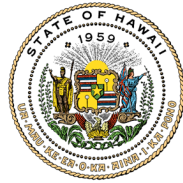


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

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 'ŌIHANA 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 AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

MARCH 14, 2025
1:00 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 224

HOUSE BILL NO. 980, HD1
RELATING TO ANIMALS

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 980, HD 1. HB980, HD1 amends section 142-93.5 by adding feral chickens and clarifying the circumstances under which feral chickens may be killed under certain circumstances. The Hawaii Department of Agriculture (Department) makes the following comments.

The Department appreciates the amendments in this version where methods of dispatching feral chickens are consistent with the AVMA guidelines for euthanasia.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

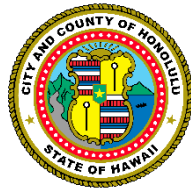


**DEPARTMENT OF CUSTOMER SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA LAWELawe KUPA
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

ADMINISTRATION

925 DILLINGHAM BOULEVARD, SUITE 257 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817
PHONE: (808) 768-3392 • FAX: (808) 768-3750 • WEBSITE: honolulu.gov

RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA



KIMBERLY HASHIRO
DIRECTOR
PO'O

MEGAN JOHNSON
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
HOPE PO'O

March 12, 2025

The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair
The Honorable Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair
and Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture
and Environment
State Capitol, Conference Room 224
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Senate
Committee on Agriculture and Environment,

SUBJECT: H.B. No. 980, H.D. 1 - Relating To Animals
HEARING: Friday, March 14, 2025, 1:00 p.m.

The City and County of Honolulu, Department of Customer Services (CSD), appreciates the opportunity to offer comments to H.B. No. 980, H.D. 1, which would amend Section 142-93.5, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS), to permit the killing of feral chickens on private land with the permission of the landowner.

CSD currently administers contracts with a third-party vendor to mitigate and control nuisance issues created by feral chickens on both private property and on city property on O'ahu. The responsibility for responding to feral chicken nuisance issues varies with the location of the animals and property ownership. Private property owners are responsible for nuisances or violations created by feral chickens or poultry on their properties.

With respect to nuisance issues created by feral chickens on privately-owned property, CSD's vendor offers services such as on-site assessment, trap placement, monitoring, and humane disposal of feral chickens at the request of the property owner. The City and County of Honolulu, subject to the extent of available funding, subsidizes a portion of the cost to private property owners to trap and humanely dispose of feral chickens. Additional services include trap rentals and direct humane chicken disposal.

Service	Total Price	Landowner's Cost	City & County of Honolulu's Cost
Full Service (one week)	\$475.00	\$375.00	\$100.00
Cage Rental (one week)	\$75.00	\$50.00	\$25.00
Feral Chicken Disposal	\$25.00 per chicken	\$10.00 per chicken	\$15.00 per chicken

All services provided pursuant to these contracts are required to comply with all applicable federal, state and city ordinances, guidelines and rules applicable to humane capturing and proper disposal.

Feral animals, particularly chickens, have increasingly become a public nuisance, impacting residential communities, businesses, and agricultural operations across the state. The rapid growth of feral animal populations presents concerns related to noise, sanitation, public health, and environmental sustainability.

CSD supports efforts to mitigate and control the growing feral chicken population on O'ahu in a humane manner.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on H.B. No. 980, H.D. 1.

Sincerely,

Kimberly M. Hashiro
Director

HB-980-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 8:55:40 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/14/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Inga Gibson	Testifying for Pono Advocacy	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Dear Chair Gabbard and Senate AEN Committee members,

Strong opposition to HB980 HD1; relating to animals

I urge the Committee to please defer this misdirected bill which threatens public health, and community and animal safety and welfare, including;

- further eroding our already weak cockfighting law given current law only allows HPD to charge misdemeanor animal cruelty when injured/dead/dying birds are found at/after cockfighting events. This bill decriminalizes our cruelty statutes by allowing any person to kill a bird on their property or with the permission of the property owner.

- this is the absolute worst time, as we face H5N1 avian influenza, to allow people to take matters into their own hands regarding the killing of poultry. Both the CDC and DOH have explicit guidance on detection and biosecurity measures that must be taken if/when bird flu may be suspected, yet this bill would completely remove public health and agriculture agencies, tasked with protecting the public from disease outbreaks, from having any authority over the handling of the birds, including cleaning, disinfection and disposal protocols that are critical to disease control.

- while the bill states birds must be killed using any methods not prohibited by law "including in accordance with AVMA standards," only licensed veterinarians have access and expertise to carry out those methods using controlled medicine. This bill misleads the public that they have the same authority and qualifications as a veterinarian.

- this bill is unenforceable yet would still generate hundreds of reports and complaints as neighbors witness neighbors killing (or attempting to kill) birds on their property. Neither Humane Societies nor HPD have the resources, capacity or funding to ensure compliance with humane methods of killing. HDOA also lacks the capacity to enforce any such law.

People with feral fowl issues can already do the following:

- contact a licensed pest control operator

- humanely live trap the bird and deliver to local humane societies for euthanasia (on Oahu, contract with Sandwich Isle PCO)
- contact the City and County of Honolulu's feral fowl contractor.
- employ exclusionary methods on their property such as fencing, repellent, humane live traps, etc.

Please defer this cruel measure. Further, I would be happy to work with the bill sponsors on any specific concerns related to nuisance feral fowl.

Inga Gibson

Director, Pono Advocacy



Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

Date: March 12, 2025

To: Chair Sen. Mike Gabbard
Vice Chair Sen. Tim Richards
and Members of the Committees on Agriculture and Environment

Submitted By: Stephanie Kendrick, Director of Community Engagement
Hawaiian Humane Society, 808-356-2217

RE: Testimony in opposition to HB 980, HD1: Relating to Animals
Friday, March 14, 2025, 1 p.m., Room 224 & Videoconference

On behalf of the Hawaiian Humane Society, thank you for considering our opposition to House Bill 980, HD1, which amends the law authorizing the killing of mongoose by clarifying the circumstances under which mongoose may be killed and authorizing feral chickens to be killed under certain circumstances.

Hawaiian Humane appreciates the amendments adopted in the HD1 of this bill but we still have concerns regarding both the animal welfare impacts of this legislation and the public health impacts.

Giving property owners permission to dispatch chickens in ways consistent with AVMA guidelines doesn't address the fact that following those guidelines requires training in the method used to avoid causing animals a potentially slow and painful death. Setting aside the methods that require the use of specialized equipment or controlled substances, which property owners are unlikely to have on hand, the remaining options require close contact with animals. This contradicts the bill's concern about biosecurity, as close contact with animals increases the threat of spreading the H5N1 virus.

Standard and acceptable pest control practices are already permissible under Hawaii law (711-1109) and at least one licensed pest control company on Oahu offers such services for feral chicken control (<https://www8.honolulu.gov/csd/feral-chickens/>). Existing law permits residents to trap feral chickens on their property and take them to a licensed pest control company for humane dispatch. This protects the interests of animals and human health by confining the humane dispatch of chickens to entities that have the appropriate training and expertise.



Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

At minimum, we would urge the committee to make the following amendment:

"[§142-93.5] Mongoose; feral chickens; killing allowed. (a) No person shall be prohibited from killing [a]:

(1) A mongoose in any manner not prohibited by law, including by trapping[-]; or

(2) A feral chicken on private land with the express written permission of the landowner in any manner consistent with the American Veterinary Medical Association Guidelines for Euthanasia of Animals that is not prohibited by law, including methods that adhere to standard veterinary guidelines for euthanasia of chickens and are.

However, rather than passing this measure at all, a far more impactful response to avian flu concerns would be to shut down cock fighting operations and the breeding of roosters on agricultural lands.

Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-980-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 5:19:28 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/14/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cathy Goeggel	Testifying for Animal Rights Hawai'i	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB980 HD1 is unenforceable. Who will venture onto private property to protect animals from torture? AVMA has refused to oppose the forced asphyxiation of chickens and pigs, and the veterinarians on their national board ignore the pain of birds and mammals by the livestock industry. The President of the HVMA has publicly supported the earlier language - killing by any means . Shame!

Please table this bill.Hawai'i will have a reputation as a hell for animals if it is passed. Mahalo

HB-980-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 1:28:16 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/14/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kayla Marie	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this measure. The methods of killing chickens outlined in this bill are cruel. Leaving poison out for chickens could cause harm to other animals. I feel that the state should focus on other methods to manage the chicken population that doesn't involve the slaughter of animals.

HB-980-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 1:51:18 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/14/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dr. Joel Fischer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

PLEASE KILL THIS AWFUL BILL, MAKE, DIE DEAD!

I hope anyone supporting this bill realizes you are condemning innocent animals to horrifying deaths. Please do everything in your power to either kill this bill, or add an amendment that mandates consultation with community groups such as ANIMAL RIGHTS-HAWAII that can offer solutions that exclude the slaughter of our animals.

Mahalo, joel

HB-980-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/13/2025 6:50:41 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/14/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryuko Miura	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We don't have a right to kill animals! We are here with them, not to exploit them!

HB-980-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/12/2025 4:01:36 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/14/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anjie Pham	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB980 HD1, if passed, is a perfect example of "government overspending" on non-pertinent issues.

Neither mongoose nor feral chickens are overpopulated or posed a threat to anyone. Mongoose may even help in keeping rat and reptile populations under control on the islands.

Hence HB980 is a ridiculous proposal. Please OPPOSE!

HB-980-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 9:49:40 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/14/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sharon Ziegler-Chong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Feral chickens are harmful to our environment and public health, especially with avian influenza cases rising. And both chickens and mongoose are a nuisance on private property. I strongly support this bill to provide this bill.

Dear Senators:

I write to express support for HB980 Relating to Animals, but as it was originally introduced, not as amended. We are in desperate need of reducing the feral chicken population. The multiple problems feral chickens cause as they take over our yards, parking strips, and streets are obvious and well-known.

For many years, I could control the situation in my yard by taking feral chickens to the Hawaiian Humane Society for humane euthanasia. But the Humane Society stopped accepting feral chickens in 2020, and since then the problem has worsened significantly. Right now, on our little dead end street, there are probably 50-60 feral chickens.

The City and County of Honolulu's contract with Sandwich Isle Pest Solutions, though well-intentioned, is neither convenient nor affordable. I found out by calling the company for more information, that the subsidized fee to dispose of feral chickens is \$10 per bird if you drop off the bird(s) at their site in Waipahu during their business hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. They are not open evenings or weekends. If you trap chickens on your property and call the company to request pick up service, that will cost \$100, plus tax, per bird, and it may be one or two days before they can come out to your property—again, during their business hours. Clearly, the cost alone, apart from the inconvenient drop off location and times, is prohibitive.

While I do not relish the thought of killing feral chickens, and would certainly take no pleasure in it, I feel I am forced to do so, having been left with no other option. So I was initially glad to hear about HB 980. However, at the Feb. 20, 2025, hearing, the head of the Hawaiian Humane Society testified that it would not oppose HB980 if it were amended to say that the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Guidelines for Euthanasia of Animals would be followed. The bill passed that committee with that amendment. I looked up that document online and found it to be a highly technical medical document intended to advise veterinarians, not private property owners.

Animal doctors can inject drugs into feral chickens, as the Guidelines recommend, but what are private homeowners to do? We homeowners need practical guidance on what methods we can use because we can't be administering drugs to feral chickens. If HB980 includes the AVMA Guidelines, the consequence will be that only veterinarians can legally perform humane euthanasia of feral chickens. For the homeowner, that presents a host of problems such as finding veterinarians to provide this service, cost of the procedure, convenient drop off locations and times, etc.

In short, if HB 980 as amended includes the AVMA Guidelines, the resulting law, sadly, will be just as un-helpful as is the Honolulu City and County contract with Sandwich Isle Pest Solutions. Indeed, this amendment actually negates the purpose of the bill, which is to give property owners clear direction on how to dispose of feral chickens on their properties.

Please amend HB980, by removing the AVMA Guidelines and, instead, including practical guidance for what private property owners can do to humanely euthanize feral chickens on their own property.

Thank you.

Faye McCoy
2255 Hualali Pl
Honolulu, HI 96819
fayeamccoy@gmail.com ph 808-845-6998

HB-980-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2025 6:29:06 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/14/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joe Cooper	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Feral chickens are a public health hazard and I support all options to cull them.

HB-980-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/14/2025 7:37:11 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/14/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thomas Haia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Feral chickens have become a persistent problem in our neighborhood. The concern for our pets' well being due to possible exposure to disease from feral chickens is real. This measure is necessary to permit landowners the right to protect their land, livestock and pets. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony supporting HB280 HD1.