provisions to relocate the quarantine station facilities and operations to achieve the Department's mission of preventing the introduction of rabies and other disease into Hawaii or address the USDA, CBP, MWR and PQ operations.

The quarantine facility has been located in Halawa Valley since the late 1960s. About 75% of the facility was demolished as part of the H-3 project and \$27 million of federal funds were used to relocate the demolished portions to another location within the Halawa site in 1990. Therefore, the majority of the facility is less than 20 years old.

The location of the Animal Quarantine Station (Station) in Halawa is convenient to pet owners and other users of the facility. Furthermore, its central location in close proximity to Honolulu International Airport affords rapid and efficient transport of animals between the airport and Station, minimizing stress to the animals. The Station is also easily accessible to pet owners arriving at the Honolulu International Airport.

Approximately 395 dogs and cats were in quarantine at the Station at the start of FY 2009. Therefore, including a contingency for an increase in the population at the Station, an estimated 700 kennels, administration building and veterinary dispensary would be required to maintain Rabies Quarantine Branch operations and allow for continued usage by other agencies. Significant infrastructure limitations in the sewage system in Halawa, as it relates to prison facilities, were also identified in a report by the Department of Public Safety and the Department of Accounting and General Services in 2003.