

**PRESENTATION OF THE  
BOARD OF VETERINARY EXAMINERS**

**TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
CONSUMER PROTECTION AND COMMERCE**

**TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE  
Regular Session of 2011**

Wednesday, February 2, 2011  
2:05 p.m.

**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NO. 1133, RELATING TO VETERINARY MEDICINE.**

**TO THE HONORABLE ROBERT N. HERKES, CHAIR,  
AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:**

My name is Lynn Bhanot, Executive Officer for the Board of Veterinary Examiners ("Board"). I appreciate the opportunity to present testimony on behalf of the Board.

The purpose of this measure is to reclassify the practice of veterinary medicine without a license from a misdemeanor to a class C felony.

The Board has not had an opportunity to review the measure; however, we generally support proposals which enhance our mission, which is to protect the general public. The Board will be discussing this bill at its next scheduled meeting on Wednesday, April 20, 2011.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 1133.

I am writing to give my full support to the passage of HB1133. It is so unfortunate and awful that this isn't already considered a felony. As secretary of Boxer Club of Hawaii, I regularly communicate with a large number of Hawaii Boxer owners looking for a veterinarian for ear cropping, tail docking, etc. I would be horrified if any of them used a veterinarian that was not licensed to perform such services. It is appalling to me to think that there is not real enforcement for such unethical practices. I never want to think there is a situation where one who does such procedures would be able to do so without significant retribution. I strongly urge you to pass this bill. Only when we hold individuals to the standards that are morally and ethically sound will this despicable practice end. It is not fair to the defenseless animals that have no voice when a botched and painful surgery takes place. Thank you for your time in reading this.

Sincerely,

Theresa Donnelly

Secretary, Boxer Club of Hawaii



*improving the quality of lives of pets and their people.*

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Testimony by: Alicia Maluafiti, President, Poi Dogs & Popoki  
HB 1133 – Relating to Veterinary Medicine  
The House Committee Consumer Protection and Commerce  
Wednesday, February 2, 2011 - Room 325, 2:05 p.m.

Aloha Chair Herkes, Vice Chair Yamane and members of the Committee.

My name is Alicia Maluafiti and I am the President of Poi Dogs & Popoki (PDP), a local nonprofit helping people and their pets with the cost of caring for their pets. I am also the former Director of Community Relations for the Hawaiian Humane Society and the founder and former president of the Oahu SPCA. PDP strongly supports HB 1133.

The purpose of this bill is to increase the penalty for practicing veterinary medicine without a license - from a misdemeanor to a Class C felony - which is parity with the penalties under Hawaii's animal cruelty statute. Conducting surgical procedures on pets without the necessary anesthesia - by people lacking the skill, education and license to do so - all the while taking advantage of naïve pet owners, is criminal and deserves to be penalized in the same degree as animal cruelty.

State licensing boards across the country are waging war against lay persons performing veterinary medicine, but with attorneys unwilling to prosecute and little means of enforcement, the problem continues to grow. Many states have passed laws making it a felony to practice veterinary medicine without a license - to not only serve as an incentive to prosecute cases, but to deter offenders.

Veterinarians are seeing more and more horrific damage done to animals by people who have no idea what they are doing – from sterilization surgery to ear cropping and tail docking to voice box removal. Most often, licensed veterinarians are sought after irreversible damage has been done and the life of the animal is at stake. Some pet owners unknowingly choose a non-licensed person because they learn that a medical procedure can be performed at a reduced cost, but not fully understanding the risks facing their pet. Lacking the education, skill set and knowledge of veterinary medicine, animals suffer from botched procedures that are done without the necessary and appropriate anesthesia, furthering the pain suffered by the pet. In cases where controlled substances are used, prescription drugs are secured illegally and dispensed and administered inappropriately. Hawaii needs to join other states in stopping the unscrupulous and callous actions of people that are cashing in on the pain and suffering of pets.

We ask you to please pass HB 1133. Mahalo for your caring and compassion for Hawaii's pets and their people.

## CPCtestimony

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, January 31, 2011 6:36 PM  
**To:** CPCtestimony  
**Cc:** akele33@aol.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB1133 on 2/2/2011 2:05:00 PM

Testimony for CPC 2/2/2011 2:05:00 PM HB1133

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
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Submitted on: 1/31/2011

**Comments:**

I think just as human doctors are required to practice medicine with a license, so to shall animals have that right. And, animal owners should also be required to seek only licensed veterinarians or be subjected to a fine or punishment, depending on the harm done to animals in an effort to save cost. Pet insurance is available now, so people do have options. Just as any legitimate business required to have a license, this is no exception.