

DAVID Y. IGE  
Governor

JOSH GREEN  
Lt. Governor



PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA  
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512  
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TESTIMONY OF PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEES ON  
WATER AND LAND AND AGRICULTURE

FEBRUARY 11, 2022  
9:30 A.M.  
VIDEOCONFERENCE

HOUSE BILL NO. 1721  
RELATING TO FERAL ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

Chairpersons Tarnas, Hashem and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 1721 regarding feral animal management. This measure requires the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) and Department of Agriculture (DOA) to collaborate on the development of a feral animal management plan and submit a report of their findings and recommendations to the legislature prior to the regular session of 2023. The DOA appreciates the intent of the measure to manage feral animals and offers the following comments.

The DOA is able to provide agriculture related data, information consultation to DLNR but is challenged with its limited resources for other activities needed to accomplish the goals set forth in this measure.

The activities contemplated by this measure are significantly broader in scope than the respective purviews of DLNR and DOA and requires participation by other state agencies, federal agencies, counties, and private entities. For example, carcass use as a food source with ante and postmortem inspections is complex and involves several agencies.

DOA would like to note that the Hawaii Department of Agriculture relinquished



its state meat inspection program during the economic downturn\_in the mid-1990s and the USDA-Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) was required to take it over. Today the USDA-FSIS provides the meat inspection service statewide in Hawaii. Exotic meat such as venison, is not under routine meat inspection but is under voluntary meat inspection by FSIS that requires different scheduling with FSIS for ante and postmortem inspections.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI  
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM  
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND  
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE**  
P.O. BOX 150  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE  
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND  
MANAGEMENT DIVISION  
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION  
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

**WRITTEN ONLY**  
TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI  
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEES ON WATER & LAND AND AGRICULTURE  
ON  
HOUSE BILL NO. 1721

**February 11, 2022**  
**9:30 a.m.**  
**Room 325 and Videoconference**

RELATING TO FERAL ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

House Bill No. 1721 requires the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) and the Department of Agriculture to collaborate on the development of a feral animal management plan to manage feral animal populations and mitigate their impact on native habitats, indigenous species, agriculture, and communities; appropriates an unspecified amount of general funds for FY 23 to be expended by DLNR for development of the feral animal management plan; and requires a report to the Legislature.

B&F notes that, with respect to the general fund appropriation in this bill, the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act requires that states receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II funds and Governor's Emergency Education Relief II funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and

- Higher education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

Further, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires that states receiving ARP ESSER funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

The U.S. Department of Education has issued rules governing how these maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements are to be administered. B&F will be working with the money committees of the Legislature to ensure that the State of Hawai'i complies with these ESSER MOE requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF  
HAWAII



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

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LAND  
STATE PARKS

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

POST OFFICE BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

Testimony of  
SUZANNE D. CASE  
Chairperson

Before the House Committees on  
WATER & LAND  
and  
AGRICULTURE

Friday, February 11, 2022  
9:30 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325, Via Videoconference

In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 1721  
RELATING TO FERAL ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

House Bill 1721 proposes to require the Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) and Department of Agriculture to collaborate on the development of a feral animal management plan and submit a report of their findings and recommendations to the legislature prior to the regular session of 2023. **The Department supports this measure and offers amendments.**

One of the Department's top priority issues is feral animal management in natural areas and finding ways to expand opportunities to harvest these animals. The Department has extensively researched the issues proposed in the bill's "feral animal management plan" and has already published various plans that address many of the bill's aims. For example, Hawaii's Forest Action Plan (See Hunting Chapter 7), the management plans for individual Department's Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) reserves, and the watershed partnership management plans, which are comprehensive plans including other agencies and private landowners. These plans provide site-specific recommendations for projects that implement the goals of the bill, including reviews of potential funding sources.

One example of a species-specific planning effort is the Maui Axis Deer Group, which consists of agency, political, and community representatives. This group has convened for over twenty years. The group has commissioned population studies and published recommendations on deer management. Despite hunting regulations allowing daily year-round harvest with no bag limit for decades, deer populations have exploded since they were first introduced to Maui in 1959. These results demonstrate that removing restrictions to hunter harvest is not controlling the population

and that a much more aggressive strategy of deer removal is needed to reduce populations. A private company harvests deer from private lands for sale as venison, and DOFAW is seeking hunter access agreements with private landowners and culls deer in un-fenced watershed areas. While these actions help, the deer removed are far fewer than their replacement rate, and the deer population continues to increase and spread to new areas.

Early on, the Maui Axis Deer Group recognized that a long-term protection strategy would require fences to keep deer out of sensitive areas, prioritizing protection for the upper watershed forests. Fence projects that encircle Haleakalā and Mauna Kahalawai (West Maui mountains) named the “Maunalei” projects (as they encircle the mountains like a lei) are being built incrementally with Watershed Initiative CIP funds and grants and are proving effective.

Various management strategies are apparent from the findings of the Maui Axis Deer Group, as well as many other population studies of Hawaii’s feral mammals. The most important is that fencing has proven successful and is the cheapest long-term option for protecting landscapes from feral animals. Hawaii Volcanoes National Park removed goats (at a rate of up to 5,000/year) for a half-century without any effect whatsoever upon the remaining goat population. After building fences, the park eliminated its goat population within a decade.<sup>1</sup>

Another strategy is to increase hunting and harvest opportunities, as hunters are valuable conservation partners. This includes removing certain hunting restrictions, which DOFAW will be proposing after authority for adaptive management was provided by the Legislature via Act 49, Session Laws of Hawaii 2021. DOFAW’s newly released hunter harvest app will provide real-time monitoring of success rates and help inform future hunting regulations. DOFAW is already loosening certain restrictions via issuing permits, for example adding hunting days on Kaua’i for COVID-19 food access. Other recent examples include a collaboration with the National Park Service to salvage goats for the public in Pu’u Hōnua O Hōnaunau, special feral cattle hunts in the Hilo Forest Reserve and a grant that DOFAW was awarded from the United States Department of Agriculture to connect farmers needing pig control with local hunters and develop improved pig trapping methods.

While DOFAW manages approximately a quarter of Hawaii’s land area (over 900,000 acres) as public hunting lands, access to these lands can be a limitation. Oftentimes, these public hunting lands are located *mauka* of privately-owned residential areas. DOFAW needs additional capacity to counter the statewide trend of lands being sold and public access blocked off. The Game Management Advisory Commission (GMAC) recommends priority areas to establish or restore access to land-locked areas, and there are tools available to implement these goals. The Division has negotiated with private landowners to provide public access through private lands, established Cooperative Game Management Areas to create public hunting on private lands, and purchased lands outright to provide hunting areas for the public.

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<sup>1</sup> Hawaii Conservation Alliance. 2005. Controlling Ungulate Populations in Native Ecosystems in Hawaii. <https://www.hawaiiconservation.org/wp-content/uploads/ungulates-1.pdf>. Adapted from Reeser, Donald W., 1993. Establishment of the resources management division, Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. Pages 431-436, Proceedings of Seventh Conference on Research and Resource Management in Parks and on Public Lands, George Wright Society

In the past fifteen years, more than 17,000 acres of new hunting land have been added to DOFAW's managed lands and an additional 28,000 acres are in the process of being added to serve the approximately 11,500 licensed hunters in Hawaii. However, DOFAW is severely limited in the capacity to pursue these opportunities or maintain the roads and trails and legal agreements. For example, the recurring general funds provided to LNR 804 (Forest and Outdoor Recreation) do not fully cover payroll costs and provide only meager operational funds for the program.

Instead of funding for a plan, the Department recommends that funding be provided for the implementation of existing management plans. This includes the following requests in the Executive budget:

- CIP: LNR 407: Add \$4,000,000 for Watershed Protection and Initiatives, Statewide to build long-term fences that protect forests from hooved animals.
- Operating: Add funds for LNR 804 personnel budget shortfall (\$300,000, A), LNR 804 operating funds (\$400,000, A, and other requests of LNR 804 which will assist with hunter access projects such as road and trail maintenance.
- Restore the requested positions in LNR 172, 407, 402, and 804. Many of these positions directly plan and implement hooved animal control and management, improve hunter access, and provide the administrative support for these efforts.

Additionally, a position could be established to pursue opportunities for additional hunting access, provided it does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Supplemental Budget request. This staff would assist the process authorized by Act 49, SLH 2021 for adaptive natural resource management to allow more flexible changes to hunting rules and pursue grant opportunities for land and easement acquisitions. The staff would also help implement the existing plans for improved feral animal management and consult with the GMAC and other hunters to prioritize projects. The Department notes that these projects are ongoing, benefitting the Forest and Outdoor Recreation Program generally and a commitment of recurring funding is necessary to achieve these goals.

The Department recommends the following amendments:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the imbalance of feral animals in the State is wreaking havoc on the environment, agriculture, and communities. As incidents of storms and severe drought increase, so will the impact of feral animals. The populations of wild pigs on Hawaii island, axis deer on Maui, and certain non-native species of birds on Oahu and Kauai are evidence of the growing problem. The legislature further finds that proactive long-term and short-term measures are needed to address the issue.

Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to:

- (1) Require the department of land and natural resources and department of agriculture to collaborate on ~~[the development of a]~~ feral animal management ~~[plan, and submit a report to the legislature of their findings and recommendations]~~; and
- (2) Appropriate funds for this purpose.

SECTION 2. (a) The department of land and natural resources and department of agriculture shall collaborate ~~[to develop a]~~ on feral animal management ~~[plan]~~ projects to manage feral animal populations, mitigate the impacts of feral animals on native habitats and ecosystems, and reduce their disturbance to indigenous species of wildlife and land plants, agriculture, and communities. A secondary goal of the feral animal management ~~[plan]~~ shall be to generate a viable source of food to assist in feeding the State's houseless or hungry, although a species' inappropriateness as a food source shall not alone prevent the species from being targeted~~[in the management plan]~~.

(b) The feral animal management ~~[plan]~~ shall:

~~[(1) Identify the process by which the feral animals are included to be addressed and prioritized in the management plan;]~~

~~[(2) Detail options to manage]~~ (1) Manage the identified feral animal populations and implement species-specific ~~[recommendations]~~ goals, to include:



~~[(A)]~~ ~~A process for determination of sustainable populations;~~

~~[(B)]~~ (A) Best management practices for population management, with ~~recommendations for~~ practices that are appropriate for public and private lands with various land uses;

~~[(C)]~~ (B) Minimization of diseased and starving feral species due to uncontrolled population growth;

~~[(D)]~~ (C) Programs to assist population management of species that threaten agricultural viability;

~~[(E)]~~ (D) A program to encourage the beneficial use of carcasses, including retail and nonprofit options for feeding the houseless and hungry, which shall include:

(i) Authority and capacity for ante- and post-mortem inspections, slaughtering, and processing of the animals; and

(ii) Best management practices for the safe handling of a carcass from the time the animal is caught to the time it is processed;

~~[(F)]~~ (E) Approaches depending on whether the feral animals are on public or private land, including access agreements, legal authorizations, and liability concerns;

~~[-G]~~ (F) Consultation with the office of Hawaiian affairs and the department of Hawaiian home lands when feral animals are on their lands;

~~[-H]~~ (G) Practices to reduce reef sedimentation through feral animal management;

~~[-I]~~ (H) Implement the ~~[Milestones]~~ milestones and timeframes proposed in existing plans for management of targeted species, including plans to adapt management goals as needed to keep populations from rebuilding; and

~~[-J]~~ (I) Partner with ~~[The]~~ the state and county agencies and other collaborators, including federal partners and resources, responsible for each action;

(3) Pursue ~~[Funding]~~ funding mechanisms to support the management ~~[plan]~~, including:

(A) Sources of seed money to develop and initiate programs;

(B) ~~[Plans to create public]~~ Public-private partnerships to reduce reliance on public funds;

(C) Hunting fees and other cost recovery methods to subsidize costs; and

(D) Potential public and private grant funding to facilitate implementation ~~[of the plan]~~, such as

Clean Water Act funding to assist with practices  
to reduce reef sedimentation; and

(4) Any other matters deemed appropriate by the department  
of land and natural resources and department of agriculture.

~~SECTION 3. The department of land and natural resources  
and department of agriculture shall submit a report of their  
findings and recommendations, including any proposed  
legislation, to the legislature no later than twenty days prior  
to the convening of the regular session of 2023.~~

SECTION [4] 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$                    or so  
much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 [~~for~~  
~~the development of the~~] to establish one full-time equivalent  
(1.0 FTE) natural resources management specialist position  
related to feral animal management [plan].

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
land and natural resources for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION [5] 4. This Act shall take effect upon its  
approval; provided that section [4] 3 of this Act shall take  
effect on July 1, 2022.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF  
HAWAII



SUZANNE D. CASE  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
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DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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**Testimony of  
SUZANNE D. CASE  
Chairperson**

**Before the House Committees on  
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and  
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~~[-H]~~ (G) Practices to reduce reef sedimentation through feral animal management;

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(B) ~~[Plans to create public]~~ Public-private partnerships to reduce reliance on public funds;

(C) Hunting fees and other cost recovery methods to subsidize costs; and

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Clean Water Act funding to assist with practices  
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of land and natural resources and department of agriculture.

~~SECTION 3. The department of land and natural resources  
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SECTION [4] 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$                    or so  
much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2022-2023 [~~for~~  
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(1.0 FTE) natural resources management specialist position  
related to feral animal management [plan].

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
land and natural resources for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION [5] 4. This Act shall take effect upon its  
approval; provided that section [4] 3 of this Act shall take  
effect on July 1, 2022.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

**HB-1721**

Submitted on: 2/10/2022 1:48:59 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/11/2022 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Brian Ley	Hawaii county GMAC	Oppose	Yes

Comments:

Brian Ley vice chairman of hawaii county GMAC. We strongly oppose this bill GMAC and the hunting community have been trying to get the DLNR for years to come up with a game management Plan. Our game animals have historical and cultural significance. Hawaii county food sustaniabliity several years ago determined that the big island harvested 400,000 pound of meat annulally. almost all of my meat consumption is wild caught meat, and a lot of people depend on me to supply meat for them. Let's get off the eradication plan and lets concentrate on managing our game animals like they are supposed to be. these animals are also a ecomic asset. hunters from all over come to hunt our game animals look at the boost Lanai gets every year with the axis and Mouflon hunts. So Please tell the DLNR, to come up with a game management plan that will work for everybody

Mahalo for your consideration Brian Ley Vice chair GMAC

**HB-1721**

Submitted on: 2/10/2022 6:07:04 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/11/2022 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Morris Atta	Hawaii Department of Agriculture	Comments	Yes

Comments:

I am available to answer questions

**HB-1721**

Submitted on: 2/11/2022 7:45:42 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/11/2022 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
isaac maeda	Department of Agriculture	Comments	Yes

Comments:

Available for questions

**HB-1721**

Submitted on: 2/10/2022 4:46:30 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/11/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Councilmember Yuki Lei Sugimura	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. This bill was requested from Congressman Kai Kahele for feral animal management, a statewide plan. Thank you!

When shared with Carolyn Auwelo from NRCS. Carolyn suggested an amendment to strengthen this bill:

(a) The department of land and natural resources and department of agriculture shall collaborate to develop a feral animal management plan to manage feral animal populations, mitigate the impacts of feral animals on (native) Hawaii’s terrestrial and marine habitats and ecosystems, ~~Delete: (and reduce their disturbance to indigenous species of wildlife and land plants,)~~ agriculture, and communities. A secondary goal of the feral animal management plan shall be to generate a viable source of food to assist in feeding the State's houseless or hungry, although a species' inappropriateness as a food source shall not alone prevent the species from being targeted in the management plan.

Reason: The language as is focuses the issue on native habitats when in fact it is mostly non-native habitats and the functional ecology of those lands that are most in jeopardy. This could create an easily avoidable loophole.



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759  
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February 11, 2022

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

**TESTIMONY ON HB 1721**  
RELATING TO FERAL ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference  
9:30 AM

Aloha Chairs Tarnas and Hashem, Vice-Chairs Branco and Perruso, and Members of the Committees:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

**The Hawaii Farm Bureau supports HB 1721**, which requires the DLNR and HDOA to collaborate on the development of a feral animal management plan and submit a report of their findings and recommendations to the legislature prior to the regular session of 2023

Across the State, various invasive species are creating havoc in agriculture as well as the ecosystems in which they exist. Maui County's axis deer population is a good example of nature getting out of control with populations exploding due to abundant forage following rainfall events. They continue to destroy crops and pasture lands by devouring any living vegetation as they continue to spread. Feral pigs damage crops by consuming them or by their rooting and trampling of crops. They will eat almost any crop. Feral pigs damage pasture grasses, killing desired plant species and often encouraging the growth of undesired weed species. They can also devastate orchards by consuming fruit, citrus, and nuts and their rooting can severely damage, or even kill saplings, shrubs, and vines directly or by facilitating the spread of soil-based fungal diseases. Feral pigs can also break irrigation lines, rip or tear nets, drying racks, and other agricultural structures and equipment.

These and other feral populations can pose a danger, especially as populations grow and their health is put into jeopardy due to inadequate food. Diseases that they normally

tolerate will become serious debilitating illnesses that could put our domestic livestock industry in jeopardy. Such fears are not unreasonable, as incidences such as the bovine tuberculosis spread from feral pigs have been documented in Molokai.

Hawaii's farmers and ranchers are working to provide Hawaii with an increased level of self-sufficiency, but will not be able to do so if their products are consumed or damaged by feral animals. Axis Deer, feral pigs, rose-ringed parakeets, and other invasive species can cause major damage to property, agriculture (crops and livestock), Hawaii's native species and ecosystems, and Hawaii's cultural and historic resources. They can also threaten the health of people, wildlife, pets, and other domestic animals. As Hawaii's feral animal populations continue to expand, these damages, costs, and risks will only keep rising

Each of Hawaii's four Counties is being impacted by feral animal damage whether it be, deer in Maui County, pigs on every major island, and various bird species on Oahu and Kauai. Reactive actions by the Counties and the State focus on short-term solutions such as fencing, livestock feed replacement, and other programs. The State needs to develop a long-term management plan, that includes input from stakeholders, to address this ever-growing problem.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this important subject.



Aloha Chair Tarnas, Chair Hashem and Members of the Committees:

MCFB strongly supports HB1721, providing a mechanism to develop sustainable implementation strategies for management of feral animals in Hawaii.

Detrimental actions due to axis deer have reached disaster levels in Maui County. Originally introduced as a gift to the King and then as a hunting alternative by DLNR is now out of control and beyond what private entities address on their own. A comprehensive solution is needed. We need to stop moving the problem and address it directly.

Over population of feral species force starvation and disease in the species. Animals forage outside of their habitats in search for food, creating damage to ecosystems, farms and ranches. Recent aerial photos documented the severe erosion caused by deer on Molokai and its resultant sedimentation of downslope reefs. Farms have experienced severe total damage to crops and ranches experience loss of forage during droughts that already reduce feed supplies. Too often focus on the problem disappears when rains come and the animals return to the wild. Yet this represents an inevitable disaster for agriculture as populations increase to cause further damage and dry weather returns.

Maui County experienced historically severe storms in the last few months and formerly dry fields have turned green. We know the deer is increasing. The wet period has been short lived and the County again faces a drought according to the weather service. This means the deer will come back and damage will resume.

Federal, state, county, NGOs, agriculture, hunters and the community need to come together to form a regional plan to address the problem. HB1721 provides action steps to address the problem. It includes provisions to identify capacity to address diseased animals as well as needs to encourage the development of creative uses of the feral species to feed the homeless and hungry along with developing entrepreneurial enterprises.

MCFB looks forward to being part of the process to develop a workable plan. Your strong support in passing this measure supporting a proactive implementation plan along with action is appreciated.

If there are any questions, please contact Warren Watanabe at (808)281-9718.

Thank you.



COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND  
Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair  
Rep. Patrick Pihana Branco, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Chair  
Rep. Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair

**HB1721**

Relating to Feral Animal Management

Friday, February 11, 2022, 9:30 AM  
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Chairs Tarnas and Hashem, Vice Chairs Branco and Perruso, and Members of the Committees,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the five county level Cattlemen's Associations. Our member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of over 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports HB1721** to require the department of land and natural resources and department of agriculture to collaborate on the development of a feral animal management plan. Unmanaged ungulates are detrimental to the goals of conservation and agriculture alike. A concerted effort is needed for the State to assess the issue and take action. While ranchers have been addressing unmanaged ungulates using traps, managed hunting, and fences, a statewide plan is needed to coordinate the removal of feral animals. Feral animals denude the land, cause economic hardship for agricultural entities, and disrupt sound grazing plans which are meant to improve soil health.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Nicole Galase  
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council  
Managing Director





Email: [communications@ulupono.com](mailto:communications@ulupono.com)

HOUSE COMMITTEES ON WATER & LAND AND AGRICULTURE  
Friday, February 11, 2022 — 9:30 a.m.

**Ulupono Initiative supports HB 1721, Relating to Feral Animal Management.**

Dear Chair Tarnas, Chair Hashem, and Members of the Committees:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food; renewable energy and clean transportation; and better management of freshwater and waste.

**Ulupono supports HB 1721**, which requires the Department of Land and Natural Resources and Department of Agriculture to collaborate on the development of a feral animal management plan and submit a report of their findings and recommendations to the legislature prior to the regular session of 2023.

Ulupono supports increased control of feral animals for agriculturalists across the State. Feral ungulates, such as pigs and axis deer, pose one of the biggest, unchecked threats to local agriculture. While there may be solutions such as fencing, feral animals have the ability to infiltrate or traverse fence lines, trample healthy soils, and demolish fresh crops.

At the end of 2021, Ulupono reached out to various partners including federal and state agencies, agricultural organizations, and active local producers to determine which Federal programs are beneficial to local producers and how we can capitalize advocacy for the 2023 Farm Bill. In these conversations, we learned about several producer needs that are not being addressed, mostly due to lack of funding or burdensome eligibility requirements. One of the most mentioned concerns from producers was the ability to obtain resources to effectively control feral ungulates. This bill, specifically the portions of the measure that identify the need to protect agricultural viability, provides help to local farmers and ranchers by establishing a management plan to determine solutions for much needed feral animal control.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata  
Director of Government Affairs

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*

**HB-1721**

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 9:34:31 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/11/2022 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Klayton Kubo	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

I Support with comments. Please amend to include discussions with communities and also hunters if referred to hooved feral animals(food source). Also eradication is wasteful.

**HB-1721**

Submitted on: 2/9/2022 1:08:09 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/11/2022 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Kimeona Kane	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha nui,

Feral animals pose great threats to our delicate natural environments. All feral animals should be treated in the same manner. This includes, pigs, chickens, cats etc. if we are classifying these animals as feral, we should be managing them as feral. We need to act on this issue from all sides simultaneously. Though I feel like this is a delay in action, if it helps to establish a firm approach, I support it.

Mahalo,  
Kimeona Kane

**HB-1721**

Submitted on: 2/9/2022 1:14:10 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/11/2022 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Kristin Mack Almasin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support HB1721 that relates to the creation of a feral animal management plan by the Department of Land and Natural Resources and Department of Agriculture.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
THE THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION OF 2022

**RE: HB 1721**

Dear COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND

Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair

Rep. Patrick Pihana Branco, Vice Chair

Rep. Sonny Ganaden, Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Rep. Sam Satoru Kong, Rep. Dee Morikawa, Rep. Takashi Ohno, Rep. Bob McDermott

Dear COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Chair

Rep. Amy A. Perruso, Vice Chair

Rep. Nicole E. Lowen, Rep. Lisa Marten, Rep. Scot Z. Matayoshi, Rep. Chris Todd, Rep. James Kunane Tokioka, Rep. Lauren Matsumoto

Esteemed Representatives,

Addressing the issue of feral animals in Hawaii and the major impacts they cause is a complex one. Feral animals are a concern of many residents and tourists, involves many groups and organizations and provokes a multitude of opinions and viewpoints.

A thoughtful, collaborative process to develop an effective and widely supported feral animal management plan is much needed. Currently there is no clear responsibility or process for managing feral animals in Hawaii. The wide-ranging harm they are causing is well documented and understood, as well as proven ways to better manage them. It is time this long-standing issue in Hawaii is addressed holistically, thus I fully support the path laid out by HB1721's proposed interdepartmental collaborative effort to develop a feral animal management plan.

Finding a better way to manage feral animals in a pono way with clear understanding and communication of the resources and organizations responsible for managing these populations would be extremely beneficial to our state. This will provide many benefits including enhancing Hawaii's food security, improving the health and prosperity of native ecosystems and native wildlife (both terrestrial and marine), and improving Hawaii's watersheds and agricultural lands. The extremely devastating threat of Rapid Ohia Death will also be beneficially improved by better management of feral animals, as recent scientific studies are finding.

Please help move this much needed bill forward for effective management of feral animals in Hawaii. Funding in future years for implementing this plan will also be required and I hope you continue to support this effort going forward.

Mahalo nui loa for your leadership and support on HB1721.

Mary E. Metcalf  
Kailua Kona, HI

**HB-1721**

Submitted on: 2/10/2022 3:14:24 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/11/2022 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Meredith Miller	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

***I support HB1721. I see the damage the unregulated feral animals are doing all over the Big Island to our native ecosystems, habitat, and watersheds.***

***I believe a joint DOA and DLNR study to address feral animals in Hawaii this year, is a necessity to keep our endemic and endangered birds and monk seals, from further declining in numbers.***

***Thank you for your consideration.***

***Meredith Miller, M.A.***



**HB-1721**

Submitted on: 2/10/2022 6:05:08 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/11/2022 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Jodie R Rosam	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha and thank you for the opportunity to express my **support for HB1721**.

The negative impacts of invasive species on our endemic island flora and fauna is unfortunately exemplary here in Hawai'i Nei. The rapid rise of habitat loss and feral animal inundation is happening right before our eyes, and at the expense of our sensitive native ecosystems. Combined with climate change and altered weather patterns, the risk heightens even more. It is time to take action.

A collaborative effort between DLNR and DOA is a crucial step towards reducing the severity of loss our island ecosystems are experiencing from feral animal pressures. This must be done both timely and efficiently. In addition, the sheer amount of feral animals on our islands is indeed a viable food source for many of our communities.

I humbly urge you to vote in support of HB1721 in an effort to protect our native ecosystems and encourage food security for our communities.

Mahalo for your time,

Jodie Rosam

**HB-1721**

Submitted on: 2/10/2022 12:59:10 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/11/2022 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
nani pogline	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

This bill does not take into consideration, that "feral" refers to our valueable, cultural, and historical wild game resources for local sustainabiliy.

Our game animals have Hawaiian names given them in history for their value. "Feral," and "ungulate," insinuates our local wild resources are no better than rodents. They are a valueable human resource for many, not just the poor and hungry, and may become more valueable in the future if imported food is interrupted.

Compared to imported meat, our wild game have tremendous flavor and organic nutrition to offer. While one neighbor may want to eradicate, another may look to wild game for their meat resource. I am neither poor or homeless, and my freezer is filled with local wild caught meat. I prefere it over imported meat, and believe we all should practice ways to depend more on local resources for sustainability, for food security.

Furthermore, this bill vicariously does not specify the means of extermination. If the use of bait poison is employed, this could present a big health problem for those who harvest meat for consumption. Bait poison could also expose non-target life.

Lastly, this bill does not address the issue of animal cruelty, which no living creature deserves.

**HB-1721**

Submitted on: 2/10/2022 2:08:35 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/11/2022 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Stanley Mendes	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I strongly oppose bill HB1721 we need these animals to be sustainable