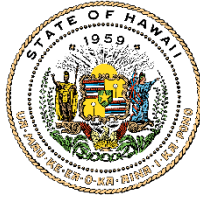


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

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

Testimony of
DAWN N.S. CHANG
Chairperson

Before the Senate Committee on
HEALTH and HUMAN SERVICES

Friday, January 31, 2025
1:34 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 225, and Via Videoconference

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 1230
RELATING TO MEAT DONATION

Senate Bill 1230 proposes to exempt the donation of wild game meat, including axis deer, to a charitable, religious, or nonprofit organization to needy persons from specific laws regarding the inspection and transportation of meat. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources supports this bill and offers the following comments.**

The disposition of game species as regulated by the Department's hunting rules, Hawai'i Administrative Rules Chapters 122 and 123, and the Hawai'i Revised Statutes, only restricts the sale or the offer for sale of any game animal or parts of the carcass of any game animal taken from any public hunting area.

The Department supports allowing licensed public hunters the discretion to donate their quarry to charitable, religious, or nonprofit organizations.

While the Department regulates the taking of game animals, it does not oversee the processing or food safety aspects of meat donation. The Department defers to the Department of Health regarding health and safety requirements for donated wild game meat.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

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

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY

DEAN D. UYENO
ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

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

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

LATE

TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

JANUARY 31, 2025
1:34 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 225

SENATE BILL NO. 1230
RELATING TO MEAT DONATION

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 1230. SB1230 amends Chapter 159, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) by adding a new section "§159- Further exemptions; food donations; wild game". SB1230 proposes to exempt meat from wild game, defined as species not indigenous to the state, from inspection if the meat is exclusively to be donated by a hunter for the use or distribution by a charitable, religious, or nonprofit organization to needy persons pursuant to chapter 145 (HRS).

The Hawaii Department of Agriculture supports this measure and will defer to the Hawaii Department of Health as it relates to food.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



Council Chair
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura

Presiding Officer Pro Tempore
Tasha Kama

Councilmembers
Tom Cook
Gabe Johnson
Tamara Paltin
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez
Shane M. Sinenci
Nohelani U'u-Hodgins



Director of Council Services
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

Deputy Director of Council Services
Richelle K. Kawasaki, Esq.

COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.MauiCounty.us

January 29, 2025

TO: Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senate Committee on Health and Human Service

FROM: Yuki Lei Sugimura
Councilmember

DATE: January 29, 2025

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT FOR SB 1230, RELATING TO MEAT DONATIONNN**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of this important measure. The purpose of this measure is to exempt the donation of wild game meat, including axis deer, to a charitable, religious, or nonprofit organization to needy persons from certain laws regarding the inspection and transportation of meat.

I SUPPORT this measure as it addresses several important issues, particularly for Maui County. Overpopulation of axis deer, and other wild game animals, in Maui County has resulted in severe damage to our watersheds, ecosystems, and agricultural industry. Additionally, food insecurity is a daily reality for many of our residents. By removing barriers and clarifying the process for meat donations, this bill can help to address both the overpopulation of axis deer and food insecurity in our communities.

While not the only solution to address the damage caused by axis deer, hunters do play an important role in controlling the population. These hunters utilize axis deer meat to feed their families and friends, and have long sought to also donate this lean and healthy source of protein to those in need through local food banks and other organizations.

I respectfully request your support in moving this bill forward. Thank you for this opportunity to provide my testimony on this important matter.

For the foregoing reasons, I SUPPORT this measure.

LATE



MAUI
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
VOICE OF BUSINESS

**HEARING BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 225
Friday, January 31, 2025 AT 1:34 P.M.**

To The Honorable Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
The Honorable Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Health and Human Services

SUPPORT SB1230 RELATING TO MEAT DONATION

The Maui Chamber of Commerce **SUPPORTS SB1230** which exempts the donation of wild game meat, including axis deer, to a charitable, religious, or nonprofit organization to needy persons from certain laws regarding the inspection and transportation of meat.

The Chamber would like to point out that axis deer, an invasive species that poses a continuing threat to Hawaii's environment, could provide significant quantities of meat as a protein source for nonprofit food distribution services, such as the State's network of food banks and Feed My Sheep, Inc. of Maui County. However, there is a gap between the hunters and the retailers and nonprofit services because the meat requires processing prior to distribution. For meat donation, other states such as Wisconsin and Michigan offer models that Hawaii can assess to develop processes for plan implementation and program funding, including licensing fees and other funding sources managed by wildlife agencies or nonprofits.

This bill will be one of a few major tools in controlling the over-population of Axis deer on all islands.

For these reasons we **SUPPORT SB1230** and respectfully request its passage.

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-1230

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 12:01:12 PM

Testimony for HHS on 1/31/2025 1:34:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robin Kean	Testifying for Maui Wild Game Management to Feed the Hungry	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of House Bill 1334 & Senate Bill 1230
Relating to Meat Donation

January 29, 2025

To: Chair and Members of the House and Senate Committees on Agriculture

My name is Robin Kean, and I am the founder of Maui Wild Game Management, an organization dedicated to sustainable wildlife population management and ethical hunting practices in Hawaii. Our mission is to promote responsible wildlife conservation while providing communities with access to high-quality, locally sourced meat. Through humane harvesting methods, we work to balance ecological health with food security, ensuring that Hawaii's natural resources are utilized efficiently and ethically.

Additionally, I have had the privilege of serving as a past director on the Board of Directors for the Maui Food Bank, where I worked to expand food access for vulnerable populations. My experience in both wildlife management and food distribution has provided me with a comprehensive understanding of the challenges we face in feeding our communities while maintaining environmental balance.

I am writing today in strong support of House Bill 1334 and Senate Bill 1230, both of which seek to exempt the donation of wild game meat, including axis deer, to charitable, religious, or nonprofit organizations from certain inspection and transportation regulations. These critical pieces of legislation provide a practical and necessary solution to two of Hawaii's most pressing issues: environmental degradation and food insecurity.

Addressing Environmental Challenges

The overpopulation of axis deer has led to devastating ecological damage in Hawaii, including:

- Habitat destruction and deforestation
- Soil erosion and water contamination
- Severe agricultural losses for local farmers

At Maui Wild Game Management, we work with landowners, conservation groups, and local hunters to responsibly harvest axis deer, reducing their negative impact on Hawaii's fragile ecosystems. However, too much of this harvested meat goes to waste due to outdated and unnecessary regulatory barriers. HB 1334 and SB 1230 will allow for responsible game management to benefit both our environment and our communities.

Enhancing Food Security

With Hawaii's high cost of living and reliance on imported food, food insecurity remains a major concern for many residents. High-protein, nutrient-dense food sources like wild game meat are difficult to access for struggling families, yet they exist in abundance on our own islands.

By removing unnecessary barriers to donation, HB 1334 and SB 1230 will help food banks, shelters, and community programs provide fresh, healthy, and locally sourced meat to those in need. Having worked with Maui Food Bank, I have witnessed firsthand the growing demand for nutritious food options. This bill represents a common-sense solution to help address hunger while supporting sustainable land management.

Federal Exemptions for Wild Game Donations

Under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA), wild game meat—including venison—is already exempt from mandatory federal inspection when donated to charitable organizations. Many states have successfully implemented wild game donation programs under these federal exemptions, demonstrating that these donations can be safely handled and distributed.

HB 1334 and SB 1230 would bring Hawaii's policies in line with established federal guidelines, ensuring that much-needed food resources are not discarded due to outdated restrictions.

Conclusion

House Bill 1334 and Senate Bill 1230 present a balanced, sustainable, and community-driven solution to two major issues affecting Hawaii: environmental conservation and food insecurity. These bills allow for the safe, responsible donation of wild game meat, ensuring that our conservation efforts benefit those most in need.

I strongly urge the committee to support and pass both pieces of legislation, helping to create a more sustainable and food-secure future for our islands.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Robin Kean
Founder, Maui Wild Game Management
Past Director, Board of Directors – Maui Food Bank
www.mauiwildgamemanagement.com



LATE

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

January 31, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

TESTIMONY ON SB 1230
RELATING TO MEAT DONATION

Conference Room 225 & Videoconference
1:34 PM

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice-Chair Aquino, 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 1230, which provides an exemption under Chapter 159, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS), to facilitate the donation of wild game meat—such as axis deer—to charitable, religious, and nonprofit organizations serving those in need.

Across the state, invasive species are wreaking havoc on agriculture and ecosystems. Maui County's axis deer population has grown uncontrollably, fueled by abundant forage after rainfall events. These deer destroy crops and pastures, consuming any available vegetation. Similarly, feral pigs pose a serious threat—not only eating crops but also uprooting and trampling farmland, damaging pasture grasses, and promoting the spread of invasive weeds. They devastate orchards by consuming fruit, citrus, and nuts, while their rooting can kill young trees, shrubs, and vines or spread soil-based fungal diseases. Additionally, feral pigs break irrigation lines, tear agricultural nets, and damage other essential farming equipment.

Beyond agricultural destruction, unchecked feral animal populations create serious risks to livestock, public health, and the environment. As their numbers grow and food sources dwindle, malnutrition weakens them, making them more susceptible to disease. This raises concerns about the spread of livestock diseases, such as bovine tuberculosis, which has already been documented in Moloka'i due to feral pig transmission.

Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers are dedicated to increasing local food production and self-sufficiency, but they cannot succeed if feral animals continue to consume or destroy their crops and livestock. These invasive species cause widespread economic, environmental, and public health damage—threatening native ecosystems, cultural and historic resources, and even the safety of people, pets, and wildlife. Without effective solutions, the costs and consequences will only escalate.

HRS §145D-2 (ACT 54, 2023) already establishes liability protections for individuals and entities donating food in good faith, including wild game meat, ensuring such donations can be made without fear of legal repercussions. However, despite these protections, existing meat inspection and transportation requirements under Chapter 159 have remained a significant barrier to the donation and distribution of wild game. HB 1334 resolves this issue by explicitly exempting the processing, transportation, and donation of wild game meat from these inspection requirements, provided the meat is not mixed with federally regulated meat products and is transported only between approved locations.

This bill increases access to high-quality protein sources for food-insecure individuals and families by enabling more wild game donations. Without this exemption, much of the wild game harvested by hunters goes to waste due to legal restrictions. HB 1334 allows this resource to be put to good use in feeding our community. While HRS §145D-2 provides liability protections, HB 1334 further clarifies the legal framework surrounding wild game donations, eliminating uncertainties that may currently discourage hunters and organizations from participating.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau urges support of HB 1334 to help mitigate the impact of invasive species while simultaneously addressing food insecurity.

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



Date: January 31, 2025

Subject: Hawai'i Foodbank in Support of SB 1230 Relating to Meat Donation

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and members of the committee,

On behalf of Hawai'i Foodbank, I support for SB 1230, Relating to Meat Donation. This bill exempts the donation of wild game meat, including axis deer, to a charitable, religious, or nonprofit organization to needy persons from certain laws regarding the inspection and transportation of meat.

As the state's largest hunger-relief organization, Hawai'i Foodbank has been committed to ensuring no one in Hawai'i goes hungry since 1983. We work with over 225 agency partners on O'ahu and Kaua'i to distribute food, and programs like Food 4 Keiki and 'Ohana Produce Plus provide nutritious meals to children and families. In addition to addressing daily needs, our organization mobilizes during emergencies to provide immediate relief and aid long-term recovery efforts.

Food insecurity is a growing crisis in Hawai'i, with nearly 1 in 3 households struggling to access adequate food. One in ten households go a whole day without food some or most months. Hawai'i communities benefit from the generosity of farmers and producers whose donations to Hawai'i Foodbank allow many families access to healthy, local foods. Allowing wild game donations would further expand the availability of healthy protein for people we serve. We support this program as a win-win for food security and invasive species management.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure and for your dedication to supporting our communities through initiatives like SB 1230.

With aloha,

Amy Miller
President and CEO, Hawai'i Foodbank



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

Executive Officers

Maile Miyashiro, C&S Wholesale Grocer, *Chair*
Kit Okimoto, Okimoto Corp., *Vice Chair*
Jayson Watts, Mahi Pono, *Secretary/Treasurer*
Lauren Zirbel, HFIA, *Executive Director*
Paul Kosasa, ABC Stores, *Advisor*
Derek Kurisu, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Toby Taniguchi, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Joe Carter, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, *Advisor*
Eddie Asato, Pint Size Hawaii, *Advisor*
Gary Okimoto, Safeway, *Immediate Past Chair*

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

DATE: January 31. 2025

TIME: 1:34pm

RE: SB1230 Relating to Meat Donation

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. Axis deer are an invasive species and keeping the population under control is necessary in order to protect our agricultural lands and ecosystems. Axis deer can be a plentiful source of affordable locally sourced meat, which can help address food insecurity in our state. Right now there are some unnecessary impediments that prevent axis deer meat from being donated. This measure would help remove those roadblocks and allow for meat donation. We encourage the committee to pass this measure and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.



MAUI ADAPTATION PROJECT

Our Mission is to protect and restore Maui's ecosystems through educating the community, growing native species, managing invasive species, and advocating for sustainable practices and policies that foster long-term resilience.

Testimony in Strong Support of Senate Bill 1230

Relating to Meat Donation

January 30, 2025

To: Chair and Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

My name is Jackie Keefe, and I am writing as an environmental advocate and the Founder & Chair of Maui Adaptation Project. We are a nonprofit that envisions a resilient Maui where ecosystems and communities thrive for generations to come. Our nonprofit began with the idea of planting native species and eradicating invasive species. As the mission developed, I learned more about the Axis Deer crisis in Maui Nui and realized what an important piece of the puzzle it is. This led to the shift from *eradication* to *management*. Eradication isn't the right mentality because Axis Deer are a renewable, sustainable food source. A good friend who runs a nonprofit focused on combatting food security and supporting circular economics introduced me to Robin Kean, who runs Maui Wild Game Management. He shared so much with me about his experience from working in that space for over a decade, and I realized that we needed to work on legislation. Everyone experiences the impacts of "deerosion," as the Maui Food & Technology Center calls it, from ranchers and farmers to our watersheds. Many folks don't realize that the Axis Deer have crossed the Pali – they are found along the slopes of Pu'u Kukui and in the gulches adjacent to Lahainaluna. We know the deer are making our food cost more and it is only a problem that we can solve together. They don't care about property lines and fences only do so much. If you ask any farmer what would help them, their first answer is that something needs to be done about the deer.

Robin and I have been having discussions with County and State officials, legislators, and advocates, and SB1230 is a bill that was born of those discussions. He felt that if we were to pass one bill this session regarding Axis Deer, it should be this one. Senator Hashimoto was a vital part of these conversations, and I am deeply grateful to him for introducing this bill with such urgency.

We need liability protections for hunters that allow for the donation of venison without the additional limitation of a USDA inspector. There is no doubt that we need more meat processing & slaughterhouse capacity, but Federal Law:

- 1) Dictates that Axis Deer are considered "non-amenable," meaning they are not required to be inspected by the USDA (but rather the FDA).
- 2) The Good Samaritan Food Donation Act of 1996 and Food Donation Improvement Act of 2023 both encourage the donation of food and grocery products to nonprofit organizations for distribution to needy individuals or for donation directly to needy individuals.
- 3) Recently updated guidelines by the USDA's FSIS facilitate food donation by promoting the message that food is generally able to be donated unless there is a specific safety concern.

Regardless of these federal regulations, the State of Hawai'i's DOH places extra regulations on donors. Over a decade ago, I believe in 2013 – when Robin was first starting Maui Wild Game Management - he wrote guidelines that he had approved by DOH. He quickly realized that they were limiting the work that nonprofits could do to donate meat, because the cost of bringing a meat inspector on hunts was a burden carried by the organization. He tried to request an update to these guidelines, but DOH said they wouldn't do so without legislation (even though it was not legislation that created the approved guidelines). The



MAUI ADAPTATION PROJECT

Our Mission is to protect and restore Maui's ecosystems through educating the community, growing native species, managing invasive species, and advocating for sustainable practices and policies that foster long-term resilience.

current State guidelines have a grey area as to whether hunters who donate meat are protected from liability. According to Federal Law, venison *does not* need to be inspected by the USDA. This is an additional barrier that has been placed on hunters in Hawai'i and it limits donation capabilities. Furthermore, the veterinarian that he brought with him found no diseases in the inspection of thousands of deer.

When you have "the axis deer conversation," it ultimately always ends up with a discussion of meat for sale. Yes, we *absolutely* need to expand our meat processing capabilities, but that's not what this bill is about. We are strictly talking about meat donation. To address this crisis, we need a kako'o effort. Hunters must be granted the ability to donate meat without fear of liability. This will significantly improve the availability of fresh, local food to our communities – who are currently experiencing some of the worst food insecurity we have ever seen.

Environmental Benefits

The overpopulation of axis deer is causing severe damage to Hawaii's ecosystems, including deforestation, soil erosion, and destruction of agricultural lands. Responsible harvesting of these animals helps restore ecological balance, and allowing donations ensures that this effort also benefits our communities. This is a common-sense solution that supports both conservation and food security. Local venison is in many ways more environmentally friendly than vegetarianism because it is not imported to the island.

Safe and Responsible Meat Donation

Wild game meat donations have been successfully implemented in many other states, aligning with federal exemptions under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA), which does not require inspection for donated venison. SB 1230 follows proven models that allow for safe and regulated donation, ensuring that harvested meat is properly handled and distributed to those who need it most.

Conclusion

House Bill 1334 represents a win-win solution for Hawaii, addressing both environmental and food insecurity challenges at no cost to taxpayers. **I urge the committee to support and pass this legislation to reduce waste, protect our environment, and provide essential food resources to our communities.**

If I have ONE comment on the bill, it's that I believe that it should be "axis deer" rather than "wild game," because axis deer do not carry the same diseases that other ungulates like boar, goats, and sheep and I fear that lumping them into one category could create a reason for DOH to implement extra regulations. That is, after all, what we're looking to avoid with the passage of SB 1230.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jackie Keefe

Lahaina, HI



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair

Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair

SB1230

RELATING TO MEAT DONATION

Friday, January 31, 2025, 1:34: PM

Conference Room 225 & Videoconference

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB1230** which exempts the donation of wild game meat, including axis deer, to a charitable, religious, or nonprofit organization to needy persons from certain laws regarding the inspection and transportation of meat.

Exempting wild game from the full extent of regulation when used for donation to our communities allows us to better feed these communities high quality sources of protein, while also creating an outlet for efforts to remove invasive species such as deer, goat, and pigs from the environment. Unmanaged ungulates damage our ecosystems and cause detriment to farming and ranching operations. The deer population in Maui County needs to be reduced dramatically in order to maintain the health of the land. Encouraging the hunting and donation of wild game will help us to meet both environmental and social needs.

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





Maui Food Bank
Nourishing Lives. Feeding Futures

January 30, 2025

RE: Support for SB 1230, Relating to Meat Donation

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura , Vice Chair Aquino, and members of the committee,

On behalf of the Maui Food Bank, I express our strong support for SB 1230 Relating to Meat Donation which would exempt the donation of wild game meat, including axis deer, to a charitable, religious, or nonprofit organization to needy persons from certain laws regarding the inspection and transportation of meat.

For 30 years, Maui Food Bank has provided daily and emergency assistance to those facing food insecurity in Maui County. Maui Food Bank distributes food to families and individuals on Maui, Molokai and Lanai through direct service programs and through our network of 170 agency partners. Last year, we served an average of over 700,000 people each month, distributing a total of 8.7 million pounds of nutritious food, including 2.3 million pounds of fresh produce.

SB 1230 removes unnecessary barriers that prevent charitable organizations from accepting and distributing wild game meat. By allowing for the donation of responsibly harvested game, we can increase food access for those in need, reducing dependency on imported proteins and strengthening local food security.

In addition to its benefits for food distribution, this bill directly supports environmental conservation efforts. The overpopulation of axis deer in Hawaii has led to significant ecological damage, including soil erosion, destruction of native plants, and agricultural losses. By allowing responsible harvesting and donation of these animals, we turn an environmental challenge into a community benefit, ensuring that excess game does not go to waste.

The Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA) exempts wild game meat, including venison, from mandatory federal inspection when donated to charitable organizations. Many states have successfully implemented similar donation programs, proving that wild game can be safely distributed to food banks without the same regulatory burdens as commercial meats. SB 1230 aligns Hawaii's policies with these federal exemptions, ensuring that valuable food resources are not discarded due to unnecessary bureaucratic restrictions.



Maui Food Bank
Nourishing Lives. Feeding Futures

Senate Bill 1230 presents a unique and necessary opportunity to reduce food waste, fight hunger, and support conservation efforts all at once. I strongly urge the committee to support and pass this bill for the benefit of our environment and those who rely on food assistance programs across the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony,

Lisa H. Paulson
CEO, Maui Food Bank

SB-1230

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 4:42:53 PM

Testimony for HHS on 1/31/2025 1:34:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole B Padilla	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of House Bill 1334 & Senate Bill 1230
Relating to Meat Donation

January 29, 2025

To: Chair and Members of the House and Senate Committees on Agriculture

I am writing as a concerned citizen and supporter of sustainable food practices and environmental conservation to express my strong support for House Bill 1334 and Senate Bill 1230. These bills would allow for the donation of wild game meat, including axis deer, to charitable, religious, or nonprofit organizations by exempting it from certain inspection and transportation regulations.

Addressing Food Insecurity

Hawaii faces significant food insecurity, with many families, seniors, and individuals struggling to access high-quality protein. Wild game meat is a nutritious, lean, and locally sourced food that could provide a valuable protein source for food banks, shelters, and community programs. Instead of letting harvested game go to waste, HB 1334 and SB 1230 ensure that this resource can be used to help feed those in need.

Environmental Benefits

The overpopulation of axis deer is causing severe damage to Hawaii's ecosystems, including:

- Deforestation and destruction of native plant life
- Soil erosion and damage to watersheds
- Devastating agricultural losses for local farmers

Responsible harvesting of these animals helps restore ecological balance, and allowing donations ensures that this effort also benefits our communities. These bills present a common-sense solution that supports both conservation and food security.

Safe and Responsible Meat Donation

Wild game meat donations have been successfully implemented in many other states, aligning with federal exemptions under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA), which does not require inspection for donated venison. HB 1334 and SB 1230 follow proven models that allow for safe and regulated donation, ensuring that harvested meat is properly handled and distributed to those who need it most.

Conclusion

House Bill 1334 and Senate Bill 1230 represent a win-win solution for Hawaii, addressing both environmental and food insecurity challenges at no cost to taxpayers. I urge the committee to support and pass these critical pieces of legislation to reduce waste, protect our environment, and provide essential food resources to our communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]
[Your Contact Information, if desired]

Testimony in Support of House Bill 1334 & Senate Bill 1230
Relating to Meat Donation

January 29, 2025

To: Chair and Members of the House and Senate Committees on Agriculture

I am writing as a concerned citizen and supporter of sustainable food practices and environmental conservation to express my strong support for House Bill 1334 and Senate Bill 1230. These bills would allow for the donation of wild game meat, including axis deer from Maui, to charitable, religious, or nonprofit organizations by exempting it from certain inspection and transportation regulations.

Axis Deer on Maui – A Growing Problem

The overpopulation of axis deer on Maui is a major ecological and agricultural crisis. Without natural predators, axis deer populations have expanded rapidly, causing severe damage to the environment and local farms. The unchecked growth of these herds results in:

- Deforestation and loss of native plant life
- Soil erosion and watershed contamination, impacting fresh water supplies
- Destruction of crops and agricultural lands, leading to financial hardship for local farmers

Hawaii must take immediate action to manage the axis deer population, and HB 1334 and SB 1230 provide a practical solution by allowing responsibly harvested game to be used for food donation rather than wasted.

Addressing Food Insecurity

Hawaii faces significant food insecurity, with many families, seniors, and individuals struggling to access high-quality protein. Axis deer meat is nutritious, lean, and locally sourced, making it an excellent protein source for food banks, shelters, and community programs. Instead of disposing of harvested deer, these bills ensure that this resource can be used to help feed those in need.

Deer Meat is Non-Amenable Under Federal Guidelines

It is important to note that under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA), venison is classified as a non-amenable species. This means that deer meat is not subject to mandatory federal inspection, unlike beef or pork. Many states have successfully implemented wild game donation programs that align with these federal exemptions, ensuring safe handling and distribution without unnecessary regulatory hurdles.

HB 1334 and SB 1230 would bring Hawaii's policies in line with these federal guidelines, removing outdated barriers that prevent harvested axis deer from being donated to communities in need.

Conclusion

House Bill 1334 and Senate Bill 1230 represent a win-win solution for Hawaii by addressing both environmental and food insecurity challenges at no cost to taxpayers. By enabling the responsible donation of axis deer meat, these bills will help protect our ecosystems, support local farmers, and provide essential food resources to those in need.

I urge the committee to support and pass these critical pieces of legislation to reduce waste, protect our environment, and strengthen food security in Hawaii.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

With Gratitude,
Nicole B Padilla

Beneditn33@gmail.com

SB-1230

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 3:07:24 PM

Testimony for HHS on 1/31/2025 1:34:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chase Cavitt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing today in support of SB1230 regarding the donation of meat for charity. I hunt often and usually share my venison with others and would certainly give out meat to my church's food pantry but currently am not allowed to so so with the way the law works now. I would love to be able to support the food pantry and other charities/ non profits if I could. I know many other hunters who would be happy to do the same. I often think about how I wish Hawaii would be more like Texas with meats harvested within the state. If we could legally sell our meat then other citizens would prosper more and be more inclined to help reduce the overpopulated herd sizes we have here on Maui. The large herds eat down the graze for livestock and it is greatly harming the ranchers on Maui. I am a rancher on Maui and I feel that this bill would help encourage others to share with their neighbors. People illegally sell venison every day of the week on Maui. Give them a legal outlet to sell that doesn't involve massive income and hoops to jump through and together we can all prosper and help the land and our natural resources. Please support SB1230.

Mahalo,

Chase Cavitt

SB-1230

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 3:32:33 PM

Testimony for HHS on 1/31/2025 1:34:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
austin gopsis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Anything that allows, the people of Hawaii to access the bounty of our land should be promoted, encouraged and made accessible

SB-1230

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 12:38:53 AM

Testimony for HHS on 1/31/2025 1:34:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bronson Teixeira	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this measure

SB-1230

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 2:54:37 PM

Testimony for HHS on 1/31/2025 1:34:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Peter Niess	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of House Bill 1334 & Senate Bill 1230

Relating to Meat Donation

January 29, 2025

To: Chair and Members of the House and Senate Committees on Agriculture

I am writing as a concerned citizen and supporter of sustainable food practices and environmental conservation to express my strong support for House Bill 1334 and Senate Bill 1230. These bills would allow for the donation of wild game meat, including axis deer from Maui, to charitable, religious, or nonprofit organizations by exempting it from certain inspection and transportation regulations.

Axis Deer on Maui – A Growing Problem

The overpopulation of axis deer on Maui is a major ecological and agricultural crisis. Without natural predators, axis deer populations have expanded rapidly, causing severe damage to the environment and local farms. The unchecked growth of these herds results in:

- Deforestation and loss of native plant life
- Soil erosion and watershed contamination, impacting fresh water supplies
- Destruction of crops and agricultural lands, leading to financial hardship for local farmers

Hawaii must take immediate action to manage the axis deer population, and HB 1334 and SB 1230 provide a practical solution by allowing responsibly harvested game to be used for food donation rather than wasted.

Addressing Food Insecurity

Hawaii faces significant food insecurity, with many families, seniors, and individuals struggling to access high-quality protein. Axis deer meat is nutritious, lean, and locally sourced, making it an excellent protein source for food banks, shelters, and community programs. Instead of disposing of harvested deer, these bills ensure that this resource can be used to help feed those in need.

Deer Meat is Non-Amenable Under Federal Guidelines

It is important to note that under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA), venison is classified as a non-amenable species. This means that deer meat is not subject to mandatory federal inspection, unlike beef or pork. Many states have successfully implemented wild game donation programs that align with these federal exemptions, ensuring safe handling and distribution without unnecessary regulatory hurdles.

HB 1334 and SB 1230 would bring Hawaii's policies in line with these federal guidelines, removing outdated barriers that prevent harvested axis deer from being donated to communities in need.

Conclusion

House Bill 1334 and Senate Bill 1230 represent a win-win solution for Hawaii by addressing both environmental and food insecurity challenges at no cost to taxpayers. By enabling the responsible donation of axis deer meat, these bills will help protect our ecosystems, support local farmers, and provide essential food resources to those in need.

I urge the committee to support and pass these critical pieces of legislation to reduce waste, protect our environment, and strengthen food security in Hawaii.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Peter Niess

SB-1230

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 3:48:39 PM

Testimony for HHS on 1/31/2025 1:34:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Dean	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of House Bill 1334 & Senate Bill 1230
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Sincerely,
Robert Dean