

Honolulu, Hawaii

APR 05 2024

RE: H.B. No. 1527
H.D. 1
S.D. 2

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2024
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred H.B. No. 1527, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO VETERINARY MEDICINE,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Prohibit animal owners and their employees from performing any surgical procedures on a pet animal;
- (2) Provide that a violation of the prohibition is a class C felony;
- (3) Clarify that the offense of cruelty to animals in the first degree does not apply to accepted veterinary practices when the practices are performed by a licensed veterinarian; and
- (4) Repeal the exemption of cropping and docking as customarily practiced under the offense of cruelty to animals in the first degree.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from Animal Rights Hawai'i, Hawaiian Humane Society, Animal Interfaith Alliance, Kaua'i Humane Society, Animal Welfare



Institute, Hawaii Veterinary Medical Association, and twenty individuals.

Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from Ponoholo Ranch Limited, Haleakala Ranch Company, Palika Ranch Family Limited Partnership, Kapapala Ranch, Parker Ranch, McCandless Land and Cattle Co. LLC, and ten individuals.

Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Agriculture; Hawaii Board of Veterinary Medicine; and Hawaii Cattleman's Council, Inc.

Your Committee finds that existing law exempts non-veterinarians from performing painful surgical procedures on animals. Non-veterinarians often perform these procedures without access to pain medication, antibiotics to prevent infection, and other critical pre- and post-operative care that can only be provided under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian. This measure will reduce unnecessary pain, harm, and suffering to pet animals by closing the loophole allowing owners to operate on or hire unqualified people to operate on their own pet animals.

Your Committee notes that the penalties for unlicensed persons performing surgical procedures on a pet animal only apply to "pet animals" and therefore by definition do not apply to livestock.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Clarifying that a person who engages in the practice of veterinary medicine or offers to practice without having a valid unrevoked license obtained from the Hawaii Board of Veterinary medicine is guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a fine not to exceed \$1,000;
- (2) Making it effective upon its approval; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B.



No. 1527, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that
it pass Third Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B.
No. 1527, H.D. 1, S.D. 2.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Judiciary,



KARL RHOADS, Chair



