

DAVID Y. IGE  
Governor

SHAN S. TSUTSUI  
Lt. Governor



State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
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**SCOTT E. ENRIGHT**  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture  
**PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER**  
Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF SCOTT E. ENRIGHT  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE**

**MARCH 24, 2017  
8:30 A.M.  
CONFERENCE ROOM 312**

**HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 145  
REQUESTING DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND  
NATURAL RESOURCES, UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA COLLEGE OF  
TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES AND UNIVERSITY OF  
HAWAII AT HILO TO FORM A TASK FORCE FOR EVALUATING THE FEASIBILITY  
OF FOREST FARMING PIGS ON THE STATE'S AGRICULTURAL LANDS.**

Chairperson Creagan and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on H.C.R. No. 145. This resolution requests the establishment of a task force of the departments of Agriculture and Land and Natural Resources and the University of Hawaii at Manoa and Hilo to evaluate the feasibility of forest farming pigs on the State's agricultural lands. The Department of Agriculture is supportive of all agriculture. However, the Department offers comments on this measure as this proposal could potentially present several serious concerns.

We are very concerned about the risk for the spread of certain incurable diseases present in the State's feral pigs to the proposed forest farmed pig operations. We would also be concerned about the ground damage caused by the rooting pigs typically produce and the introduction and spread of noxious weeds and plants, if unchecked by other control measures.



Forest farming pig operations must be able to prevent the movement of feral pigs into their operations and the movement of their farmed pigs to prevent the co-mingling with feral pigs in order to prevent infection and spread of diseases common in feral pig populations. Swine brucellosis and pseudorabies are two common diseases present on the major islands in feral pig populations. These diseases are a constant threat to our domestic pig operations, other animals and the public's health. These diseases are not curable and depopulation of infected domestic herds is typically undertaken to rid herds of these diseases causing a tremendous financial and emotional hardship to farmers.

On the east end of Molokai, we also have found that feral pigs are maintaining bovine tuberculosis (BTB) infections and they serve as a reservoir and threat for BTB infections of beef cattle herds in that area. The Department has ongoing control and eradication programs to combat these diseases and would not encourage activities that would increase the risk of infection spreading to our domestic livestock operations and further threatening the public health. If a forest operation as described were proposed, the operator would need to demonstrate their ability to keep the pigs in the production system separate from feral pigs. Otherwise, we would have to quarantine the operation which would prohibit their ability to move and sell their livestock other than to direct slaughter.

Swine brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis are both zoonotic diseases that can cause serious infection in humans. Pseudorabies typically causes 100% mortality in very young pigs and many other species of domestic animals (cattle, horses sheep, dogs, etc.) but not to humans.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our testimony.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF  
HAWAII



SUZANNE D. CASE  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

KEKOA KALUHIWA  
FIRST DEPUTY

JEFFREY T. PEARSON, P.E.  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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Testimony of  
SUZANNE D. CASE  
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on  
AGRICULTURE

Wednesday, March 24, 2017  
8:30 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 312

In consideration of  
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 145  
REQUESTING DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND  
NATURAL RESOURCES, UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA COLLEGE OF  
TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES AND UNIVERSITY OF  
HAWAII AT HILO TO FORM A TASK FORCE FOR EVALUATING THE  
FEASIBILITY OF FOREST FARMING PIGS ON THE STATE'S AGRICULTURE  
LANDS

House Concurrent Resolution 145 proposes to establish a task force for evaluating the feasibility of forest farming pigs on the state's agriculture lands. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) offers the following comments.**

The incorporation of trees into agricultural systems provides many benefits. Agroforestry systems enable producers to diversify their operation; provide soil protection, fertility, and ameliorated microclimatic conditions; enhance nutrient cycling; and reduce pests and diseases by integrating trees and shrubs into agricultural practices. The public also benefits from agroforestry systems through increasing tree canopy, reducing soil erosion on our coral reefs, improving watershed health, sequestering carbon, and providing for a diversity of locally produced food resources.

The Department notes that a variety of non-native ungulates, including feral pigs, have negatively impacted Hawaii's native forest ecosystems and watersheds resulting in increased soil erosion, removal of tree cover, and spreading of invasive species, among other impacts. Forest farming with pigs is not appropriate in our remaining native forests, however, there are opportunities to enhance existing farming operations through development and support of silvopasture designs that incorporate trees, crops, and rotational grazing of animals.

The Department's Division of Forestry and Wildlife provides tree-planting support for the development of agroforestry systems, including the silvopasture design described in this concurrent resolution, through its Forest Stewardship Program. The Department believes that through this existing program as well as complementary programs with the United States Department of Agriculture, the goals for this concurrent resolution can be supported. Landowners participating through these types of government assistance programs ensures that best management practices are utilized when selecting where to plant trees and how to successfully manage their agroforest/silvopasture system.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

Testimony of The Nature Conservancy of Hawai'i  
Commenting on H.C.R. 145 Requesting HDOA, DLNR, UH-CTAHR and UH-Hilo Form a Task  
Force for Evaluating the Feasibility of Forest Farming Pigs on the State's Agriculture Lands  
House Committee on Agriculture  
Friday, March 24, 2017, 8:30AM, Room 312

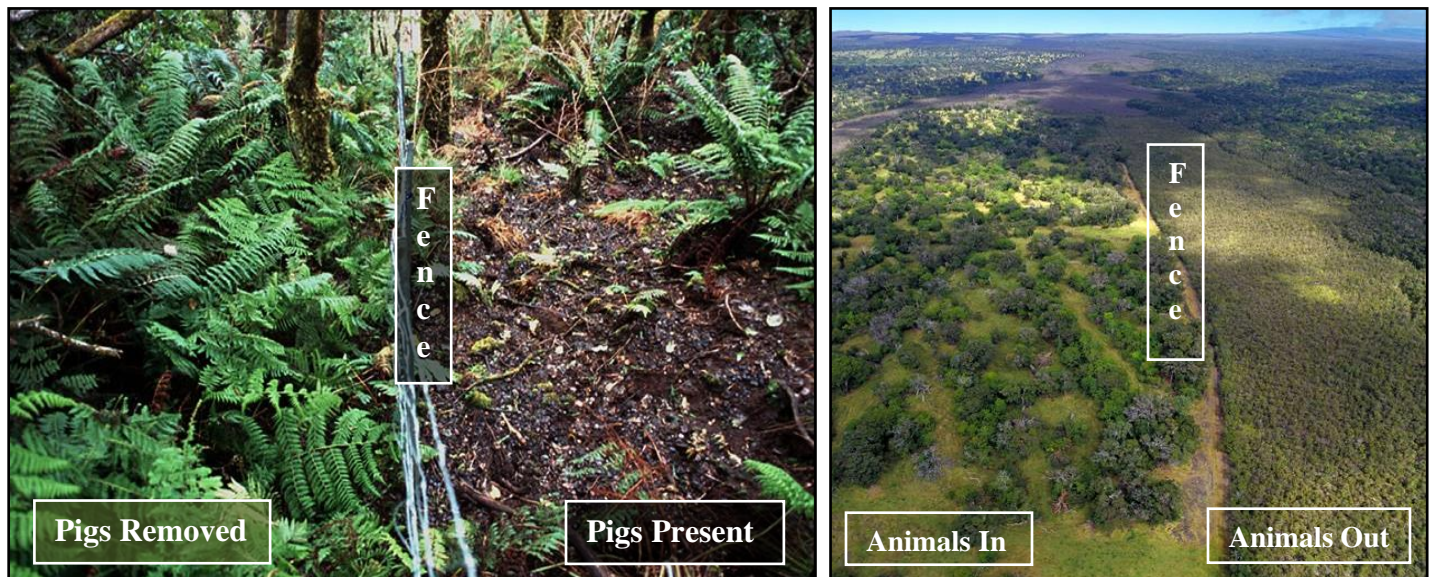
The Nature Conservancy submits the following comments on H.C.R. 145. We have no objection to raising domesticated pigs on appropriate State-owned agricultural lands with degraded forest.

**However, these animals must be contained by fencing and not allowed to roam freely contributing to damaging healthy forested areas.** We do not agree—as seems to be suggested in this resolution—that pigs can help rejuvenate or increase biodiversity in Hawai'i's native forests. Free-roaming pigs are antithetical to native forest restoration in the Hawaiian Islands.

Many animals that were introduced to Hawai'i by humans, including pigs, goats, sheep, deer, cattle, cats, dogs, mongoose, and rats, if left unmanaged cause significant damage to agriculture, private property, native plants and animals, and public health. Wild pigs were introduced from Europe and Asia after 1778. The smaller Polynesian pig brought by the first Hawaiians is gone (except on Ni'ihau), crowded out by these later introductions.

Centuries before the introduction of hooved mammals, Hawai'i's native plants and animals evolved in geographic isolation to form the globally unique ecosystems that make up these islands. In the absence of predator species, native species did not develop defenses such as thorns or other mechanism to deter browsing or rooting animals. Our native forests have no defenses against free-roaming mammals whose feeding, trampling, digging, feces and urine can destroy native species, promote the spread of weeds and disease, and increase runoff and sedimentation in streams and onto coral reefs. **While pigs' rooting may cause native seeds in the soil to germinate, those same pigs will quickly consume those seedlings, eventually exhausting the native seed bank.** Controlling non-native, free roaming animals is an important aspect of good land management, sound agricultural practices, public health protection, and natural resource preservation.

Effective animal control is essential in specific large high priority natural areas for preserving native species and healthy forested watersheds. However, hundreds of thousands of acres can be maintained for managed populations of game and livestock animals. A balance can be achieved between recreational and subsistence uses, livestock production, public health, property protection, and conservation of irreplaceable native ecosystems.



**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 18, 2017 1:11 PM  
**To:** AGRtestimony  
**Cc:** mendezj@hawaii.edu  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HCR145 on Mar 24, 2017 08:30AM\*

**HCR145**

Submitted on: 3/18/2017

Testimony for AGR on Mar 24, 2017 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Javier Mendez-Alvarez	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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James B. Friday  
1416 Kilikina St.  
Hilo, HI 96720  
james.b.friday@gmail.com  
March 22, 2017

Dear Representative Creagan and Committee on Agriculture,

I am writing to oppose any work promoting forest farmed pigs as outlined in HCR 145.

Feral pigs are enormously destructive to local agriculture. I and many of my neighbors in Hilo have had our gardens dug up and crops destroyed by marauding feral pigs. I cannot see how any scheme to increase numbers of unmanaged pigs on the landscape would not lead to more damage to local farms. Feral pigs are also of course enormously destructive to our native forests. It is completely unclear to me how so-called forest farmed pigs would not get loose in the forest and join the herds of feral pigs wreaking havoc in our native forests.

I am puzzled by the frequent reference to oaks in the resolution. We don't have oaks in Hawaii. I am familiar with the dehesas of Spain. These are oaks widely planted in pastures where swine graze under the oaks. I could imagine such a system set up in macadamia nut orchards, if the orchard owners were content to allow the pigs to graze on the nuts rather than harvesting them. I doubt this would be the case. There are no equivalent nut trees in either our native or our exotic forests. In short, I think "forest farmed pigs" would cause large amounts of damage for very little benefit. I urge you to vote against the resolution.

Sincerely,

J. B. Friday



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Agriculture  
March 24, 2017 at 8:30 a.m.

By  
Donald O. Straney  
Chancellor, University of Hawai'i at Hilo

HCR 145 – REQUESTING DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES, UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES AND UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT HILO TO FORM A TASK FORCE FOR EVALUATING THE FEASIBILITY OF FOREST FARMING PIGS ON THE STATE'S AGRICULTURE LANDS

Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony for HCR 145. My name is Donald Straney, Chancellor of the University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UH Hilo). I am testifying as a member of the Hawai'i Island community and I support the intent of HCR 145 to establish a task force to evaluate the feasibility of forest farming of pigs on the state's agricultural lands.

Raising pigs stocked on well-managed and appropriately fenced pasture or forested areas are a proven production method that has been used for many years elsewhere in the world. There are a few small farmers already adapting this method in Hawai'i. Pasture- or forest-based pig production can have some economic and sustainability challenges and outcomes can differ over time, however it can work well in the long-term. This production method has fewer waste management problems associated with most confinement feeding operations. The pigs kept on well-fenced pasture are more vigorous, receive more exercise, exhibit more normal pig behavior, and likely experience less boredom and stress. They are considered a niche-market with rich meat flavor similar to wild pig.

Fencing costs and associated maintenance may be a challenge to minimize escapes and possible interactions with the already abundant feral pig populations.

The University of Hawai'i at Hilo has faculty with the expertise needed to contribute to the task force and I urge the Committee on Agriculture to approve this resolution for the future of our state and to ensure a bright future for our farmers.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HCR 145. Aloha.