

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
**KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO**  
P. O. Box 3378  
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378  
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony in SUPPORT of H.B. 1427**  
**RELATING TO AVIAN INFLUENZA**

REPRESENTATIVE GREGG TAKAYAMA, CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Wednesday, February 5, 2025, 9:30 am, Room Number: 329

1 **Fiscal Implications:** A proposed budget of approximately \$3,300,000 to \$4,700,000, depending  
2 upon availability of federal funds, will support the Department of Health's monitoring and  
3 respose for avian influenza, both in current state and in the event of a larger outbreak in  
4 animals or humans. This amount is not inclusive of funding for activities to be carried out by  
5 other agencies, but will position the Department of Health for effective collaboration with  
6 other state agencies to respond to avian influenza both in animals and in humans.

7 **Department Position:** The Department of Health ("Department") **supports** this measure  
8 offering comments and proposed amendments.

9 **Department Testimony:** The Disease Outbreak Control Division (DOCD) provides the following  
10 testimony on behalf of the Department of Health in support of the proposed Act which  
11 appropriates funds for preventing, monitoring, and responding to avian influenza in Hawaii. The  
12 recent global health challenges presented by avian influenza underscore the importance of  
13 robust monitoring and surveillance measures to protect Hawaii's public health, industry, unique  
14 wildlife, and our agricultural economy.

15 Avian influenza poses significant risks not only to our bird populations but also to the broader  
16 agricultural and food industries that contribute to the livelihood of many residents. Hawaii is

1 particularly vulnerable to the spread of infectious diseases due to its geographic isolation and  
2 unique ecosystems. While current overall risk to humans is low, the potential for the virus to  
3 mutate and cause more severe disease and/or more widespread human-to-human transmission  
4 is a real and present threat.

5 This Act will ensure that Hawaii has the resources necessary to quickly respond to any  
6 outbreaks, animal or human, and minimize the potential for widespread transmission. The  
7 Department has already taken a One Health Approach (the recognition that the areas of  
8 human, animal and environmental health intersect) to this issue, by convening representatives  
9 from stakeholders in a weekly status call updating partners on surveillance testing, sharing  
10 resources, planning response activities, and discussing scenarios where an enhanced response  
11 is needed. Heightened awareness of biosecurity and occupational health and safety protocols,  
12 along with a robust wastewater and animal surveillance testing program, will protect local  
13 farms, safeguard our food production systems, and reduce the risk of the virus spreading within  
14 Hawaii. Enhanced monitoring for novel influenza variants in humans will enable early  
15 identification and response to cases should they occur in Hawaii, and monitoring of contacts.  
16 Timely investigations of cases and clusters of morbidity and mortality events support early  
17 detection goals. In addition, the educational efforts outlined in this Act are essential to  
18 informing the public about the risks associated with bird flu and the necessary precautions they  
19 can take to stay safe.

20 This Act represents a crucial investment in the health and safety of Hawaii's residents and  
21 agricultural industry. This legislation will enable proactive steps to prevent, monitor, and  
22 respond to avian influenza, ultimately safeguarding our state's economy and public health.

23 **Offered Amendments:** Page 2, Lines 5-9

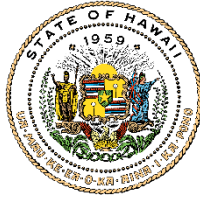
24 ... Enhanced biosecurity will help protect local farms and food production, and increased  
25 testing of birds, humans, and wastewater will help better understand the spread of bird flu in

1 Hawaii and its potential impacts on human health. In addition, education will help inform the  
2 public about bird flu, their risk, and how to stay safe.

3 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT

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FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
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FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

Testimony of  
DAWN N. S. CHANG  
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on  
HEALTH

Wednesday, February 5, 2025  
9:30 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 329 and Via Videoconference

In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 1427  
RELATING TO AVIAN INFLUENZA

House Bill 1427 proposes to allocate funds to the Department of Health and the Department of Agriculture to prevent, monitor, and respond to avian influenza in Hawai'i. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Budget request.**

Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), caused by the H5N1 virus, is a highly contagious disease mainly affecting birds. In November 2024, Hawai'i recorded its first HPAI case in a backyard flock on O'ahu, making it the last state to detect the virus. A migratory bird likely introduced the disease, with the first wild bird case confirmed in a hybrid mallard duck on the North Shore of O'ahu. No additional detections in birds have been reported since these initial cases.

HPAI poses significant risks to poultry and dairy farmers, public health, and Hawai'i's native bird species—many already threatened or endangered. Large-scale die-offs of wild birds, as seen on the mainland, could have serious ecological consequences. The Department supports this measure to ensure necessary funding for monitoring and response efforts that will help mitigate the virus's impact on public health, agriculture, and native wildlife.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
Governor

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
Lt. Governor



**SHARON HURD**  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

**DEAN M. MATSUKAWA**  
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD**  
**CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**

**FEBRUARY 5, 2025**  
**9:30 AM**  
**CONFERENCE ROOM 329**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1427**

**RELATING TO AVIAN INFLUENZA**

Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committee:

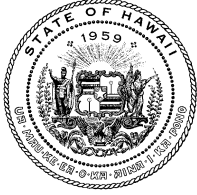
Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 1427. The Hawaii Department of Agriculture (Department) supports HB 1427. The purpose of HB 1427 is to appropriate funds to the Department of Health (DOH) and to the Department of Agriculture to prevent, monitor, and respond to avian influenza in Hawaii.

The Department is collaborating with DOH on avian influenza and additional funds are needed to support ongoing activities. Therefore, the Department requests \$293,000 to be appropriated for the purpose of this act including prevention monitoring and response to avian influenza. The Department notes that two (2) of the largest categories of proposed use of funds is for public outreach through radio and TV and PPE for producers. Those amounts are estimated at \$100,000 and \$150,000 respectively. Enhanced media outreach improves public information and PPE for producers supports increased biosecurity measures on production sites. The remainder



of \$43,000 is targeted for equipment, supplies, sample shipping, contracts and other related expenditures. The department defers to DOH for an appropriation that addresses their needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**STATE HEALTH PLANNING  
AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH - KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII  
KE KIA'AINA O KA MOKU'AINA 'O HAWAII

**KENNETH S. FINK, MD, MGA, MPH**  
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH  
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

**JOHN C. (JACK) LEWIN, M.D.**  
ADMINISTRATOR

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1177 Alakea St., #402, Honolulu, HI 96813 Phone: 587-0788 Fax: 587-0783 [www.shpda.org](http://www.shpda.org)

January 27, 2025

To: House Committee on Health  
Representative Gregg Takayama, Chair  
Representative Sue Keohokapu-Lee Loy, Vice Chair,  
And Honorable Members

From: John C (Jack) Lewin MD, Administrator, SHPDA; and Senior Advisor to Governor Green  
On Healthcare Innovation

Re: HB  
Position: SUPPORT

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Testimony:

SHPDA fully supports this bill appropriates funds to the Department of Health (DOH) and Department of Agriculture (DOA) to prevent, monitor, and respond to avian influenza in Hawai'i.

While we defer to the DOH and the DOA in terms of appropriation requests and to detailed response to this measure, it is critically important for this to pass and be funded to prevent the spread of avian influenza here and moreover, if not controlled, to reduce the risk of the development of potential human-to-human transmissions and a possible new pandemic in the future.

We also note the sluggish response of the federal government on this issue at this time, which underscores the importance of proactive action in Hawaii.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



**HAWAII VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**  
**P.O. Box 61309, Honolulu, Hawaii 96839-1309**

February 2, 2025

Committee on Health  
Representative Gregg Takayama, Chair  
Representative Sue L. Keohokapu-Lee Loy, Vice Chair

RE: HB 1427, Relating to Avian Influenza

Dear Committee on Health,

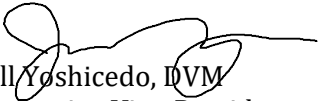
On behalf of the Hawaii Veterinary Medical Association, I would like to express our support of HB 1427 and its appropriation of funds to support the Department of Health and Department of Agriculture to prevent, monitor, and respond to avian influenza in Hawaii.

Highly pathogenic avian influenza has already become endemic in the rest of the United States, but is a recently emerging disease in Hawaii. Its spread throughout the United States has already caused widespread economic losses in poultry and dairy operations. This virus is zoonotic and can spread from animals to people. Furthermore, influenza viruses are highly mutable and have potential to evolve into the next human epidemic.

As health professionals dedicated to the protection of animal health and welfare, promotion of public health, and advancement of medical knowledge, the Hawaii Veterinary Medical Association strongly supports this legislative response to avian influenza in Hawaii. We also encourage the Department of Health to re-establish its public health veterinarian position to more effectively prevent, monitor, and respond to public health threats such as avian influenza. Re-establishing a public health veterinarian position within the state would align us with other state health departments and multiple federal health agencies that utilize public health veterinarians such as the US Department of Health and Human Services, US Department of Agriculture, Army Veterinary Corps, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Please SUPPORT HB 1427 and support Hawaii's preparation and response to avian influenza within the state. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. Please contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

  
Jill Yoshicedo, DVM  
Executive Vice-President  
Hawaii Veterinary Medical Association





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Honolulu, Oahu

Natalie Urminska  
Kauai

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the House Health Committee,

The Hawaii Farmers Union 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 HB1427.**

HB1427 is an essential measure to safeguard Hawaii's agriculture by addressing the threat of avian influenza. Allocating funds to the Department of Health and the Department of Agriculture emphasizes a proactive approach, ensuring that Hawaii is equipped to prevent, monitor, and respond effectively to potential outbreaks. By taking these steps, the state can protect its poultry industry. The resources provided by this bill will enhance our ability to implement biosecurity measures, surveillance programs, and rapid response initiatives, all crucial for mitigating the impact of avian influenza.

The bill also underscores the importance of collaboration between state departments, agricultural stakeholders, and health professionals. This cooperative strategy will foster robust communication networks and facilitate the sharing of critical information, thereby reducing response times and enhancing our ability to act swiftly in the event of an outbreak. In addition to its immediate benefits, HB1427 will contribute to the long-term resilience of Hawaii's agriculture, bolstering the confidence of our farmers and supporting the viability of local farming operations.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin  
Advocacy Director  
Hawaii Farmers Union



1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 |  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
P: 808-533-1292 | e:  
[info@hawaiiifood.com](mailto:info@hawaiiifood.com)

#### **Executive Officers**

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**Jayson Watts**, Mahi Pono, *Secretary/Treasurer*  
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**Joe Carter**, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, *Advisor*  
**Eddie Asato**, Pint Size Hawaii, *Advisor*  
**Gary Okimoto**, Safeway, *Immediate Past Chair*

TO: Committe on Health  
FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION  
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 5. 2025  
TIME: 9:30am

RE: HB1427 Relating to Avian Influenza  
Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, manufacturers and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

HFIA is in support of this measure. As the measure notes enhanced biosecurity will help protect local farms and food production, and increased testing of birds will help better understand the spread of bird flu in Hawaii.

Increasing local food production is a goal we all share. The first step in achieving that goal is protecting the food producers we already have. This measure is an important step to help many of our local agricultural producers continue to provide food for our state.

We urge the Committee to pass this measure and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759  
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921  
e-mail [info@hfbf.org](mailto:info@hfbf.org); [www.hfbf.org](http://www.hfbf.org)

February 5, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

**TESTIMONY ON HB 1427**  
RELATING TO AVIAN INFLUENZA

Conference Room 329 & Videoconference  
9:30 AM

Aloha Chair Takayama, Vice-Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, 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 HB 1427**, which appropriates funds to the Department of Health and the Department of Agriculture to prevent, monitor, and respond to avian influenza in Hawai'i. Given the significant threat that avian influenza poses to Hawai'i's poultry industry, food security, and broader agricultural sector, proactive measures are critical to safeguarding the state's economy and public health.

Avian influenza outbreaks have devastated poultry industries worldwide, leading to the culling of millions of birds, supply chain disruptions, and severe economic losses for farmers. Hawai'i's poultry farms, egg producers, and backyard flocks are vulnerable to the disease, which can spread rapidly and result in severe production declines. Any outbreak in Hawai'i could lead to shortages of locally produced eggs, increased reliance on imported products, and higher prices for consumers.

Beyond poultry production, the spread of avian influenza could have far-reaching effects on Hawai'i's agricultural industry. The disease could impact feed suppliers, processing facilities, and other agricultural operations that rely on poultry production. Additionally, if an outbreak were to occur, strict quarantine measures and trade restrictions could disrupt the movement of agricultural goods, harming farmers and ranchers across the state.

Avian influenza also presents serious public health concerns. While transmission to humans is rare, highly pathogenic strains have the potential to cross species barriers, posing risks to farm workers, veterinarians, and those in close contact with infected birds. Early detection and containment efforts are essential to prevent any potential public

health crisis. The World Health Organization and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention emphasize the importance of monitoring avian influenza strains for potential mutations that could lead to human-to-human transmission. Strengthening surveillance and biosecurity measures will help protect both animal and human health in Hawai'i.

Funding for prevention, monitoring, and response efforts will help minimize the risk of an outbreak and ensure rapid containment if avian influenza is detected.

We urge the committee to advance HB 1427 to protect Hawai'i's poultry industry, maintain food security, safeguard public health, and preserve the state's agricultural economy from the devastating effects of avian influenza.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.**

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH  
Rep. Gregg Takayama, Chair  
Rep. Sue L. Keohokapu-Lee Loy, Vice Chair

**HB1427**  
RELATING TO GENERAL EXCISE TAX

Wednesday, February 5, 2025, 9:30 AM  
Conference Room 329 & Videoconference

Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports HB1427** which appropriates funds to the Department of Health and Department of Agriculture to prevent, monitor, and respond to avian influenza in Hawaii.

Avian influenza has the potential to have far reaching impacts – not just on birds, but on other livestock as well as human health. Currently, avian influenza is not impacting beef cattle, but appropriating funds for DOH and DOA to have the resources to prevent and respond to any changes is extremely important. It is critical producers get timely communication on biosecurity measures and updates on the ever changing situations so that we can protect our community's access to local food.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure. 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.

Nicole Galase  
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council  
Managing Director



**HB-1427**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 12:50:32 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/5/2025 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jacqueline Bosman	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments: I oppose HB1427. This bill lacks outlines of how money will be spent and how much will be advocated within the terms of health surrounding Bird Flu which has not become a large issue to our health here in Hawaii.

**HB-1427**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 12:52:10 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/5/2025 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Renee Dieperink	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Comments only:

Please establish an agency that teaches the public on how to stay healthy and create a strong immune system, instead of only working on healthcare (sickness care!) AFTER the fact.

For example, during Covid, did our government do ANYTHING to teach the public about robust immune systems and illness prevention? No, they did not. The only thing they did was telling us to stay indoors, whereas sunshine increases our health, closed the gyms but left liquor stores open, told us to isolate, whereas we feel better when we are amongst family and friends, etc.

**HB-1427**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 10:56:53 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/5/2025 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
kamakani de dely	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

OPPOSE THIS!



**HB-1427**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 10:57:36 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/5/2025 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mallory De Dely	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

OPPOSE THIS!

**HB-1427**

Submitted on: 2/2/2025 10:58:17 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/5/2025 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Susan Dedely	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

OPPOSE THIS!

**HB-1427**

Submitted on: 2/3/2025 9:04:54 AM

Testimony for HLT on 2/5/2025 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michelle K.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

I strongly support allocating additional funds to addressing avian influenza since Hawaii is impacted with the few scares we had from H5 detection among birds as well as the current egg shortage. Let's ensure both DOH and DOA are adequately funded in case of future outbreaks. Thank you for your time and kind consideration.

Mahalo,  
Michelle

**HB-1427**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 9:32:25 PM

Testimony for HLT on 2/5/2025 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lisa Kart	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Waste of resources and culling is not the solution. Bird flu has been around for a long time, with little harm to humans so far, so lets NOT just overreact and always resort to killing.

Legislators please use the \$ and manpower elsewhere, like fighting fetanyl and homelessness. Homeless defacting all over, tweaked out junkies stabbing people

Respectfully request that you do not pass this bill at this time  
Thank you