
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE SPAYING AND NEUTERING OF ANIMALS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that animal
2 overpopulation contributes to animal suffering in Hawaii.
3 Spaying and neutering pets are proven ways to reduce pet
4 overpopulation and euthanasia rates. The legislature further
5 finds that the humane reduction of the free-roaming cat
6 population is in the best interest of cats, wildlife, the
7 environment, and humans. However, the State does not contribute
8 funds to address these issues.

9 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish a spay
10 and neuter special fund to reduce pet overpopulation and the
11 reproduction of free-roaming cats and various revenue and
12 fundraising sources for the special fund.

13 SECTION 2. Chapter 143, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
14 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
15 and to read as follows:

16 "§143- Spay and neuter special fund. (a) There is
17 established in the state treasury the spay and neuter special



1 fund, to be administered by the department of budget and
2 finance. Moneys received by the department of budget and
3 finance from:

4 (1) State income tax refund designations to the special
5 fund pursuant to section 235- ;

6 (2) Revenue generated by the fundraising fees from special
7 number plates pursuant to section 249- ; and

8 (3) Legislative appropriations, private gifts or
9 donations, and other sources,

10 shall be deposited into the special fund. All interest earned
11 or accrued on moneys deposited into the special fund shall
12 become part of the special fund.

13 (b) Moneys in the special fund shall be expended to reduce
14 pet overpopulation and the reproduction of free-roaming cats by
15 providing spaying and neutering surgery and associated
16 veterinary care; provided that the uses and expenditures of
17 moneys in the special fund shall follow the eligibility criteria
18 established by the advisory committee established under
19 subsection (c).

20 (c) There is established an advisory committee to assist
21 the department of budget and finance in establishing the



1 eligibility criteria and procedures for disbursements from the
2 special fund.

3 The advisory committee shall consist of five members to be
4 selected by the director of finance and shall include the
5 following:

6 (1) One representative of the department of budget and
7 finance;

8 (2) One representative of the Hawaii Animal Welfare
9 Association or its successor organization, who shall
10 be invited to participate;

11 (3) At least one representative of the Hawaii Veterinary
12 Medical Association, who shall be invited to
13 participate; and

14 (4) At least one member from a Hawaii-based, private, non-
15 profit animal-welfare organization, who shall be
16 invited to participate.

17 The advisory committee shall select a chairperson from
18 among its members. All members of the advisory committee shall
19 be residents of the State and shall serve three-year terms. All
20 members shall have an active interest in humanely reducing pet



1 overpopulation and reducing the number of free-roaming cats in
2 the State.

3 (d) The advisory committee shall submit an annual report
4 to the director of finance, in a form prescribed by the
5 director, that identifies the total amount of funds that were
6 disbursed from the special fund during the previous fiscal year
7 and the amount of funds to be carried over to the next fiscal
8 year. The advisory committee shall submit the report to the
9 director of finance within ninety days after the close of each
10 fiscal year.

11 (e) The members of the advisory committee shall serve
12 without pay but shall be reimbursed for their actual and
13 necessary expenses, including travel expenses, incurred in
14 carrying out their duties."

15 SECTION 3. Chapter 235, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
16 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
17 and to read as follows:

18 **"§235- Income check-off authorized; spaying and**
19 **neutering of animals.** Notwithstanding any law to the contrary,
20 any individual whose state income tax refund for any taxable
21 year is \$5 or more may designate \$5 of the refund to be



1 deposited into the spay and neuter special fund established by
2 section 143- , when submitting a state income tax return to
3 the department. In the case of a joint return of a married
4 couple having a state income tax refund of \$10 or more, each
5 spouse may designate that \$5 be deposited into the special fund.
6 The director of taxation shall revise the individual state
7 income tax form to allow the designation of contributions to the
8 fund on the face of the tax return and immediately above the
9 signature lines. If no designation was made on the original tax
10 return when filed, a designation may be made by the individual
11 on an amended return filed within twenty months and ten days
12 after the due date for the original return for that taxable
13 year. A designation once made, whether by an original or
14 amended return, shall not be revoked."

15 SECTION 4. Chapter 249, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
16 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
17 and to read as follows:

18 "§249- Special number plates; spay and neuter special
19 fund; authorized. (a) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary,
20 the director of finance shall issue to any registered owner of a
21 motor vehicle, who is a resident of the State, upon completed



1 application and payment of the required fees, a special number
2 plate for the registered owner's motor vehicle supporting the
3 spay and neuter special fund.

4 (b) The director of finance of the city and county of
5 Honolulu, in consultation with the directors of finance of the
6 counties of Hawaii, Kauai, and Maui; chiefs of police of the
7 city and county of Honolulu and the counties of Hawaii, Kauai,
8 and Maui; and advisory committee of the spay and neuter special
9 fund, shall establish a special number plate design that:

10 (1) Contains words, images, or both, that indicate the
11 special number plate is issued to recognize the
12 spaying and neutering of animals;

13 (2) Is similar in shape and size to the uniform state
14 number plate prescribed by law; and

15 (3) Does not obstruct the visibility of the numbers or
16 letters or any other information that is required by
17 law to be on a number plate and is readily
18 identifiable and distinguishable under actual traffic
19 conditions.

20 (c) The special number plate design shall not:



- 1 (1) Infringe upon or otherwise violate any trademark,
2 trade name, service mark, copyright, or other
3 proprietary or property right;
- 4 (2) Represent any obscene or degrading image, idea, word,
5 or phrase;
- 6 (3) Advertise or endorse a product, brand, or service that
7 is provided for sale;
- 8 (4) Promote any religious belief; or
9 (5) Promote any philosophy based on prejudice or that is
10 contrary to state civil rights laws.

11 (d) Each special number plate shall be securely fastened
12 to the motor vehicle in lieu of the uniform state number plate.

13 (e) The director of finance shall charge a special number
14 plate fee at least equal to the county's cost of providing the
15 special number plate and administrative costs, if any, plus a
16 fundraising fee to be determined by the director of finance in
17 consultation with the advisory committee of the spay and neuter
18 special fund. The fundraising fee shall be in addition to any
19 other state or county fees collected for a motor vehicle
20 registration or license plate.



1 (f) The director of finance may charge an additional
2 fundraising fee of the same or a different amount as the
3 fundraising fee established pursuant to subsection (e), for the
4 renewal of a special number plate. If an additional fundraising
5 fee is implemented pursuant to this subsection, the director of
6 finance shall revoke the special number plate of any registered
7 owner of a motor vehicle who fails to pay the additional
8 fundraising fee imposed by this subsection.

9 (g) The revenue generated by the fundraising fees, or a
10 portion of the revenue generated by the fundraising fees as
11 determined by the director of finance, shall be deposited into
12 the spay and neuter special fund established by section 143- .

13 (h) The director of finance may revoke all special number
14 plates issued pursuant to this section if the total number of
15 registered owners of motor vehicles that obtain the special
16 number plates is less than one hundred fifty within three years
17 of issuance of the first special number plate.

18 (i) Nothing in this section shall be construed to apply to
19 any plates issued pursuant to section 249-9.2 or 249-9.5.



1 (j) As used in this section, unless a different meaning
2 appears from the context, "special number plate" means a license
3 plate that recognizes the spaying and neutering of animals."

4 SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general
5 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$50,000 or so much
6 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the
7 same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year
8 2026-2027 to be deposited into the spay and neuter special fund
9 established by section 143- , Hawaii Revised Statutes.

10 SECTION 6. There is appropriated out of the spay and
11 neuter special fund established by section 143- , Hawaii
12 Revised Statutes, the sum of \$50,000 or so much thereof as may
13 be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 and the same sum or so
14 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 to
15 reduce pet overpopulation and the reproduction of free-roaming
16 cats by providing spaying and neutering surgery and associated
17 veterinary care.

18 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
19 of budget and finance for the purposes of this Act.

20 SECTION 7. New statutory material is underscored.



H.B. NO. 547

1 SECTION 8. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025;
2 provided that section 3 of this Act shall apply to taxable years
3 beginning after December 31, 2024.

4

INTRODUCED BY: _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. J. G.', written over a horizontal line.

JAN 17 2025



H.B. NO. 547

Report Title:

Spay and Neuter Special Fund; Special Number Plates; Income
Check-off

Description:

Establishes the Spay and Neuter Special Fund to reduce pet
overpopulation and the reproduction of free-roaming cats and
various revenue and fundraising sources for the special fund.

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is
not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

