

HAWAII TEAMSTERS AND ALLIED WORKERS, LOCAL 996

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Rep. Robert Herkes, Chair
Rep. Glenn Wakai, Vice-Chair
Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce

Rep. Jon Riki Karamatsu, Chair
Rep. Ken Ito, Vice-Chair
Committee on the Judiciary

Glenn Ida
Representative
Monday, Feb. 23, 2009, at 2 PM
Conference Room 325

The Hawaii Teamsters Local 996, Strongly Supports the passage of HB 1611, HD1, Relating to Labeling of Meat and Fish Products.

Currently packages of meat that have gas technology applied to them are not required to list it on the label and most disturbing it is placed in same area of the meat case with meat products that have been traditionally processed as fresh cut or packaged on the store premises.

Gas technology only enhances the color of the meat product allowing the expiration date to be moved by up to 5 days depending on the cut of meat. Gas technology does nothing to maintain the sanitation of the product. By placing the packages of the gas and fresh cut in the same place may be deceiving the consumers in thinking that the gassed meat is fresher because of the appearance and expiration date, which will be the only basis of the consumers' decision to purchase that Meat Product. Compare that to purchasing fresh fruit which can be directly handled, inspection of all sides and/or sniffed for freshness.

HB 1611, HD1, will require the meat products to be appropriately labeled to advise the consumer what has been added to the meat in processing just like the requirements of labeling on fish products containing Carbon Monoxide Gas.

The Hawaii Teamsters Local 996, Strongly Supports, HB 1611, HD1, Relating to the Labeling of Meat and Fish Products.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to present my testimony.