JAN 1 5 2025

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE RESIDENTIAL LANDLORD-TENANT CODE.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that prohibiting a 1 2 landlord from restricting a tenant's ability to keep pet animals in a dwelling unit, contingent upon the tenant obtaining and 3 maintaining liability insurance, offers numerous benefits. Pets 4 5 contribute significantly to the emotional and mental health of individuals, as evidenced during the COVID-19 pandemic when 6 sixty-two per cent of pet owners reported improved mental health 7 8 due to their pets and eighty-four per cent noted strengthened 9 emotional bonds. Allowing pets in rental properties can also 10 promote housing stability, as pet owners often face challenges 11 in finding suitable housing and tend to stay longer in pet-12 friendly accommodations. This stability benefits both tenants 13 and landlords by reducing turnover rates. Additionally, 14 permitting pets in dwelling units broadens the pool of potential 15 tenants for landlords, as a large portion of households own pets, and landlords can often command higher rents or charge 16 17 pet-related fees, increasing rental income. Furthermore,



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reducing restrictions on pet ownership can help mitigate the
 number of animals surrendered to overcrowded shelters,
 addressing a significant animal welfare issue.

4 The legislature further finds that other jurisdictions have 5 explored similar measures. In California, recent legislation aimed to prohibit landlords from instituting blanket bans on 6 7 common household pets in rental units, while also limiting additional pet-related fees. Similarly, New South Wales, 8 9 Australia, has enacted reforms making it easier for tenants to 10 keep pets in rental properties, requiring landlords to provide 11 valid reasons for denying pet requests.

Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to enhance tenant well-being, housing stability, and animal welfare by restricting landlords from prohibiting pet animals in dwelling units, while ensuring landlords are protected through the requirement of tenant-obtained liability insurance to cover potential damages caused by pet animals.

18 SECTION 2. Chapter 521, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
19 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
20 and to read as follows:

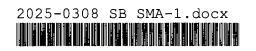
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1	" <u>§521-</u> Pet animals; restrictions prohibited; proof of
2	insurance. (a) No rental agreement shall prohibit a tenant
3	from keeping a pet animal in the dwelling unit; provided that
4	the tenant obtains and maintains liability insurance to cover
5	personal or property damages caused by the pet animal; provided
6	further that this section shall not apply where the articles of
7	incorporation, declaration, bylaws, administrative rules, house
8	rules, association documents, or a similar document of a
9	condominium property regime or planned community association
10	prohibits the presence of pet animals in the dwelling unit.
11	(b) For the purposes of this section, "pet animal" has the
12	same meaning as defined in section 711-1100."
13	SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.
14	SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.
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INTRODUCED BY:



Report Title:

Residential Landlord-Tenant Code; Pet Animals; Restrictions Prohibited; Liability Insurance Coverage

Description:

Prohibits rental agreements from prohibiting tenants from keeping pet animals in dwelling units, subject to certain conditions.

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

