

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
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Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
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SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA
Deputy to the Chairperson

TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

FEBRUARY 20, 2025
2:00 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 325

HOUSE BILL NO. 980
RELATING TO ANIMALS

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 980. HB980 amends section 142-93.5 authorizing the killing of mongoose 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 recommends changing lines 15, 16, and 17 on page 2 From:

15 including but not limited to poisoning the feral
16 chicken in a cage using _____, decapitation, and
17 drowning.

To:

15. providing methods of extermination are consistent with the
16. American Veterinary Medical Association Guidelines for Euthanasia
17. of Animals;



Some methods listed are not consistent with the American Veterinary Medical Association guidelines and are not recommended.

Furthermore, the Department recommends the criminal behaviors listed in lines 18 through 21 are better addressed in Chapter 711, HRS rather than Chapter 142.

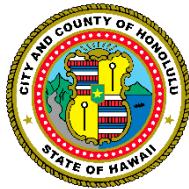
Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

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

ADMINISTRATION

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RICK BLANGIARDI
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MEIA



KIMBERLY HASHIRO
DIRECTOR
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MEGAN JOHNSON
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
HOPE PO'O

February 19, 2025

The Honorable David A. Tarnas, Chair
The Honorable Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair
and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary
and Hawaiian Affairs
State Capitol, Conference Room 325
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the House Committee
on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

SUBJECT: H.B. No. 980 - Relating To Animals
HEARING: Thursday, February 20, 2025, 2:00 p.m.

The City and County of Honolulu, Department of Customer Services (CSD), appreciates the opportunity to offer comments to H.B. No. 980, 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.

Sincerely,

Kimberly M. Hashiro
Director Designate

HB-980

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 4:55:36 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

We strongly oppose HB980. It would give people who hate animals carte blanche to kill "pests" indiscriminately. Please kill this bill. Mahalo

HB-980

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 9:07:03 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--|--|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Hawaii Self Advocacy Advisory Council | Hawaii Self-Advocacy Advisory Council | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

The Hawaii Self-advocacy advisory council supports HB980.



Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

Date: Feb. 19, 2025

To: Chair Rep. David Tarnas
Vice Chair Rep. Mahina Poepoe
and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

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

RE: Testimony in opposition to HB 980: Relating to Animals
Thursday, Feb. 20, 2025, 2 p.m., Room 325 & Videoconference

On behalf of the Hawaiian Humane Society, thank you for considering our opposition to House Bill 980, 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 is the animal law enforcement contractor for the City and County of Honolulu and we know of no instances of property owners being prosecuted for lethal control of feral chickens on their property. 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/>).

This measure is unnecessary and cruel. While the language includes a prohibition on torture, it expressly allows cruel methods such as drowning. That begs the question of what would be considered torture. It also contradicts the bill's concern about biosecurity, which would be compromised by close contact with chickens. Allowing property owners to kill feral chickens by methods involving close contact with the animals could increase potential H1N1 threats.

A far more impactful response to avian flu would be to shut down cock fighting operations and the breeding of roosters on agricultural lands.

Please reject HB 980, which is cruel and lacks a clear purpose. Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-980

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 12:30:43 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly oppose this measure. While feral chickens pose a threat to the environment i belive that killing chickens is inhumane treatment of animals.

HB-980

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 10:05:10 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Jacoby Young | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair and Members of the Committee:

I write in strong opposition to HB 980, which would authorize the killing of feral chickens on private property. This bill represents a cruel and unnecessary approach to managing Hawai'i's feral chicken population.

The methods of killing outlined in this bill are particularly disturbing, including poisoning, decapitation, and drowning. These methods are inhumane and could cause prolonged suffering. While the bill prohibits torture and starvation, the approved methods of killing could still result in significant distress to these animals.

While the bill cites concerns about H5N1 avian influenza, killing feral chickens is not an evidence-based solution to disease control. In fact, disturbing feral chicken populations could potentially spread disease further as surviving birds disperse to new areas. The CDC and World Health Organization recommend biosecurity measures and monitoring, not mass culling, as the primary approach to preventing avian influenza spread in wild bird populations.

The characterization of feral chickens primarily as "nuisances" ignores their cultural significance in Hawai'i. Moa (chickens) have been part of our island ecosystem since Polynesian settlement. While population management may be needed in some areas, this should be done through humane methods such as:

- Egg removal and replacement with dummy eggs
- Habitat modification
- Proper waste management to reduce food sources
- Installation of barriers in problem areas

Representative Takenouchi's support of this cruel legislation shows a concerning lack of compassion for animals and disregard for more humane, effective solutions. We need leaders who will pursue evidence-based, ethical approaches to wildlife management, not quick fixes that cause unnecessary suffering.

I strongly urge the committee to reject HB 980 and instead support development of humane, long-term strategies for managing feral chicken populations.

With grave concern,
Jacoby Young

HB-980

Submitted on: 2/18/2025 10:39:38 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Jill Yoshicedo, DVM | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am in support of addressing the feral chicken overpopulation issue.

HB-980

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 8:31:47 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Animals are here with us, not for us. Please don't kill them.

HB-980

Submitted on: 2/19/2025 1:18:03 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Andrea Quinn | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Honorable Committee Members:

Please oppose HB980. This is a horrificably inhumane bill and has no place in civilized society.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to present my testimony.

Sincerely,

Andrea Quinn

Kihei, Maui

HB-980

Submitted on: 2/20/2025 12:43:39 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| James K. Rzonca | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose this bill