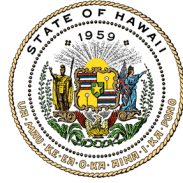


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

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

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
AND HIGHER EDUCATION**

**MARCH 31, 2025
1:02 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 224 & VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 89 / SENATE RESOLUTION 72
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO CONVENE A WORKING
GROUP TO DEVELOP A PLAN TO CREATE AN EDUCATIONAL PATHWAY IN
THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM TO EQUIP
INTERESTED STUDENTS WITH THE NECESSARY ENTRY LEVEL
KNOWLEDGE, SKILL SET, EXPERTISE AND ADVANCEMENT POTENTIAL IN
THE FIELD OF MEAT PROCESSING.**

Chairs Gabbard and Kim, Vice Chairs Richards and Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Concurrent Resolution 89 / Senate Resolution 72 requesting the Department of Agriculture to convene a working group to develop a plan to create an educational pathway in the University of Hawaii Community College system to equip interested students with the necessary entry level knowledge, skill set, expertise and advancement potential in the field of meat processing. The Hawaii Department of Agriculture (Department) supports the intent of the resolution and offers comments.

The Department's intent is to reestablish the meat inspection program, however currently there is no Meat Inspection Agreement with USDA-FSIS. The Department is



in the process of establishing meat inspector positions and re-organizing the Division to incorporate the positions within its structure. The Department will be working concurrently with USDA-FSIS to develop the Meat Inspection Agreement and once the positions have been filled and the program has been stood up, a review by USDA-FSIS will need to be conducted.

The Department would recommend that the University of Hawaii be the lead agency as the primary intent is to create an educational pathway for meat processing as meat processing encompasses a much broader area of which meat inspection is only a portion.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



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March 31, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

TESTIMONY ON SCR 89 / SR 72
RELATING TO BIOSECURITY

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
1:02 PM

Aloha Chairs Gabbard and Kim, Vice-Chairs Richards and Kidani, and Members of the Committees:

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 SCR 89 / SR 72, which calls for the development of an educational pathway in the University of Hawai'i Community College System to prepare students for careers in meat processing.

HFB has long supported efforts to expand local meat processing capacity as a critical component of Hawai'i's food security, invasive species management, and economic diversification. As outlined in our previous testimony on meat inspection and grant programs, our farmers and ranchers face persistent challenges due to limited processing infrastructure, regulatory barriers, and workforce shortages.

Workforce development is key. One of the major constraints facing local meat producers is the lack of trained meat processors. Without a qualified labor force, even expanded facilities will struggle to operate at capacity. SCR 89 / SR 72 offers a forward-thinking approach to this issue by proposing a comprehensive educational pathway that equips students with both technical skills and real-world experience in meat processing.

We especially support the resolution's emphasis on:

- Hands-on training and internships to prepare students for immediate employment;
- Instruction on food safety, carcass evaluation, and regulatory compliance;
- Inclusion of sustainability and responsible resource use in the curriculum;

- Collaboration between industry and educational institutions to ensure workforce readiness.

Building this educational foundation can help Hawai'i grow its local protein supply, reduce reliance on imports, and improve the economic viability of farming and ranching across the islands.

We appreciate the Legislature's recognition of this workforce gap and urge the swift convening of the working group to move this plan forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support.



Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair

Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Senator Donna Mercado Kim, Chair

Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

SCR 89/ SR 72

Monday, March 31, 2025, 1:02 PM
Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

Chairs Gabbard and Mercado, Vice Chairs Kim and Kidani, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SCR 89/SR 72** which requests the Department of Agriculture to convene a working group to develop a plan to create an educational pathway in the University of Hawaii Community College system to equip interested students with the necessary entry knowledge, skill set, expertise, and advancement potential in the field of meat processing.

Increasing the resources to enter the field of meat processing is aligned with the State's goals to increase local food production. A butcher is versed on how to handle, store, and cut, and process meat – all critical factors in getting Hawaii's beef from the pasture to the plate. As the demand for local beef increases, we will need increase capacity at our meat processing facilities. This will also allow us to better meet the demand for the Farm to School program and processing of small animals, notably the invasive axis deer. An educational pathway focused on meat processing will ensure a strong pipeline of talent into the field.

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

SCR-89

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 12:04:43 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/31/2025 1:02:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
B.A. McClintock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill. Mahalo.

SCR-89

Submitted on: 3/29/2025 11:54:44 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/31/2025 1:02:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lu Ann Mahiki Lankford-Faborito	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support as we need more meat processing on Molokai & slaughter houses throughout the state

SCR-89

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 2:39:35 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/31/2025 1:02:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aileen K . F. Yeh	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in subbort of this bill. We need more people who are interested in the industry to be able to get training here in Hawaii. There has been a long time lack of capacity, partly due to lack of trained staff.

SCR-89

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 5:01:47 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/31/2025 1:02:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jimmy Gomes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB72

SCR-89

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 5:10:02 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/31/2025 1:02:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lorie Farrell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support

SCR-89

Submitted on: 3/30/2025 6:22:53 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/31/2025 1:02:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jason Moniz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SR72.

SCR-89

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 6:35:00 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/31/2025 1:02:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keith Unger	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We support SR 72.

SCR-89

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 7:23:27 AM

Testimony for AEN on 3/31/2025 1:02:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Woody Child	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I Strongly Support SR72.