



23 E. Kawili St, Hilo, HI 96720 • Phone: (808) 933-3340



OPPOSING HB 1902 RELATING TO HUNTING

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

MARCH 28, 9:15 AM RM 211

The Big Island Invasive Species Committee is a partnership of private citizens and government agencies working to address invasive species issues on the island of Hawaii. Our mission is to prevent, detect, and control the spread of the highest risk invasive species threats to the Big Island environment, economy, and way of life.

BIISC OPPOSES THIS MEASURE, AND OFFERS THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS:

A. The Big Island Invasive Species Committee opposes the proposed pilot project on our island.

1. If there is established a commission, it is already stated in Section 2 that it would advise the Department on game management regularly, and due to the vast acreage of hunting area on the Big Island, it is not necessary to create a pilot program to direct their attention to our island.

2. The counties have no jurisdiction over hunting or natural resource preservation in the state of Hawai'i, and therefore no agency with which the Department could consult on this pilot plan. The Hawaii County Game Management Advisory Commission (GMAC) advises the Mayor, who has no authority to enact game management policies.

3. The commission as described in Section 2 is heavily weighted with hunters and individuals likely to be pro-hunting or unfamiliar with the impacts of non-native ungulates on Hawaii's forest resources. It seems unlikely that this commission would be motivated to balance recreational hunting, legally enjoyed by 11,500 licensed hunters, with watershed protection which is legally enjoyed by nearly 1.4 million residents.

4. Since only 2 of 12 positions are guaranteed to be representatives of the Big Island, this plan is an insult to hunters, residents, and land managers of the Big Island. Consider that large land owners on the Big Island, including the Division of Forestry and Wildlife, Hawaii County, the US Army, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Hawaiian Homelands, Kamehameha Schools, Kapapala Ranch, and Parker Ranch, *each* may manage acreage greater than the total amount of state land on any other island, and that each are bordered by or host public hunting areas, and must navigate an array of state and federal laws when making any land management decision. But hunters from Oahu, Maui, and Kauai are now to decide how game, and therefore land, is managed on their lands and along their borders.

5. For the first time, the Big Island has a *county* game advisory commission, a framework to collect and communicate the opinions of the diverse individuals of the hunting community. The new DOFAW Administrator is a strong, capable leader hailing from the Big Island, who understands the need for real game management and inclusive practices. She has met with the commissioners, filled the state Wildlife Manager position (the position needed to write the game management plan), and requested a serious



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budget for increasing game management and the access and acquisitions program to promote hunting in areas where hunting makes sense.

We ask that you strike Section 3 from this bill, and instead fund DLNR’s budget request for \$750,000, to implement objectives identified by hunters on the island of Hawaii, particularly improved access, and the study and management of game numbers in public hunting areas.

B. BIISC opposes the creation of the proposed state game commission, and specifically its proposed structure, as it has no representation from the agriculture and forest products industry, which are directly harmed by continued tolerance of feral animals in this state, and no representation from an expert in native forest or watershed protection or in human health impacts. It includes a superfluous position for the tourism industry, which declared hunting to be irrelevant in its latest strategic plan. Finally, it includes two members of the department having “experience in sustainable game management principles and practices,” ignoring the well documented fact that the current suite of game species in Hawaii are invasive, proven to be incompatible with sustaining critical watershed in every island ecosystem to which they have been introduced--worldwide.

We ask that this bill be opposed or held. If the committee prefers to keep the state commission, the language regarding the structure and duties of the commission be amended to indicate that their role is informative and advisory, in a manner similar to that of the Aha Moku Council, and to include, at a minimum, representatives with expertise in watershed protection and agriculture to ensure that information flows both ways.

C. BIISC supports the committee’s decision to remove the “no net loss provision” from this bill, and asks that this provision not be allowed to return in any conference committee negotiations. A significant decline in the number of hunters in this generation (39%) is projected by sportsmen’s lobbies. This decline in recreational hunting may result in increased feral ungulate pressure on farms, ranches, and native forest over the next decades. Over the same time period, changing climate and native species recovery plans require that native habitat be restored and forests be protected for long term preservation of biodiversity and water supply to a growing population. Removing under-utilized hunting areas, and increasing hunter access to areas with high populations of game mammals, are both management tools that must remain available to DLNR and used at the discretion of its professional wildlife managers.

Thank you for your consideration.



From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: chadmata84@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1902 on Mar 28, 2014 09:20AM
Date: Thursday, March 27, 2014 7:49:12 PM

HB1902

Submitted on: 3/27/2014

Testimony for WAM on Mar 28, 2014 09:20AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
chad mata	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I would love to teach my lil girls how to hunt one day when there older , but can't if there is no public hunting areas!!! Or game !!!

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Cc: dreid@nrahq.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1902 on Mar 28, 2014 09:20AM
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HB1902

Submitted on: 3/27/2014

Testimony for WAM on Mar 28, 2014 09:20AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Daniel Reid	National Rifle Association	Support	No

Comments: The NRA supports the previous versions of HB 1902 that included language protecting Hawaii hunting grounds through “no net loss”. This is critical legislation to help preserve the rich hunting traditions of Hawaii for generations to come. One of the biggest threats to hunting for future generations is the availability of hunting opportunities. Implementing “no net loss” protections ensures those opportunities will remain available.

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Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1902 on Mar 28, 2014 09:20AM
Date: Thursday, March 27, 2014 4:06:43 PM



HB1902

Submitted on: 3/27/2014

Testimony for WAM on Mar 28, 2014 09:20AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dustin Wamar	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I support this bill 100%. We (hunters and gatherers) need a commission to speak and help make decisions at the legislative level. A commission that should be made up of hunters and gatherers itself. Because if you are not out there practicing your traditions and using the land itself, one has no idea of what goes on in the forest simply by a few "scientific" evaluations. These animals that are being called "pest" and "invasive" is nothing short of an insult to the people of Hawaii who treat these same animals with the utmost respect because it puts food on their family's table and provides an environment where traditions are passed down from generation to generation. The animals that are being eradicated are renewable resources. They put food on the table for thousands of families throughout the state of Hawaii. Don't continue to take away and destroy something that we the people of Hawaii hold so valuable. Hunters can work together with dofaw and DLNR and I'm sure everyone would be more than willing to if there is compromise on both ends. Not just the hunters always having to compromise. Please pass this bill and have our culture of Hawaii live on.

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Cc: ilojerry@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1902 on Mar 28, 2014 09:20AM
Date: Thursday, March 27, 2014 5:05:03 PM

HB1902

Submitted on: 3/27/2014

Testimony for WAM on Mar 28, 2014 09:20AM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jerry Ilo	Babooze Bowstrings	Support	No

Comments: Aloha, I am Jerry Ilo. I am a lifetime resident of Hawaii as well as a lifetime Hunter, Fisherman and Gatherer. I am also owner of Babooze Bowstrings a business catering to the Hunting community and a State of Hawaii Hunter Education Program Volunteer Instructor. While I do support this bill in its current state, I am extremely disappointed to see it as well. Please be aware of the original intent of this bill. While the hunting community may not have the dollars that the larger so called "Green" or "Environmental" groups do, that does not make us irrelevant. Form the time mankind was drawing on cave walls, Hunters were the only Environmentalists and Conservationists there were. In many cases we still are. Do not continue to remove Hunting from the equation. I implore you to include the No net loss of hunting lands language in this bill. Mahalo, Jerry Ilo

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
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Cc: josh_gealon@hotmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB1902 on Mar 28, 2014 09:20AM*
Date: Thursday, March 27, 2014 7:19:01 PM

HB1902

Submitted on: 3/27/2014

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Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Josh Gealon	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i
Commenting on H.B. 1902 SD1 Relating to Hunting
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Friday, March 28, 2014, 9:20 AM, Room 211

LATE

We agree with the Senate Water and Land Committee's decision to remove the no-net-loss provisions from the House draft of this bill, and we urge the Senate not to allow these provisions to return to this measure in any conference committee negotiations. We agree that both native and introduced wildlife resources need to be wisely managed both for their benefits and, in some cases, for the risks they pose. We don't believe that a statutory policy seeking to establish a minimum acreage for public hunting areas is necessary, appropriate or even numerically workable, particularly when there are already about 900,000 acres of public hunting areas across the state.

We urge support for DLNR programs to improve hunting access and opportunities including:

- \$750,000 in DLNR's budget to match federal funds for programs and staff that:
 - enhance opportunities on land already open to hunting;
 - improve roads, trails and other access; and
 - create access to other appropriate non-state lands while protecting private landowners from liability.
- General obligation bond funds to help purchase Central O'ahu land that, amongst other things, includes expanded hunting opportunities.
- Hunting rules that ease restrictions on bag limits, hunting days and seasons.
- True science-based game management to improve hunting yields and experience.
- DLNR annual reporting on progress toward improving hunting opportunities statewide.

While the DLNR has a responsibility to provide recreational and subsistence hunting opportunities for the approximately 11,500 licensed hunters, it also has a responsibility to promote other uses and activities on public lands. The Department also has a State Constitutional duty to conserve and protect all natural and cultural resources for the benefit of all of the state's 1,400,000 residents. And, there is no documented evidence by any land management entity in Hawai'i that shows that public hunting alone is effective at managing ungulates in native watershed forests.

Lastly, if the Committee is inclined toward the proposed hunting advisory commission and the Hawai'i island pilot project in Sections 2 and 3 of the bill, we recommend that Section 3 be amended as follows:

SECTION 3. (a) There is established a hunting pilot program on the island of Hawaii. The ~~[program shall be an undertaking of the]~~ hunting advisory commission established pursuant to section 2 of this Act shall advise the department on the implementation of this program. The hunting advisory commission shall:

(1) Recommend to the department of land and natural resources ~~[which public lands on the island of Hawaii shall be designated as public hunting areas]~~ areas suitable for inclusion as public hunting areas while preserving designated watershed areas that are protected in accordance with law; and

(2) ~~[Implement]~~ Advise the department on a game management plan or hunting plan for the island of Hawaii after consultation with the hunting community on the island of Hawaii and the appropriate county agency having jurisdiction over hunting and natural resource preservation.

Attachments:

- Photos before and after fencing and animal control in priority watershed areas.
- Article on the cultural history of pigs in Hawai'i.

Before and After Fencing and Animal Control in Selected Priority Watershed Areas

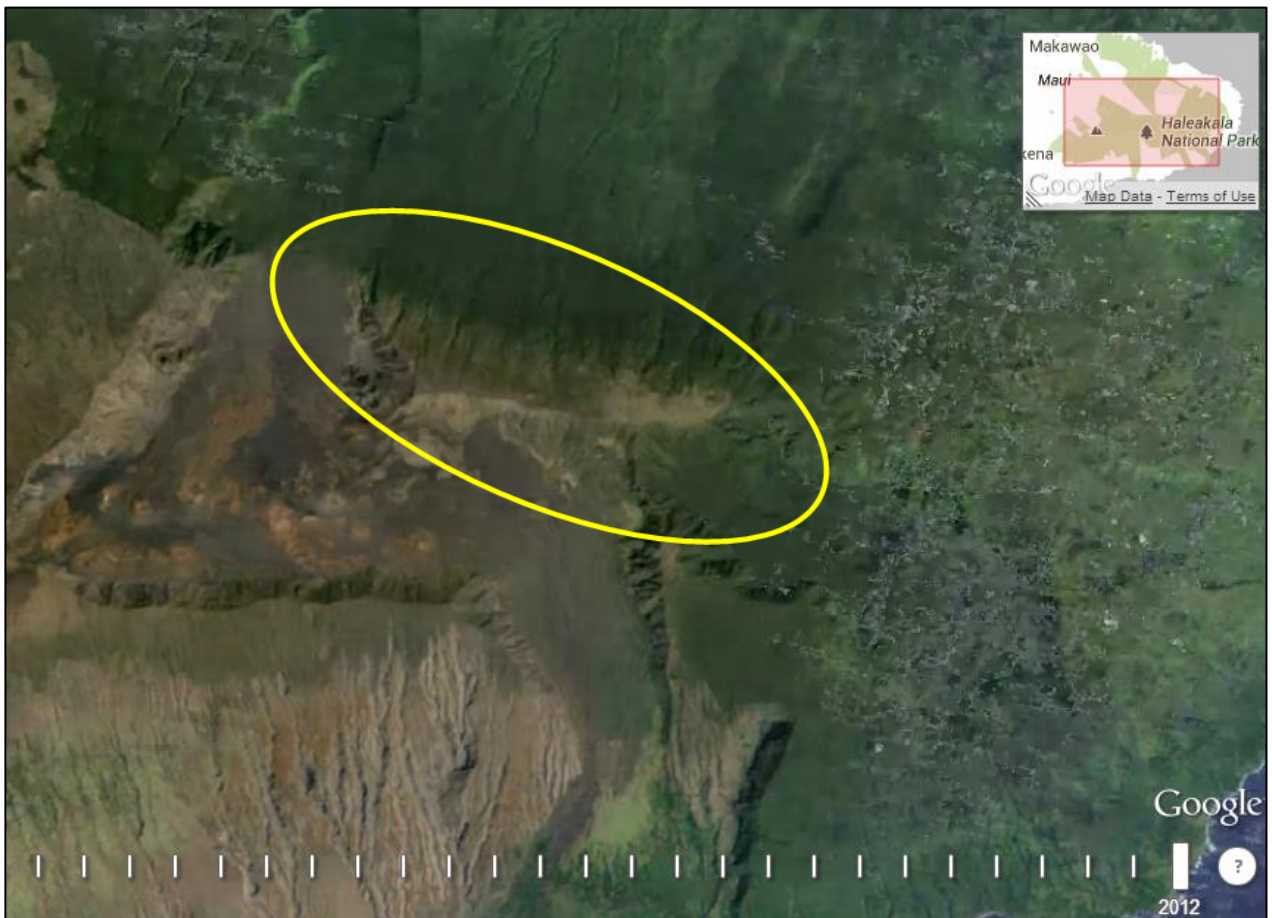
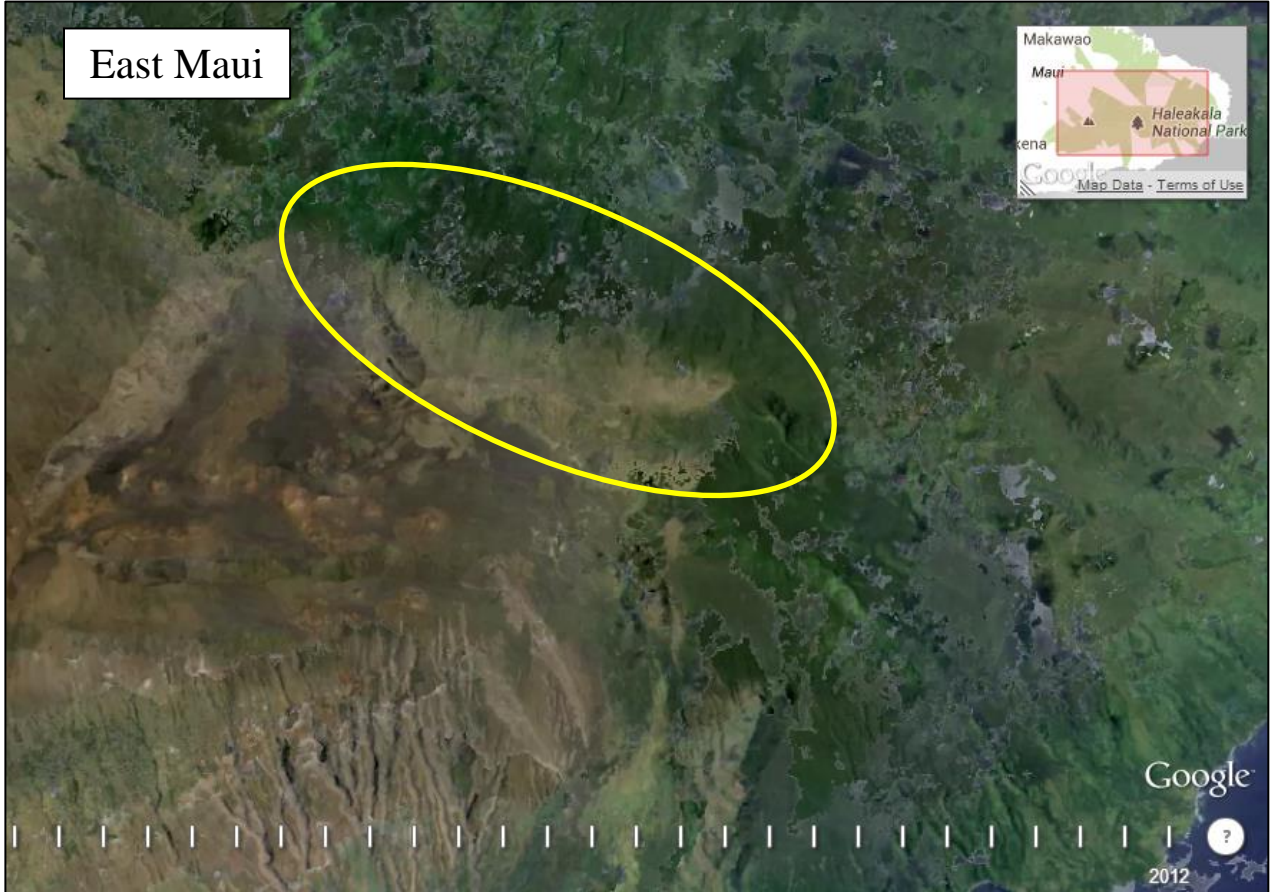






East Maui





Pua‘a: Hawaiian Animal?

Sam ‘Ohukani‘ohi‘a Gon III

Senior Scientist / Cultural Advisor

The Nature Conservancy, Hawai‘i Program

It is certainly well known that feral ungulates -- browsing mammals such as cattle, goats, and pigs -- pose one of the most serious threats to the survival of native plants and animals in Hawai‘i. Yet, isn't the *pua‘a* (pig) a Hawaiian animal? Weren't pigs important in Hawaiian culture, and shouldn't they be allowed to roam free in the islands as a hunting resource? It turns out that these questions are more complex than they seem, and the story of pigs in Hawai‘i is one worth telling.

To begin with, pigs of any sort are not native to Hawai‘i. Imagining a pig (or any large land mammal) swimming 2,000 miles across the Pacific to get here makes it clear why our two native mammals are a seal, and a bat. Indeed, our native vegetation evolved for millions of years without the need to defend against grazing, rooting, or trampling, and had lost defenses such as thorns or poisons.

It remains a popular misconception that pigs are native to Hawaiian forests and that ancient Hawaiians hunted them as a way to get meat. The first pigs were brought to the Hawaiian Islands by Polynesians as early as the fourth century AD.¹ These *pua‘a*, or Polynesian pigs, were much smaller than the feral European swine found today in Hawaiian forests. They were the product of a long and close domesticated relationship with people, and rarely strayed far from the *kauhale* (family compound) where they enjoyed familial status. Taro and sweet potato agriculture in Hawai‘i is incompatible with free-roaming pigs, and the common presence of *pā pua‘a* (pig pens) in a typical house site reflects the controlled nature of pig management in traditional Hawai‘i.

Ungulate introductions to Hawai‘i (Tomich 1986)

- Polynesian pig – ca 400 AD
- European swine – 1778
- Goat – 1778
- Sheep – 1791
- Cattle – 1793
- Horse – 1803
- Donkey – 1825
- Axis deer – 1868
- Mouflon sheep – 1954
- Pronghorn – 1959*
- Mule deer – 1961

* Now extirpated

One key factor during pre-contact times was that native forest then lacked large edible fruit such as guavas and mangos, both introduced after Western contact. Without such fodder, pre-contact pigs stayed close to their human source of shelter and food and did not stray far into surrounding forest. Clearly, *pua‘a* carried strong cultural significance in traditional Hawai‘i. Even the name of the traditional land division, *ahupua‘a*, hearkens to the importance of *pua‘a* as one of the resources offered during the annual Makahiki tributes. *Pua‘a*, however, were but one land resource, produced by *kanaka* (people) and belonging to the *wao kanaka* (realm of people). But there were also the thousands of native plants and animals who represented the *kinolau* (physical forms) of the *‘aumakua* (ancestral deities). These resided in the upland forests, the *wao akua* (realm of the gods) and were held sacred as the *kini akua* (myriad gods). In the traditional Hawaiian experience, *pua‘a*, as human-reared, were denizens of the *wao kanaka* and alien to these sacred forests. There are no pre-contact traditions of hunting pigs for meat (though rat-hunting with arrows was celebrated), and even the exploits of *Kamapua‘a*

describe pursuit of the demigod – not for sport or sustenance – but so that he might be punished for his wrong-doings.

This entire context changed following Cook. Following contact, European swine were introduced and, over time, the Hawaiian pua‘a interbred with and were displaced by these larger foreign animals. In quick succession, goats, sheep, cattle, and other ungulates followed. Introduction of this working stock, the spread of western agriculture, a decline in the native Hawaiian population, and a growing westernization of concepts of private land property contributed to the collapse of traditional Hawaiian land management systems, and with it, the careful control of animals such as pigs.

Over the 1800s, uncontrolled spread of introduced ungulates led to the watershed crisis of the late 19th century, and widespread fencing, feral animal control, and forest restoration were undertaken to try to reverse the damage. King Kalākaua himself led a party into the head of Nu‘uanu Valley in the late 1870s to plant trees. The custom of recreational hunting evolved over the last 200 years as Hawaiians assimilated western traditions dealing with these introduced feral animals.

Today we face the continued destruction of native forest, and risk losing a huge and irreplaceable natural and cultural resource to uncontrolled feral animals. Pua‘a were valuable cultural resources, but in ancient times were kept away from the wao akua, which held much more of value to Hawaiians than a single species. As we strive to strike a balance between protecting native Hawaiian plants and animals and our dwindling native forests and the more recent practice of game hunting, we need to reassert the value that the wao akua represents, and protect it and the kini akua for the descendants of the future.

¹ Tomich, P. Quentin. 1986. *Mammals in Hawai‘i*. Bishop Museum Press. Honolulu, Hawai‘i.

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HB1902

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Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Robin	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Please support HB 1902 with the "no net loss of hunting land" language.

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HB1902

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Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ryder Souza	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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HB1902

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Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tyrel Cuyo	Individual	Support	No

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