HR 322 requests the Department of Health, Vector Control Division to examine the status of the mongoose population and the methods being made to eradicate mongooses, to compare the rat population in the state prior to 1883 with the present population, and to report on these matters to the 1986 Hawaii State Legislature. This statement on the resolution does not reflect an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

The destructive nature of the mongoose population especially with respect to native birds is well recognized. The omnivorous food habits of the mongoose have permitted its population to increase even in highly urbanized areas. It is not therefore immediately clear whether the loss of 56,000 acres of cane land has significantly affected the mongoose population as is implied in the resolution.

The request that the rat population of 1883 be compared with the present population seems unlikely to be productive. It would be most surprising if much information exists on the rat population of 1883, or that such information as may exist will be found to have much relevance to the present population. Furthermore, it is our understanding that the rats in the sugarcane fields, are diurnal, they are most active at night than during the day. Mongooses on the other hand, are active during the day. Hence the two species seldom meet. Thus it is somewhat unlikely that a significant relationship will be found between gross rat and mongoose populations. However, it might be possible to establish significant relationships between the mongoose population and the relative populations of different species of rats.

Inasmuch as the requested study may identify changes in the mongoose population or document the existing rat population and areas needing more attention from the vector control division, the general intent of the resolution is appropriate.