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HCR 94
REQUESTING THE NATURAL AREA RESERVES SYSTEM COMMISSION
TO TAKE A STRONG POSITION ON MINIMIZING THE IMPACT OF UNGULATES

Statement for
House Committee on
Planning, Energy, and Environmental Protection
Public Hearing - March 10, 1988

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HCR 94 directs the Natural Area Reserves Commission to include the reduction of non-native ungulates, within the reserves system, as one of the specific goals of the Commission.

Our statement on this resolution does not represent an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

Feral ungulates, *ie.*, pigs, goats, and deer, present a serious threat to island ecosystems, critical habitats for endangered species, the stability of the land, the quantity and quality of water supplies, and to community health.

The latter issue has been brought to our attention most recently in the reported number of cases of leptospirosis infections. Leptospirosis is a spirochete bacteria carried in ungulates and transmitted by way of their waste products to surface water supplies. The disease produced by these pathogens can be fatal. The bacteria causing the disease are nearly ubiquitous in their distribution as they can be carried by ungulates and rodents to all moist or wet environments. Control of the disease is limited to control of the carriers and thus the need for reducing the number of feral ungulates.

Past attempts to control feral ungulates in ecologically sensitive areas have met with strong resistance from local hunters. We note that the resolution stresses the need for control of ungulates only inside the reserve system therefore hunting in areas outside of the reserve system would not be affected. Additionally, the opportunity for hunting may be increased, in the short run if the management plan includes intensive hunting in the reserves to reduce the feral ungulate population.

HCR 94 would establish a clear directive to the NARS Commission to direct attention toward this needed reduction in feral ungulates and thereby significantly improve the environmental climate of the State.