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**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**JANUARY 27, 2025
1:00 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 224**

**SENATE BILL NO. 387
RELATING TO SERVICE ANIMALS**

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 387. SB 387 amends Chapter 142, Hawaii Revised Statutes by adding a new section as follows:

"§142- Service animals; interisland quarantine; permit fees. The Hawaii Department of Agriculture (Department) shall be responsible for all neighbor island inspection permit fees for a service animal, as defined in section 347-2.5, that is located in the State and is being transported for release at Ellison Onizuka Kona International Airport, Kahului Airport, or Lihue Airport." Unspecified funds are also appropriated. The Department will not have funds to be responsible for these fees as proposed. Therefore, the Department opposes this measure unless permanent dedicated funding is provided for this purpose on an annual basis.

The Department has the following comments. Service animal entry into the state is regulated by the Animal Quarantine (AQ) program. This program operates on the AQ Special fund where all expenditures of the program, including payroll and other current expenses, are defrayed through user fees. The program only has staff on Oahu. As a



result, the Department permits private veterinary facilities that meet specific physical and operational requirements to conduct entry inspections of qualified dogs and cats at Ellison Onizuka Kona International Airport (KOA), Kahului Airport (OGG), or Lihue Airport (LIH). AQ reviews and processes health documents to ensure the animals meet entry requirements up to inspection, verifies a private veterinary facility will meet and inspect the animal on arrival at the airport, and issues a Neighbor Island Inspection Permit (NIIP). A valid NIIP must be shown to the airline to fly a dog or cat directly to KOA, OGG, and LIH. The NIIP identifies the animal, owner, flight, and private veterinary facility scheduled to inspect the animal on arrival at the airport. The inspection involves a microchip scan to positively identify the animal, check for documents and treatments, inspection for external parasites and signs of illness. The Department does not charge fees to issue an NIIP for a service animal. Private veterinary facilities establish and collect their own fees for conducting inspections. The Department will not have funds to be responsible for all NIIP fees as proposed. Therefore, permanent, dedicated funding is necessary for this purpose on an annual basis.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure