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July 18, 2025

MEMO TO: ADEPT-1(8) File

F R O M: Gabe Johnson, Chair 
Agriculture, Diversification, Environment, and Public
Transportation Committee

SUBJECT: **TRANSMITTAL OF INFORMATIONAL DOCUMENT RELATING TO
AXIS DEER MITIGATION** (ADEPT-1(8))

The attached informational document pertains to Item 1(8) on the
Committee's agenda.

adept:ltr:001(8)afile01:ebm

Attachment

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE OF THE COUNTY OF MAUI TO TAKE FURTHER
MEANINGFUL ACTION TO ADDRESS THE AXIS DEER OVERPOPULATION.

WHEREAS, eating locally-grown food and meats are known to
provide a benefit to the local economy and to our citizens; and

WHEREAS, the people of the State deserve to have access to
the many local foods, including locally-hunted meat, available
on the islands; and

WHEREAS, the overpopulation of axis deer has been a great
detriment to Maui by overgrazing native plants that would
otherwise aid in mitigating erosion and fire and flood effects;
and

WHEREAS, axis deer are a plentiful source of high-quality
delicious protein; and

WHEREAS, other states have successfully implemented
programs that process and distribute locally-hunted meat to
their community, for example Pennsylvania's Hunters Sharing the
Harvest Program, which yearly donates over one hundred thousand
pounds of venison to over five thousand food banks; and

WHEREAS, the existing United States Department of
Agriculture inspection and meat processing requirements severely
limit the financial and practical feasibility of the State's
local hunters to successfully maintain a reasonably low
population of axis deer and to distribute venison to the
community; and

WHEREAS, an increase of United States Department of
Agriculture-certified meat inspectors in the State would lower



1 the cost of inspections for local hunters, provide a benefit to
2 the agricultural industry in the State, and make locally-hunted
3 venison more available and safer for the community to consume;
4 now, therefore,

5
6 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
7 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
8 of 2025, the Senate concurring, that the State Department of
9 Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture of the County of
10 Maui are urged to take further meaningful action to address the
11 axis deer overpopulation, including:

- 12
13 (1) Implementing policies to make United States Department
14 of Agriculture-certified meat inspectors, certified
15 inspections, and certified processing facilities more
16 accessible, capable, and affordable in the State for
17 local hunters to utilize to sell or gift venison; and
18
19 (2) Implementing policies to increase the amount of
20 in-state United States Department of
21 Agriculture-certified meat inspectors for game
22 mammals; and
23

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State Department of
25 Agriculture and Department of Agriculture of the County of Maui
26 are urged to convene a joint task force to oversee the County of
27 Maui program that, in coordination with the United States
28 Department of Agriculture-certified processing facilities, would
29 aim to investigate and develop plans to make affordable the
30 processing of locally-hunted axis deer meat and the distribution
31 of venison to the community; and
32

33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the joint task force is
34 requested to submit a report of the program's accomplishments
35 and barriers to the accomplishment of the program with its
36 findings and recommendations, including any proposed
37 legislation, to the Legislature no later than November 30, 2025;
38 and
39

40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
41 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the United States
42 Secretary of Agriculture, Administrator of the United States



1 Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service,
2 Deputy Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service,
3 Governor, Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture, Chairperson
4 of the Board of Land and Natural Resources, Mayor of the County
5 of Maui, each member of the Maui County Council, and Director of
6 the Department of Agriculture of the County of Maui.

