

**LINDA LINGLE**  
Governor



State of Hawaii  
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Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

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**TESTIMONY OF SANDRA LEE KUNIMOTO  
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEES ON  
CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE  
AND  
JUDICIARY  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2009  
2:00 P.M.  
ROOM 325**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1611, HD 1  
RELATING TO LABELING OF MEAT AND FISH PRODUCTS**

Chairpersons Herkes and Karamatsu and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill No. 1611, HD 1, relating to the treatment of pre-packaged meat with gas or other technology to enhance its color only. The Department of Agriculture supports the intent and offers comments. We defer to the Department of Health as to their ability and authority to enforce this bill if passed into law.

The Food and Drug Administration has determined that use of safe levels of carbon monoxide in treating meat is not harmful to human health. However, the department notes that it is possible for the meat to appear fresh to the consumer because of the gas treatment but still to have high bacterial levels indicative of spoilage even though the meat is within the labeled 'use, sell or freeze by' date listed on the package.