

March 25, 2010

TESTIMONY TO: Committee on Water, Land, and Ocean Resources, 586-8504

FROM: Mary Ikagawa, Kailua, HI

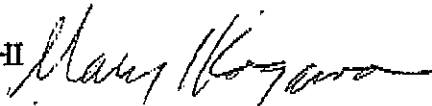
RE: HCR 306, hearing Monday, March 29, 2010 at 10:45 a.m. in Conference Room 325

TOTAL PAGES: 7 6

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TESTIMONY TO: Committee on Water, Land, and Ocean Resources

FROM: Mary Ikagawa, Kailua, HI



RE: HCR 306, Requesting the Department Of Land and Natural Resources to conduct a study on the most effective and efficient methods for the control and reduction of the feral pig population statewide.

Aloha Representatives,

In its present form, HCR 306 will not improve feral pig management. The missing ingredient in the study is addressing the social and legal barriers to widespread feral pig control. Having a report of the best methods does not help if the methods cannot be used because of opposition from landowners and interest groups based on fear of liability or loss of hunting opportunities.

It is well known by those governments that are pushing ahead with large-scale vertebrate pest control that the first consideration has to be social. The right laws, definitions, and informational pathways must be in place to have any chance at success.

Now is the time to understand who "owns" wildlife (the public or the landowner?); what to do when one landowner wants to keep feral pigs on their land but an adjacent landowner does not; how can private land be accessed for control without exposing the landowner to excessive risk; what are the options for providing both effective pig control and hunting opportunities; and so forth.

Furthermore, whereas the methods presently available for feral pig control may not be as efficient or humane as we might like, there are better methods being developed. These will not benefit Hawaii if we do not first address the legal and social issues standing in the way.

I have suggested minor changes to the bill that will add this component to the study. Please note that DLNR is a member of the Hawaii Conservation Alliance, whose members have recently been discussing this very issue: the fact that although land managers know *how* to control introduced game mammals, they are often unable to do it because Hawaii has not yet addressed the social and legal constraints on widespread control. DLNR/DOFAW staff are well aware of the need for this type of study and can request collaboration from the other members of the Alliance. However people rarely do more than they have to. Adding this requirement to this bill could be the first step toward hands-on game management and meaningful feral pig control for Hawaii.

Sincerely,  
Mary Ikagawa  
Kailua

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE, 2010

STATE OF HAWAII

## H.C.R. NO. 306

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# HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO  
CONDUCT A STUDY ON THE MOST EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT METHODS FOR  
THE CONTROL AND REDUCTION OF THE FERAL PIG POPULATION STATEWIDE.

1 WHEREAS, feral pigs are an invasive species that cause  
2 considerable damage to the environment by consuming ground-  
3 covering plants, destroying understory vegetation, churning and  
4 wallowing in the ground, causing erosion, and creating mosquito  
5 breeding grounds; and

6  
7 WHEREAS, feral pigs directly impact the survival of native  
8 forest birds and other species; and

9  
10 WHEREAS, due to their aggressive nature, feral pigs are  
11 also known to attack livestock, and transmit diseases to  
12 livestock, people, and pets; and

13  
14 WHEREAS, these pests have migrated in increasing numbers  
15 from state land to residential areas, causing property damage  
16 and disturbances that affect the health, safety, and welfare of  
17 area residents; and

18  
19 WHEREAS, in 2006, on Oahu, the Division of Forestry and  
20 wildlife (DOFAW) of the Department of Land and Natural Resources  
21 (DLNR) received 12 calls per month concerning nuisance pigs; and

22  
23 WHEREAS, in 2007, in Hawaii County, the United States  
24 Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection  
25 Services, Wildlife Services Office, set up a hotline to record  
26 complaints about damages and threats from feral pigs and  
27 received over 240 calls within two months; and

HCR HMS 2010-2423

WHEREAS, Senate Resolution (S.R.) No. 26, S.D. 1, was adopted by the Senate in 2005, requesting DLNR to collaborate with land conservation, hunting, and animal care organizations to review various methodologies for controlling non-native game animals in Hawaii's forest areas; and

WHEREAS, House Concurrent Resolution (H.C.R.) No. 98, S.D. 1, was adopted in 2006, requesting DLNR to prepare a plan to reduce the statewide feral pig population; and

WHEREAS, in response to H.C.R. No. 98, S.D. 1, 2006, DLNR reported that DOFAW removed approximately 550 nuisance pigs on Oahu in fiscal year 2006, in response to landowner reports and:

- (1) Provides direct assistance to individuals affected by feral pigs by loaning traps, trapping pigs for release in game management areas, or trapping pigs for dispatch by interested hunters, where appropriate;
- (2) Provides information to assist in the removal of pigs, such as by issuing a wildlife damage control permit, and contact information for individuals that will conduct removal work; and
- (3) Provides information on how to obtain a hunting permit;

and

WHEREAS, despite the preparation of the technical report reviewing the methods and approaches for controlling non-native ungulates in Hawaii in response to S.R. No. 26, S.D. 1, 2005, and recommendations to reduce the statewide feral pig population in response to H.C.R. No. 98, S.D. 1, 2006, the feral pig population and the problems associated with the feral pig population continue; and

WHEREAS, feral pig invasions continue to jeopardize the health, safety, and economic well-being of our communities; and

WHEREAS, this problem has forced residents faced with this issue to take the situation into their own hands by entrapping the animals and employing firearms to protect their property from the threat posed by the feral pigs, which raises public safety concerns; and

WHEREAS, DLNR's plan to reduce the statewide feral pig population prepared in response to H.C.R. No. 98, S.D. 1, 2006, states that appropriate solutions to problems with nuisance

feral pigs are site specific, depending on whether the land is private or government land, a public hunting area, rural, or residential or urban where public hunting and use of firearms is prohibited; and

WHEREAS, a comprehensive study on the best methods of controlling and reducing the feral pig population specific to each type of site is necessary to address this situation; and

WHEREAS, no study has yet been performed on how to address recognized social and legal barriers to effective feral pig control in Hawaii, including but not limited to the responsibilities and liabilities of private landowners, the potential need for changes to statutes and rules to facilitate control, and resistance to control efforts by interest groups; and

WHEREAS, DLNR's DOFAW is responsible for stewardship of forest, wildlife, and watershed resources, and is in the best position to address the concerns of these landowners who are affected by the rampaging feral pigs; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2010, the Senate concurring, that DLNR, with the cooperation and input of various government agencies and stakeholders, is requested to conduct a comprehensive study on (1) the most effective and efficient methods for the control and reduction of the feral pig population statewide, specific to each type of site and (2) comprehensively addressing the social and legal barriers that may impede widespread feral pig control, including but not limited to the responsibilities and liabilities of private landowners, the potential need for changes to statutes and rules to facilitate control, and resistance to control efforts by interest groups; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in gathering input, DLNR is requested to consult with:

- (1) The United States Department of Agriculture;
- (2) Hawaii Department of Agriculture;
- (3) University of Hawaii-Manoa, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources;
- (4) Office of Hawaiian Affairs;

- (5) County agencies;
- (6) Private landowners affected by the feral pig population;
- (7) Hawaii Office of the Attorney General;
- (8) The Hawaiian Humane Society; and
- (9) Pig hunting organizations;

and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DLNR is requested to submit its findings and recommendations, including any necessary legislation, to the Legislature no later than 20 days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2011; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources, Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture, Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Dean of the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the mayor of each county, and the Executive Director of the Hawaiian Humane Society.