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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ANIMAL ENDANGERMENT.

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

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that every year, hundreds  
2 of pet animals tragically lose their lives when their owners  
3 leave them alone in parked vehicles in extreme temperatures.  
4 Many pet owners are unaware that even on a temperate day, the  
5 inside of a parked vehicle can reach extreme temperatures within  
6 minutes. According to the American Veterinary Medical  
7 Association, the temperature inside a vehicle with all the  
8 windows closed can hit eighty-nine degrees in just ten minutes.  
9 On a hot day, the temperature inside a closed vehicle can rise  
10 as high as one hundred fourteen degrees in the same amount of  
11 time. While humans can cool themselves through an extensive  
12 system of sweat glands and evaporation, pet animals have a  
13 harder time staying cool, leaving them extremely vulnerable to  
14 heat stroke. Therefore, leaving pet animals in vehicles can  
15 cause severe dehydration and even death.

16           The purpose of this Act is to:



- 1 (1) Prohibit intentionally leaving or confining pet
- 2 animals in unattended vehicles; and
- 3 (2) Allow certain public officials and private citizens to
- 4 rescue pet animals in unattended vehicles if certain
- 5 conditions are met.

6 SECTION 2. Chapter 708, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
 7 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated  
 8 and to read as follows:

9 "§708- Unattended vehicle; pet animal; removal or  
 10 retrieval; immunity; criminal liability. (a) An animal control  
 11 officer, law enforcement officer, or firefighter who removes or  
 12 otherwise retrieves a pet animal from an unattended vehicle  
 13 pursuant to section 711- (b), and the agency or county that  
 14 employs the officer or firefighter, shall be immune from  
 15 criminal liability that might otherwise result from the removal  
 16 or retrieval.

17 (b) A person who removes or otherwise retrieves a pet  
 18 animal from an unattended vehicle pursuant to section 711- (e)  
 19 shall be immune from criminal liability that might otherwise  
 20 result from the removal or retrieval."



1 SECTION 3. Chapter 711, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
2 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated  
3 and to read as follows:

4 "§711- Confinement of a pet animal in an unattended  
5 vehicle; permitted protection and rescue of an animal; penalty.

6 (a) A person shall not intentionally leave or confine a pet  
7 animal in an unattended vehicle under conditions that endanger  
8 the health, safety, or well-being of the pet animal due to heat;  
9 cold; lack of adequate ventilation; lack of food or water; or  
10 other circumstances that could reasonably be expected to cause  
11 suffering, disability, or death to the pet animal.

12 (b) After making reasonable efforts to locate the  
13 unattended vehicle's owner or operator, an animal control  
14 officer, law enforcement officer, or firefighter may enter a  
15 vehicle by any reasonable means to protect the health, safety,  
16 or well-being of a pet animal that is endangered by being left  
17 or confined in an unattended vehicle. A law enforcement  
18 officer, animal control officer, or firefighter may enter the  
19 unattended vehicle for the sole purpose of removing or otherwise  
20 retrieving the pet animal and shall not search the vehicle or



1 seize items found in the vehicle, unless otherwise permitted by  
2 law.

3 (c) An animal control officer, law enforcement officer, or  
4 firefighter who removes or otherwise retrieves a pet animal  
5 under this section shall:

6 (1) Leave written notice in a secure and conspicuous  
7 location or in the vehicle bearing the officer's or  
8 firefighter's name and title and the address of the  
9 location at which the pet animal may be retrieved; and

10 (2) Deliver the pet animal to a veterinary hospital or  
11 animal clinic for a health screening and treatment.

12 (d) An animal control officer, law enforcement officer, or  
13 firefighter who removes or otherwise retrieves a pet animal from  
14 an unattended vehicle pursuant to subsections (b) and (c), and  
15 the agency or county that employs the officer or firefighter,  
16 shall be immune from civil liability that might otherwise result  
17 from the removal or retrieval.

18 (e) After making reasonable efforts to locate an  
19 unattended vehicle's owner or operator, a person other than an  
20 animal control officer, law enforcement officer, or firefighter  
21 may enter an unattended vehicle to remove or otherwise retrieve



1 a pet animal to protect the health, safety, or well-being of the  
2 pet animal; provided that the person:

3 (1) Determines that the unattended vehicle is locked and  
4 there are no reasonable means of egress for the pet  
5 animal from the vehicle;

6 (2) Has a good faith and reasonable belief, based upon  
7 known circumstances, that entry into the unattended  
8 vehicle is reasonably necessary to prevent imminent  
9 danger or harm to the pet animal;

10 (3) Calls 911 to coordinate the removal or retrieval of  
11 the pet animal with law enforcement, animal control,  
12 or fire, or, if unable to reach those authorities  
13 through a 911 call, otherwise makes reasonable  
14 attempts to contact those authorities;

15 (4) Shall not use more force than reasonably necessary to  
16 enter the unattended vehicle and remove or otherwise  
17 retrieve the pet animal; and

18 (5) Remains with the pet animal in a safe location in  
19 reasonable proximity to the unattended vehicle until  
20 law enforcement or another first responder arrives.



1        (f) A person who removes or otherwise retrieves an animal  
2 from an unattended vehicle pursuant to subsection (e) shall be  
3 immune from civil liability that might otherwise result from the  
4 removal or retrieval.

5        (g) The owner of the pet animal may retrieve the pet  
6 animal that was removed or otherwise retrieved from the  
7 unattended vehicle pursuant to this section only after payment  
8 of all charges that have accrued for the maintenance, care,  
9 medical treatment, and impoundment of the pet animal.

10       (h) A violation of subsection (a) shall constitute a  
11 misdemeanor under section 711-1109.

12       (i) For the purposes of this section:

13       "Cold" means a low temperature, inside or outside a  
14 vehicle, that could endanger a pet animal's health, safety, or  
15 well-being.

16       "Heat" means a high temperature, inside or outside a  
17 vehicle, that could endanger a pet animal's health, safety, or  
18 well-being.

19       "Pet animal" shall have the same meaning as defined in  
20 section 711-1100.



1        "Vehicle" means a car, truck, camper, or other form of  
2 transportation in which a pet animal can be transported."

3        SECTION 4. This Act does not affect rights and duties that  
4 matured, penalties that were incurred, and proceedings that were  
5 begun before its effective date.

6        SECTION 5. New statutory material is underscored.

7        SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.



**Report Title:**

Animal Endangerment; Pet Animals; Unattended Vehicles;  
Confinement; Immunity

**Description:**

Prohibits intentionally leaving or confining pet animals in a vehicle under conditions that endanger their health, safety, or well-being. Allows law enforcement officers, animal control officers, and firefighters to enter an unattended vehicle to protect the health, safety, or well-being of a pet animal that is endangered by being left or confined in an unattended vehicle. Allows private citizens to rescue a pet animal that has been left in an unattended vehicle under certain circumstances. (SD1)

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

