

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

MORRIS M. ATTA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
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**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON
AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS**

**MARCH 15, 2023
9:30 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 325**

SENATE BILL NO. 99, SD1

RELATING TO MEAT AND POULTRY INSPECTION

Chairperson Gates and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 99, SD1. The bill requires that: (a) The department of agriculture shall establish, implement, and administer a meat and poultry inspection program; and (b) The department of agriculture shall submit a report of its findings and recommendations relating to activities conducted pursuant to this Act, including any proposed legislation, to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of each regular session. The bill also appropriates money. The Department supports the intent of this bill to provide meat inspection to promote the state's livestock and game industries. The Department's previous meat inspection program was discontinued in the 1990s due to budget cuts and staffing mandated by the reduction in force directives. The USDA-Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) assumed responsibility for those obligations and has been performing meat inspection services statewide in Hawaii since that time. FSIS reports that they are capable of expanding inspection where needed upon request. This includes inspection of poultry.



The department envisions that a state program will supplement the existing federal program rather than replacing it.

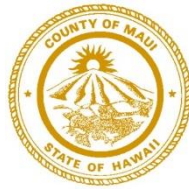
Currently, poultry slaughter facilities processing less than 20,000 birds annually are able to get exempted from bird-by-bird inspection and presence of FSIS Inspectors at the facility.

The associated costs for inspectors, supervisor veterinarian, training, laboratory testing, reporting requirements, and operation must be taken into account. A current evaluation to accurately project anticipated staffing, staff training, costs and operations is needed. The department estimates around one million dollars will be required however, specifics on laboratory testing, travel and office space/renovation costs are not known. It is anticipated it will take at least two years to restore the program provided positions can be filled. Long term financial commitment and support by the state is necessary to restore and operate an effective program because it is not possible to combine state and federal meat inspection in a single facility.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor

KEKUHAUPIO R. AKANA
Acting Managing Director



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 SOUTH HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.mauicounty.gov

March 14, 2023

TO: Honorable Rep. Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair
Honorable Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Agriculture and Food

FROM: Richard T. Bissen, Jr., Mayor
Rogerene K.M. Arce, Director of Agriculture

DATE: March 14, 2023

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT OF SB 99, SD1, RELATING TO MEAT AND POULTRY INSPECTION**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of this important measure. The purpose of this measure is to establish and appropriate moneys for a meat and poultry inspection program within the department of agriculture.

Our administration **SUPPORTS** this measure for the following reasons:

1. Axis deer is an invasive species that poses a continuing threat to Maui County, and despite a current ongoing effort to control the growing deer population, there are an estimate of 60,000 deer roaming Maui County. This measure would support a growing demand for locally grown beef and assist with mitigating the axis deer population in Maui County.
2. Hawaii is dependent and limited by the capacity of the United States Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service to inspect the safety and labeling of locally sourced meat, poultry, and egg products.
3. This measure will significantly help increase and promote economically viable agriculture, increase food production, and support food sustainability in Hawaii.

For the foregoing reasons, we offer our **SUPPORT** of this measure.



March 13, 2023

Representative Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair
Representative Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

Testimony in Support of SB 99, S.D. 1, Relating to Meat and Poultry Inspection (Requires the Department of Agriculture [DOA] to establish, implement, and administer a meat and poultry inspection program; appropriates funds for the establishment, implementation, and administration of the program.)

**Wednesday, March 15, 2023, 9:30 a.m.
State Capitol Conference Room 325 Via Videoconference**

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF) is a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers, and utility companies. LURF's mission is to advocate for reasonable, rational, and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural and cultural resources, and public health and safety.

LURF appreciates the opportunity to express its **support of SB 99, S.D. 1** and for the various agricultural stakeholder groups who defend the goals of viable agricultural operations and the conservation and protection of agriculture in Hawaii.

SB 99, S.D. 1. LURF understands that due to the discontinuance of the State's meat inspection program in the mid-1990s, local meat producers must now comply with inspection requirements of the USDA-Food Safety and Inspection Service (USDA-FSIS) in order to sell meat to retail and wholesale market. USDA-inspected processing facilities, however, are often not accessible within a reasonable distance and/or cost. The purpose of this bill is therefore to establish and appropriate funds for a meat and poultry inspection program within the DOA.

LURF's Position. LURF members include property owners, farmers and ranchers who own, maintain, and engage in agricultural enterprises, and who consider efforts to protect and support agriculture significant to the continued conduct of their operations and to help sustain and preserve farming and ranching businesses into the future.

LURF supports SB 99, S.D. 1 because the bill could provide local meat facilities with an alternative to USDA-FSIS inspection, which would increase processing capacity and diversify processing options, as well as support the ability of local producers to donate locally produced meat to community food programs.

This measure makes a significant effort to advance and facilitate needed meat and poultry production in Hawaii. By recognizing the issues faced by local farmers and ranchers, and by identifying the need to assist the local agriculture and ranching industries and implement measures which help to support the viability and maintenance of agriculture and ranching in the State, this bill significantly helps to promote economically viable agriculture, increased food production, and food self-sufficiency in Hawaii.

For the reasons stated above, LURF **supports SB 99, S.D. 1**, and respectfully urges your favorable consideration of this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding this matter.



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March 15, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

TESTIMONY ON SB 99, SD1
RELATING TO MEAT AND POULTRY INSPECTION

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
9:30 AM

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice-Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the Committee:

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

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports SB 99, SD1, which requires the Department of Agriculture to establish, implement, and administer a meat and poultry inspection program and appropriates funds for the establishment, implementation, and administration of the program.

Federal law requires that meat and poultry sold for retail/wholesale markets be processed at a federally inspected facility. Currently, 27 states have State Meat and Poultry Inspection (MPI) Programs that operate under cooperative inspection agreements with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service (USDA-FSIS). States with MPI programs operate under a cooperative agreement with FSIS and must enforce requirements "at least equal to" those imposed under the Federal Meat Inspection Act and Poultry Products Inspection Act. However, State-inspected meat and poultry products are limited to intrastate commerce only, unless a state opts into an additional cooperative program, the Cooperative Interstate Shipment Program.

Hawai'i previously had its own meat inspection program, but it was discontinued in the mid-1990s due to cuts in budget and staffing, and since then, the USDA-Food Safety Inspection Service assumed full responsibility for these obligations in the State. This means that Hawai'i facilities wishing to sell meat to retail/wholesale markets must be inspected by the USDA.

Hawai'i farmers and ranchers that raise livestock and poultry that sell directly to local consumers, restaurants, grocery stores, and farmers' markets are often challenged

because they do not have USDA-inspected processing facilities available within a practical distance and at an affordable cost. A Hawai'i State Meat and Poultry Inspection Program could provide an alternative to FSIS inspection. It could help increase processing capacity, diversify processing options and reduce processing bottlenecks, allow producers to find a local facility to slaughter and process livestock in remote/rural locations, reduce transportation time and costs, and support producers' ability to donate locally produced meat to food banks and other community feeding programs. State MPIs are often more flexible and responsive to the unique need of producers than USDA-FSIS. Under a cooperative agreement, USDA-FSIS can provide up to 50 percent of Hawai'i's operating funds, as well as training and other assistance.

In order to sell Axis deer meat, the meat must first be inspected by a USDA-FSIS inspector under voluntary USDA inspection. The USDA defines Axis Deer as a non-amenable species or exotic meat which means that the cost of the inspection is not covered by the federal government as opposed to other meats such as beef, pork, sheep, and domesticated birds. A Hawai'i State Meat and Poultry Inspection could pay for or subsidize the inspection cost for Axis Deer.

Reestablishing a Hawai'i meat and poultry inspection program will help promote the state's livestock industries. This will increase the ability to have local inspection of harvest facilities and help drive the growth of local protein production.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.



COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS
Rep. Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair
Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair

SB99 SD1
RELATING TO MEAT AND POULTRY INSPECTION

Wednesday, March 15, 2023, 9:30 AM
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

Chair Gates, Vice Chairs Kahaloa, and Members of the Committees,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four 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 SB99 SD1** which requires the Department of Agriculture to establish, implement, and administer a meat and poultry inspection program. It appropriates funds for the establishment, implementation, and administration of the program.

Access to inspectors to validate safety of harvest and processing of livestock is a necessary part of Hawaii's local meat supply chain. The creation of a state administered meat and poultry inspection could increase access to inspectors that facilities can utilize, which would increase the capacity of meat that could be processed. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council supports the establishment and funding of a meat and poultry inspection program. The state program should be supplemental to the existing federal inspection, allowing for more options for processors to choose from to get the job done.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director





Officers

Kaipo Kekona
State President

Anabella Bruch
Vice-President

Maureen Datta
Secretary

Reba Lopez
Treasurer

Chapter Presidents

Madeline Ross
Kohala, Hawaii'i

Odysseus Yacalis
East Hawaii'i

Puna, Hawaii'i

Andrea Drayer
Ka'u, Hawaii'i

Chantal Chung
Kona, Hawaii'i

Fawn Helekahi-Burns
Hana, Maui

Reba Lopez
Haleakala, Maui

Kaiea Medeiros
Mauna Kahalawai,
Maui

Kaipo Kekona
Lahaina, Maui

Rufina Kaauwai
Molokai

Negus Manna
Lana'i

Brynn Foster
North Shore, O'ahu

Christian Zuckerman
Wai'anae, O'ahu

Ted Radovich
Waimanalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura
Honolulu, O'ahu

Ray Maki
Kauai

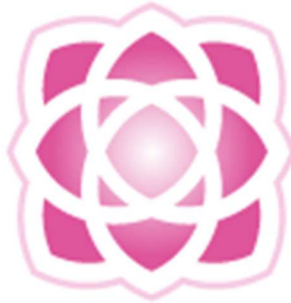
Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee,

The Hawaii Farmers Union United (HFUU) is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFUU supports SB99.**

****HFUU supports SB99**** as a critical mechanism to increase access to safe and affordable meat and poultry inspection.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Kaipo Kekona, President HFUU/HFUF



MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 312
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 2023 AT 9:30 A.M.

To The Honorable Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair
The Honorable Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair
Members of the committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

SUPPORT FOR SB99 SD1 RELATING TO MEAT AND POULTRY INSPECTION

The Maui Chamber of Commerce would like testify in **support for SB99 SD1** which requires the Department of Agriculture to establish, implement, and administer a meat and poultry inspection program and appropriates funds for the establishment, implementation, and administration of the program.

Currently, instead of a state administered meat and poultry inspection program, the State relies on the United States Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service under a cooperative agreement to inspect the safety and labeling of meat, poultry, and egg products produced in the State. Other states have their own state-run meat and poultry inspection programs, and Hawaii would benefit to have its own program.

This bill will also be beneficial to our local meat producers and value-added manufacturers and is a huge step in allowing the processing of Axis deer meat for sale and can increase the number of deer that are taken. This will be a major tool in controlling the over-population of Axis deer on all islands.

For these reasons, we **support SB99 SD1**.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.

SB-99-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2023 6:02:09 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/15/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Azelski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of SD1. Thank you.