



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES**

LATE TESTIMONY

COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND AND OCEAN RESOURCES

Honorable Chair Ken Ito, Vice-Chair Sharon Har

March 30, 2009, 900am, Rm 325

Statement of Support for HCR 60

Submitted by Inga Gibson, Hawaii State Director, The Humane Society of the United States

Dear Chair Ito, Vice-Chair Har and Committee members:

On behalf of our 47,704 members and supporters in Hawaii, The Humane Society of the United States thanks you for the opportunity to testify in support of HCR 60; to convene a task force to discuss the safe use of hunting dogs.

We thank the legislature for its passage of a felony animal cruelty law in 2007, making Hawaii the 43rd state to enact a felony provision for intentional acts of animal cruelty. This law was enacted in part due to 2 high profile cases involving the killing of pet pigs; "Porky" in Mililani Mauka, who was cornered on private property by hunting dogs and subsequently killed by a hunter, and "Gonzo", who lived at a home in the Tantalus area and met a similar fate when hunting dogs trespassed onto private property and attacked and killed him.

While the felony animal cruelty law provides much needed penalties for the intentional killing of a pet animal, we believe it necessary to enact steps to prevent such future tragedies both on private property and in public areas and state hiking trails.

The current reference to the regulation of hunting dogs is found in Hawaii Administrative Rule §13-123-22 (c) (3) which states "The dog's owner or handler shall *accompany* the dog at all times while hunting. The dog's owner shall be held strictly liable for all actions, injuries, or damages caused by the owner's dog, while in the hunting area." There is no requirement that the dogs be under the physical control of the hunter- even while accessing heavily trafficked areas, that the dogs be registered or have identification to increase the likelihood of return if lost or abandoned while hunting. There also is no requirement for the appropriate care or keeping of dogs used for hunting.

Below are additional concerns regarding the use of dogs for hunting that are not addressed under existing law:

Animal Welfare Concerns:

Abandoned Hunting Dogs: The welfare of both the dogs used in hunting and the wildlife pursued are of particular concern. Abandoned or lost dogs may be struck by vehicles, die as a result of starvation, dehydration, predation or exposure, or may burden local animal shelters that are left to care for them.

Abandoned hunting dogs, when in search of food, may pack up and threaten native species or other animals. Last May, 90 shearwaters were found dead at the Kahuku golf course due to what authorities believe was a pack of hunting dogs that had been lost or abandoned.

Treatment of hunting dogs: Without adequate regulation and enforcement, some hound hunters treat their dogs inhumanely, more like hunting equipment than live beings. Some do not give the dogs the care or attention they require as was the case last September in Kauai where 3 hunting dogs were found dead on agriculture land in Kekaha and another 77 living in poor conditions. The dogs were owned by seven different people. These social animals are given little or no attention, kept in improper confinement the majority of their lives, and receive no exercise outside the hunt. Some are kept in pens or are hazardously tethered outside for long periods of time. Both the US Department of Agriculture and the American Veterinary Medical Association condemn the practice of tethering or chaining dogs for long periods of time.

Training the hunting dogs: Animal welfare concerns originate even before the hunting dogs reach the field. There are many training practices that place dogs in unnecessary danger of injury or death, and result in the torment and death of wildlife. Hunters often teach “bloodlust” by allowing dogs to tear apart small or young animals, believing this will make them more aggressive during the hunt.

Public Safety: Hikers and their pets have been seriously injured when they encounter aggressive hunting dogs on public hiking trails. Hunting dogs, trained for “blood lust” may become frenzied during a hunt- unable to distinguish their prey from a person or a pet.

Furthermore, according to the US Fish and Wildlife Service 2006 National Survey of Hunting, Fishing and Wildlife Recreation in Hawaii, Wildlife Watchers (including hikers) contributed 10 times more monies (\$210 million) to our state’s economy than did hunters. Only 5% (18,000) of those surveyed were registered hunters compared to 72% (262,000) Wildlife Watchers yet hunters and hikers share the same days and access to the same public areas. These identical access periods increase the likelihood of conflict and may negatively impact both tourist and resident perceptions of the safety of using our public wildlife areas.

We respectfully urge your passage of HCR 60 so we may begin the critical discussion that is necessary to protect pets and public safety.

Please contact me at 808-922-9910 or igibson@humanesociety.org for further information.

**Hawaii State Legislature
House Committee on Water, Land & Ocean Resources
Monday, March 30, 2009
9:00 a.m.
Room 325**

HCR 60 Requesting the University of Hawaii at Manoa, College of Social Sciences, Public Policy Center and Spark M. Matsunaga Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution to Convene a Working Group to Explore the Safe Use of Hunting Dogs on Public Hiking Trails

Testimony of Jon M. Van Dyke and Sherry P. Broder
4191 Round Top Drive
Honolulu, HI 96822

We strongly support the passage of this resolution. Proper regulation of pig hunting in residential areas and in areas utilized by the public such as public hiking trails is long overdue.

Our pet Vietnamese pot-bellied pig Gonzo Picasso was killed on our property by unsupervised hunting dogs on Sunday, April 1, 2007, a day on which pig hunting was permitted pursuant to DLNR regulations in the Tantalus area. Gonzo was in his enclosure, which had four-foot high fencing around it. The dogs entered into our property, without any human supervision, scaled the fence, and tore Gonzo apart within minutes after they arrived on the scene. It was totally irresponsible for the DLNR to permit such pig hunting in residential areas.

Ferel pigs can be controlled in a humane fashion through the use of cages, which should be placed at locations where they frequent and then must be checked regularly so that the captured pigs do not suffer unnecessarily.

The study envisioned in this Resolution could help establish a humane approach to controlling ferel pigs, an approach that would be consistent with the values we cherish in the Aloha State. We urge its enactment.

Testimony for HCR60 on 3/30/2009 9:00:00 AM

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]

Sent: Sunday, March 29, 2009 5:36 PM

To: WLOtestimony

Cc: [REDACTED]

LATE TESTIMONY

Testimony for WLO 3/30/2009 9:00:00 AM HCR60

Conference room: 325

Testifier position: support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Christy Deutsch

Organization: Individual

Address: [REDACTED]

Phone:

E-mail: cfora@hotmail.com

Submitted on: 3/29/2009

Comments:

To the WLO committee members,

I am writing this in support of HCR60.

I cannot understand why hunters with dogs are allowed and even encouraged by DLNR to hunt on the same trails that hikers use. This is very dangerous for the public, and posting signs is not enough. When let loose, a pack of hunting dogs has only one purpose- and that is to attack. Usually the focus of that attack is a pig, but there are still many times where pets are killed or severely injured by these dogs. Once these dogs are no longer in control by their owners and are let loose- they become a safety issue to the public, and can do a lot of damage.

There are a lot of people, kama'aina and tourists alike, who want to enjoy and witness the beauty of these islands on hiking trails. The following quote is from a 2001 news release by DLNR, where they recognize how important hiking is to tourists; "The popularity of hiking in Hawai'i continues to increase, especially among visitors. A survey last year of trail and park users showed that approximately 78 percent were from out-of-state." Many tourists coming here from thousands of miles away look forward to using our beautiful hiking trails in the mountains. These people may or may not be deterred by posted hunting signs alone because; 1) They came so far and want to continue on their hike as planned; 2) They don't see the signs or may not be able to read english; or, 3) See the signs and do not truly understand that they are in danger. Everyone needs to be protected by our state, and as an agency funded by tax dollars, DLNR needs to put public safety needs first.

Hiking and Hunting don't mix, and something has to be done about it. That is why I support HCR 60.

Thank you,
Christy Deutsch

Testimony for HCR60 on 3/30/2009 9:00:00 AM

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]

Sent: Sunday, March 29, 2009 11:54 PM

To: WLOtestimony

Cc: [REDACTED]

LATE TESTIMONY

Testimony for WLO 3/30/2009 9:00:00 AM HCR60

Conference room: 325

Testifier position: support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Gillian boss

Organization: Individual

Address: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

E-mail: gillian1@hawaii.rr.com

Submitted on: 3/29/2009

Comments:

My dog was attacked by hunting dogs in a non hunting area. I now am afraid to take my dog for country walks.

Testimony for HCR60 on 3/30/2009 9:00:00 AM

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]

Sent: Monday, March 30, 2009 12:22 AM

To: WLOtestimony

Cc: [REDACTED]

LATE TESTIMONY

Testimony for WLO 3/30/2009 9:00:00 AM HCR60

Conference room: 325

Testifier position: support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Greg Knudsen

Organization: Hawaii Kai Neighborhood Board

Address: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Submitted on: 3/30/2009

Comments:

The Hawaii Kai Neighborhood Board is concerned about the safe use of hunting dogs on public hiking trails.

On February 24, the board unanimously approved a motion "to support House Concurrent Resolution 60, which requests the University of Hawaii at Manoa, College of Social Sciences, Public Policy Center and Spark M. Matsunaga Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution to convene a working group to explore the safe use of hunting dogs on public hiking trails; and that the working group should include in the dialogue representatives from: (1) DLNR; (2) Honolulu Police Department; (3) Citizens for Safe Hiking; (4) Hawaiian Trail and Mountain Club; (5) Hawaii Dog Foundation; (6) Hawaiian Humane Society; (7) The Humane Society of the United States; (8) The Nature Conservancy; (9) The Sierra Club, Hawaii Chapter; (10) Hawaii Hunting Association; and (11) Oahu Pig Hunters Association."

Linda Vannatta, Citizens for Safe Hiking, has made a presentation to the board and has kept the board informed about this resolution.

Please vote to approve HCR 60. Mahalo.

PLEASE PASS THIS BILL!

HCR 60
(HUNTING DOG RESOLUTION)
Monday, March 30, 2009, 9:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Rm. 325

COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, & OCEAN RESOURCES

Rep. Ken Ito, Chair
Rep. Sharon E. Har, Vice Chair

Dear Representatives:

I SUPPORT HCR 60.

It is **unfair to the taxpaying public** that while all dogs who have owners are required to pay for pet tags and wear the City & County ID tag when out in public, the boar hunting dogs DO NOT.

Hunter with dogs hence should be required to:

- 1) Have their dogs **microchipped**. Personal responsibility is key.
- 2) **Pay extra** for their dog tags with the money going towards animal charities or Humane Societies.
- 3) The dogs also should be required to be **easily identifiable** and have their tags on at all time.

Boar hunting dogs roam alone in pack, separated from their owners often for many miles and days, when tracking. They present a real **danger** to the unsuspecting hikers and public. They should **limited to certain areas** only and not have free range of all trails. If they go over, the **hunters should be fined** for not having more control over their dogs.

Mahalo nui pumehana for supporting this bill.

Anjie Pham


Testimony for HCR60 on 3/30/2009 9:00:00 AM

mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov [mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov]

Sent: Monday, March 30, 2009 9:29 AM

To: WLOtestimony

Cc: [REDACTED]

LATE TESTIMONY

Testimony for WLO 3/30/2009 9:00:00 AM HCR60

Conference room: 325

Testifier position: support

Testifier will be present: No

Submitted by: Jane Shiraki

Organization: Individual

Address:

Phone: [REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Submitted on: 3/30/2009

Comments:

Upon visually seeing a video of a group of hunting dogs mercilessly biting into a boar, and hearing the unceasing screams of the boar, and seeing the suffering on the face of the boar, I was appalled that such suffering is allowed. This is wrong! No animal or living being should suffer like that and this must be stopped. I am appalled that there are no laws to protect boars from such suffering. This kind of hunting must be put to end. Look at the face of suffering of the boar, it is wrong, wrong, wrong.