

JOSH GREEN M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION

Ka 'Oihana 'Auhau

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GARY S. SUGANUMA
DIRECTOR

KRISTEN M.R. SAKAMOTO
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**TESTIMONY OF
GARY S. SUGANUMA, DIRECTOR OF TAXATION**

TESTIMONY ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. No. 364, H.D. 1, Relating to Animal Control

BEFORE THE:

House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

DATE: Wednesday, February 12, 2025

TIME: 2:00 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 325

Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Taxation (DOTAX) offers the following comments regarding H.B. 364, H.D. 1, for your consideration.

H.B. 364, H.D. 1, establishes a new cat sterilization and breeding permit program and establishes a new "Spay and Neuter Special Fund". Section 3 amends chapter 235, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), to authorize a new income "check-off" option. Individual taxpayers with a refund of \$5 or more may designate \$5 to the fund, and married couples filing jointly with a refund of \$10 or more may designate \$5 per person to the fund.

The bill requires the Director of Taxation to revise tax return forms. As with other existing check-off boxes, if no initial designation was chosen, taxpayers will be allowed to amend a return to choose a designation within 20 months and ten days after the due date for the original return for that taxable year. A designation is nonrevocable once made.

The measure has a defective effective date of July 1, 3000, with section 3 pertinent to the check-off boxes applying to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2025.

If adopted, DOTAX recommends that the proposed check-off option proposed in section 3 be added as a new subsection to section 235-102.5, HRS, which already authorizes other “check-off” options for income tax purposes.

DOTAX further notes that it can administer section 3 of this measure for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2024.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

Testimony of
DAWN N. S. CHANG
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on
JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Wednesday, February 12, 2025
2:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 325, and Via Videoconference

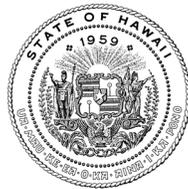
In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 364, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO ANIMAL CONTROL

House Bill 364, House Draft 1 proposes to amend Chapter 143, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to add two new sections regarding cat sterilization and breeding permits and requirements and establish a spay and neuter special fund. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure.**

House Bill 364 requires the surgical sterilization of cats over three months old, with certain exceptions, and authorizes county animal control authorities to establish and enforce a permit program for responsible cat breeding. Additionally, the bill creates a spay and neuter special fund to address pet overpopulation, including the free-roaming cat population. It provides funding for spaying and neutering animals which cannot then be released into the environment.

The Department recognizes the significant negative impact that feral and free-roaming cats have on Hawai'i's unique native wildlife, both through direct predation and the spread of the toxoplasmosis parasite. Hawai'i is home to 28% of all threatened and endangered species in the United States, and 78% of all U.S. species extinctions have occurred here. Free-roaming cats are known predators of native and endangered birds and pose a serious health risk as the only known reproductive host of the toxoplasmosis parasite. Toxoplasmosis is one of the most significant threats to the endangered Hawaiian monk seal and infects other endangered birds, including Hawai'i's state bird, the nēnē. Supporting cat sterilization efforts and reducing free-roaming cat populations are critical steps in protecting Hawai'i's native and endangered wildlife while promoting responsible pet ownership.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.



JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR

SABRINA NASIR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
Ka 'Oihana Mālama Mo'ohelu a Kālā
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

TESTIMONY BY LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 364, H.D. 1

February 12, 2025
2:00 p.m.
Room 325 and Videoconference

RELATING TO ANIMAL CONTROL

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

House Bill No. 364, H.D. 1, does the following: 1) makes it unlawful for any person to own a female cat over the age of three months or a male cat over the age of five months unless the cat is surgically sterilized or the conditions for certain exceptions are met; 2) establishes the Spay and Neuter Special Fund (SNSF) within B&F to finance spaying and neutering surgery and associated veterinary care to reduce pet overpopulation and the reproduction of free-roaming cats; 3) establishes an advisory committee to assist B&F in establishing SNSF disbursement eligibility criteria and procedures; 4) allows taxpayers to contribute \$5 of their income tax refund to be deposited into the SNSF; 5) appropriates an unspecified amount of general funds for both FY 26 and FY 27 for deposit into the SNSF; and 6) appropriates an unspecified amount of special funds out of the SNSF for both FY 26 and FY 27 for the purposes of the SNSF.

B&F strongly believes that it is not the appropriate agency to administer the SNSF and its related program functions. B&F does not possess the required

subject-matter expertise on spaying and neutering animals or any other related veterinary services as these subject areas are outside of the purview of the department. Further, with the ongoing statewide financial management replacement project, B&F staff are fully engaged and committed to working on the project and doing its regular work; therefore, additional staff and funding would be necessary to administer the SNSF.

B&F recommends that funds be appropriated directly to the counties instead because they have historically been responsible for animal control functions. The counties can then allocate these funds to entities best able to perform the desired services.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/7/2025 6:08:39 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cathy Goeggel	Animal Rights Hawai'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We are in support of HB364. Mahalo

Testimony of the Hawaii Board of Veterinary Medicine

**Before the
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
Wednesday, February 12, 2025
2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 329 and Videoconference**

**On the following measure:
H.B. 364 HD1, RELATING TO ANIMAL CONTROL**

Chair Tarnas and Members of the Committee:

My name is Marcella Chock, and I am the Chair of Hawaii Board of Veterinary Medicine (Board). The Board appreciates the intent of the bill and offers comments.

The purposes of this bill are to: (1) require that female cats over the age of three and male cats over the age of five months be surgically sterilized; (2) authorize county animal control authorities to establish and enforce a permit program to allow the responsible breeding of cats; (3) establish minimum requirements for breeding permits and penalties; and (4) establish a spay and neuter special fund.

The Board is concerned that the early sterilization of both male and female cats can lead to increased difficulty in treating lower urinary tract disease (FLUTD) and/or urethral obstructions. The Board requests the legislature consider amending subsection (a) on page 4, lines 11 to 15 by deleting paragraphs (1) and (2) and to read as follows: “(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to own a cat over the age of five months unless the cat is surgically sterilized.”

The Board also notes that mandating sterilization may pose a hardship for individuals on fixed incomes or on neighbor islands with limited veterinary services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

Testimony in Opposition to HB364 HD1

February 9, 2025

Members of the House committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs:

The Pacific Pet Alliance is a Hawai'i non-profit organization that promotes responsible pet ownership through education and advocacy.

The Pacific Pet Alliance (PPA) respectfully submits testimony for your consideration regarding our opposition to HB364 HD1 in its current form.

HB364 HD1 attempts to merge four different issues in one bill. Although 171 individuals and agencies testified, it was not always clear as to which part of the bill they opposed or supported.

- Mandatory sterilization at age 5 months.
- Setting up a spay/neuter fund.
- Addressing the concerns from the community and conservationists regarding free-roaming/"feral" cats/abandoned cats.
- Setting up a cat breeding permit system. Per an informal (but reliable) survey done by a local cat fancier, there are approximately 18 cat breeders belonging to two different national cat registries of pedigreed cats. The average cost to purchase a pedigreed cat from these breeders is roughly \$750 to \$3,000 each. Understandably these special cats are cherished and kept indoors at all times; they are never "abandoned", nor do they predate upon outdoor wildlife. The intent of this bill is to address the overpopulation of free roaming and abandoned cats and lessen their impact on Hawaiian wildlife- but breeders of pedigreed cats certainly aren't contributing to that overpopulation. Setting up a breeding permit system for such a small population is onerous when the conservationists estimate that there are over 300,000 free-roaming "feral" cats. There simply is no evidence that the local pedigreed cat fancy and the cats they produce have impact on Hawaii's wildlife.

The Pacific Pet Alliance respectfully asks this committee to please amend HB364 HD1 to remove the section requiring cat breeder permits and instead consider other means of cat control such as requiring cat owners to keep their cats indoors or programs to help cut down on pet abandonment. We would also like to encourage further discussions between humane societies state wide and wildlife conservationists to address the root causes of feral cat control and to evaluate whether humane trap/neuter/release/manage programs are effective or if their efficacy could be improved. It is our understanding that the island of Kauai already secured the service of a company that monitors endangered birds and humanely euthanizes feline predators in areas that are only accessible by helicopter.

Lynn Muramaru

Board Member

Pacific Pet Alliance

References:

- <https://www.biisc.org/pest/feral-cats/>
- https://youtu.be/rnBIC8_6sFY?feature=shared
- <https://www.vox.com/down-to-earth/24041534/hawaii-cats-invasive-species-extinction>
- <https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/hisc/news/resolution-19-2-keeping-cats-indoors-using-peer-reviewed-science/>
- https://www.researchgate.net/publication/231177038_Costs_and_Benefits_of_Trap-Neuter-Release_and_Euthanasia_for_Removal_of_Urban_Cats_in_Oahu_Hawaii

**Testimony of American Bird Conservancy
In Support of HB 364_HD1 Relating to Animal Control
House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs | February 12, 2025**

On behalf of American Bird Conservancy and our members throughout Hawai'i, we are writing to express our **strong support for HB 364_HD1**.

Although cats (*Felis catus*) can make wonderful pets, Hawai'i is experiencing a cat overpopulation crisis that puts cats, other domestic animals, wildlife, and human communities at risk. **To foster a healthy and safe environment for people and animals, it is essential that Hawai'i incentivize and support responsible cat ownership behaviors, including spaying or neutering pet cats.**

The spaying or neutering of pet cats is highly popular among cat owners and other Hawai'i residents. **Research of Hawai'i residents conducted by Griffith University in 2024 found that two-thirds of respondents supported making pet cat sterilization mandatory.** Many of Hawai'i's cat owners have already chosen to spay or neuter their cat voluntarily, but further encouragement and support is needed to spay or neuter the rest. Spaying or neutering pet cats not only benefits the cat and owner but also eliminates undesirable breeding, which contributes to the cat overpopulation and resulting environmental and public health risks.

HB 364_HD1 is a common-sense strategy to reduce the cat overpopulation and provide resources for responsible cat ownership. **This bill is consistent with animal welfare, wildlife conservation, and public health and safety goals.** Key components of this bill include:

1. A mandate that all pet cats above a certain age be spayed or neutered, with certain exceptions;
2. The establishment of a responsible pathway for deliberate pet cat breeding; and
3. Financial support for reducing the cat overpopulation, including free-roaming cats, that is consistent with reducing environmental and public health risks.

Cat Overpopulation Risks

Cats are an invasive species in Hawai'i that have contributed to the extinction of two endemic Hawaiian species, the Lāna'i Hookbill and Moho (Hawaiian Rail), and the decline of countless others. Research has repeatedly shown that cats are a [major threat to Hawai'i's unique birds](#), such as 'A'o (Newell's Shearwater) and 'U'au (Hawaiian Petrel), two species which have experienced [94% and 78% population declines](#), respectively.

Contact

abcbirds.org
info@abcbirds.org
tel. **540.253.5780**
fax **540.253.5782**

Address

regular, registered, or certified mail:
P.O. Box 249, The Plains, VA 20198
physical address for deliveries:
**8255 E. Main Street, Suites D & E,
Marshall, VA 20115**



Cats can also carry a large number of infectious parasites and diseases that put people and wildlife at risk. For example, [research at Kapiolani Medical Center for Women and Children](#) found that **keiki in Hawai'i were particularly at risk of cat scratch disease**. These human exposures are not only dangerous for individual health but, with a median patient hospital stay of 8.5 days, also a financial burden for families.

Toxoplasma gondii, the parasite that causes toxoplasmosis in birds and mammals, is excreted in cat feces. A single cat can excrete up to hundreds of millions of *T. gondii* eggs (called "oocysts") into the environment via its feces, and these oocysts remain infectious for months to years. This parasite is a serious risk for Hawai'i's wildlife, [including Hawaiian Monk Seals](#), and has long been recognized as a public health risk in the state.

HB 364_HD1 is essential to addressing the cat overpopulation in Hawai'i. This bill will encourage responsible cat ownership and reduce risks for Hawai'i's residents, both people and animals. **We respectfully ask that you support HB 364_HD1.**

Mahalo for your consideration,

Grant Sizemore, M.S., CWB®
Director of Invasive Species Programs

Chris Farmer, Ph.D.
Hawai'i Program Director

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 12:37:11 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hob Osterlund	Kaua'i Albatross Network	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs Committee,

The Kaua'i Albatross Network stands in the strongest possible support of HB 364. Hawai'i already has an estimated half-million feral cats, and our native birds as well as monk seals are bearing the largest brunt of the cats' impact. Equally vital is being sure to withhold support for any program that neuters cats and then releases them on the landscape. Such cats may be sterile but they still have to hunt, and they still have to poop---leaving toxoplasmosis in our watershed and killing endangered monk seals. Please stand firm in requiring that all of Hawai'i cats are fixed. It can make all the difference.



Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

Date: Feb. 10, 2025

To: Chair Rep. David Tarnas
Vice Chair Rep. Mahina Poepoe
and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

Submitted By: Stephanie Kendrick, Director of Community Engagement
Hawaiian Humane Society, 808-356-2217

RE: Testimony in support of HB 364 HD1: Relating to Animal Control
Thursday, Feb. 12, 2025, 2 p.m., Room 325 & Videoconference

On behalf of the Hawaiian Humane Society, thank you for considering our support for House Bill 364, HD1, which establishes the Spay and Neuter Special Fund to reduce pet overpopulation, including the free-roaming cat population, and authorizes an income tax designation to provide revenues into the special fund; requires that female cats over the age of three months and male cats over the age of five months be surgically sterilized, with certain exceptions; authorizes county animal control authorities to establish and enforce a permit program to allow the responsible breeding of cats; establishes minimum requirements for breeding permits and penalties; and appropriates funds.

Hawaiian Humane has long advocated for the regulation of all pet breeders and this would be an excellent step in that direction. Hawai'i is one of very few states with no regulation of animal-related businesses. Further spay/neuter is the best way to prevent pet overpopulation. It also affords animals a longer, healthier life, and reduces nuisance behaviors.

As the animal services contractor for the City and County of Honolulu, we do need to point out that requiring the counties to enforce this measure represents an unfunded mandate from the state. Animal business regulation in most states is administered by a state agency. While county animal services personnel have the expertise to execute this scope of work, animal services are underfunded across Hawai'i for the current scope of work defined by county ordinances. If the state wants the counties to enforce this



Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

measure, rather than imposing that responsibility on a state agency, it should appropriate funding for that purpose

We also request the removal of the following language highlighted in red from page 2:

HRS36- (3) (b) Moneys in the special fund shall be expended to reduce pet overpopulation, including the free-roaming cat population, by providing spaying and neutering surgery and associated veterinary care; provided that ~~spayed or neutered animals are not re-released into the environment and~~ the uses and expenditures of moneys in the special fund shall follow the eligibility criteria established by the advisory committee established under subsection (c).

We understand that the intent of this language is to protect wildlife from Free-Roaming cats, but it will have the opposite effect. Many Free-Roaming cats are unsocialized to humans and cannot be adopted into homes. Sanctuaries for unsocialized cats are few, because they are expensive to maintain, and perpetually full. Trap-Neuter-Return-Manage is the only large-scale effort being undertaken to reduce the population of Free-Roaming cats, thanks to an army of volunteers who are willing to trap cats for spay/neuter surgery. While the cats are rereleased to their outdoor homes, they are not making more cats, which is a vast improvement over a breeding population of Free-Roaming cats.

The state's alternative, lethal control, is an inhumane response to abandoned pets and is ineffective. It has never been successful in areas with large human populations. It is so unpopular in our compassionate community that it is not even practiced in many of the areas where the state has given itself permission to do so.

To maximize the effectiveness of these funds to reduce pet and Free-Roaming cat overpopulation, we urge you to remove the barriers to supporting TNRM efforts.

Please pass HB364, HD1, with state funding for county enforcement and an approach that uses all of the best tools available to us for curbing overpopulation.

Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 5:58:34 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Kaaumoana	Hanalei Watershed Hui	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

We strongly support this legislation. It is life and death for our native things.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 6:47:03 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Natalie Playdon	Cat Fanciers of Hawaii	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concern

My name is Natalie Playdon. I am strongly opposed to HB364.

I have been breeding Persian cats in Hawaii for 40 years. I have imported cats from Sweden, Australia, Florida, New Jersey, Texas, Washington DC, and California. I have exported to most of those states as well as Japan and Australia.

Legitimate breeders' cats are registered with CFA or TICA which govern the rules for responsible breeding of cats. When kittens are sold, the buyer is bound by contract which specifies that the buyer must neuter any kitten that is not to be used for breeding. Kittens to be used for breeding must be registered by CFA or TICA. Contracts also include a clause that provides that, if any time the buyer is unable to care for the kitten, it will be returned to the breeder. Thus, NO cats or kittens produced by legitimate breeders will ever join the undesirable cat population.

The bill specifies that all kittens are to be neutered by the age of 3 months. Veterinarians do not agree with performing this surgery at such an early age as it can seriously interfere with the kitten's development. This and other provisions of the bill are best left to certified veterinarians. These include frequency of breeding, number of breedings per female, etc. Female cats have irregular breeding patterns and can develop pyometra, an infection of the uterus which can be fatal, if their breedings are controlled by arbitrary, fixed guidelines. Such guidelines should be decreed, if at all, only by veterinarians.

Lastly, there are very few legitimate breeders in Hawaii. Being one, I believe there are fewer than 15 with each having less than 10 breeding cats. That would result in a total of $(15 \times 10 \times \$250) = \$37,500$ in total fees to be paid annually by these breeders, or \$2500 average per breeder—a cost that many could not afford. This fee would be immensely consequential to the breeders yet extremely inadequate to eliminate the many free roaming cats.

Why penalize legitimate breeders by assessing inadequate fees for the purpose of reducing the number of free roaming cats and regulating the practices of cat breeders which are already controlled by a registry?

Thank you for reviewing my testimony regarding HB364. I respectfully encourage you to oppose it.

Natalie Playdon

playdonn001@hawaii.rr.com

808 497-3215

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 9:50:30 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marian Hussenbux	Animal Interfaith Alliance in Britain	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We refer to The House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs's hearing of HB364, HD1, Relating to Animal Control on Wednesday, Feb. 12,

This bill requires that cats over the age of five months be surgically sterilized, with certain exceptions. It also authorizes county animal control authorities to establish and enforce a permit programme to allow the responsible breeding of cats, establishes minimum requirements for breeding permits and penalties, and establishes the Spay and Neuter Special Fund to reduce pet overpopulation, including the free-roaming cat population, and various revenue and fundraising sources for the special fund.

We very much support the regulation of pet breeders as unscrupulous people in pursuit of profit can cause great suffering to animals and buyers can be unaware of the health of cats they wish to buy, creating problems later on to the cats and their families. We also support the funding dedicated to spay/neuter initiatives in this measure.

We also endorse the following amendments to:

Include funding for enforcement, which the state is delegating to the counties;

Remove the restriction that grants cannot be used to spay/neuter free-roaming cats who will be returned to their outdoor homes.

If the cats are not returned to their outdoor homes to which they are attached, they will become the responsibility of rescues, which are already over-subscribed.

We beg to support this important Bill.



**Comments on HB 364
Relating to Animal Control
House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce
February 12, 2025**

Please accept these comments on House Bill 363, a measure relating to animal control, cat sterilization and funding mechanisms for spay/neuter.

It's important to examine all possible implications of proposed legislation, considering how it will be enforced and any potential adverse outcomes. For example, examining how a requirement that cat owners sterilize their pets overwhelmingly impacts families experiencing poverty and those without access to veterinary care.

Data collected through our Pets for Life program shows that when people in underserved communities are provided with access to spay/neuter resources (such as cost assistance and transportation), the percentage of altered pes in the community skyrockets to 89%--nearly identical to the national rate of 91%. This tells us that most pet owners, regardless of nationality, religion or other factors, are not ideologically opposed to altering pets.

As such, mandating that owners alter their pets is self-defeating as it only serves to penalize people who do not have resources, and it can even remove pets from families who love them. Instead, we recommend focusing on an infrastructure that incentivizes the procedure and provides all community members access to spay/neuter services.

The truth is that most people want to do the right thing but simply lack the resources to do so. This is particularly true for those who find themselves caring for a large number of free-roaming cats. Unable to get enough of the cats sterilized in a timely manner, the cats continue to reproduce, making the goal of reducing the population even more of a challenge. When funding is made available to cover the cost of sterilization, organizations which deliver these services to communities can be more effective in their outreach efforts. Not only will this prevent many surplus animal births and deaths but also lowers the cost of animal care and control in the future, reduce public health concerns and decrease threats to wildlife and the environment.

The HSUS supports legislative efforts to create sustainable funding streams for spay/neuter programs, particularly those accessible to underserved populations and free-roaming cats. Cost is the primary barrier to spay/neuter services for individuals as well as for animal welfare organizations. Spay/neuter subsidy funds have proven to be effective in the states where they exist, particularly when paired with strategic marketing plans to raise awareness and participation, as well as considerations for the administration of the funds.

One of the greatest needs for spay/neuter funding in Hawaii is for free-roaming cats. Prohibiting special funds being used for this population of cats will likely circumvent any ground gained by increasing the sterilization rate of indoor cats.

There is an urgent need for practical and effective solutions to the challenges associated with the presence of cats outdoors. There is no one-size-fits-all solution to managing cats in the environment,



but with determination, innovation, and collaboration, we can implement and sustain effective programs to humanely resolve human-cat-wildlife conflicts. HB 364 seeks to take steps in that direction yet misses the mark in several places. We recommend re-examining the bill language, it's impact and it's implications to cat owners in the state.

TESTIMONY OF PACIFIC WHALE FOUNDATION

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2025
2:00 PM

IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL HB364 HD1

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

Pacific Whale Foundation (PWF), a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the ocean through science and advocacy and inspiring environmental stewardship, strongly supports HB364, requiring the sterilization of all cats over five months old, as an essential measure to protect Hawai'i's fragile ecosystems and unique marine wildlife.

Since the founding of PWF in 1980, the organization has been dedicated to saving the world's whales from extinction. Today PWF focuses on the protection of whales, dolphins, and all marine life. HB364 will help to reduce the number of feral cats in Hawai'i. This is critical because feral cats are a vector for toxoplasmosis. Toxoplasmosis is a parasitic disease found in cat feces and has been linked to the deaths of endangered Hawaiian monk seals and spinner dolphins. This parasite is transmitted into the ocean via stormwater runoff and poses a grave threat to marine ecosystems and the livelihoods of those who depend on them. NOAA Fisheries has documented numerous cases of marine mammal deaths caused by toxoplasmosis (<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/pacific-islands/endangered-species-conservation/toxoplasmosis-and-its-effects-hawaii-marine>).

Hawai'i is estimated to have tens of thousands of feral cats, contributing to the proliferation of toxoplasmosis and the loss of native species. Sterilization programs such as described in this legislation are a key step in mitigating this threat by eliminating the uncontrolled reproduction of cats in Hawai'i. **PWF supports this bill provided that spayed or neutered animals are not re-released into the environment.**

As an organization dedicated to protecting marine life and supporting sustainable ecosystems, PWF recognizes the importance of addressing threats to ocean health. HB364 aligns with PWF's mission by reducing a major source of harm to marine mammals. This approach is both humane and effective in decreasing ecological damage.



Protecting the ocean through science and advocacy, saving a species and inspiring environmental stewardship

We urge the committee to pass HB364 HD1 to protect Hawai'i's wildlife and marine ecosystems. Mahalo for your leadership on this critical issue and for considering the testimony of PWF and its supporters.

Sincerely,

Susan Frett

Susan Frett
Conservation Director

BIISC
23 E. Kawili St.
Hilo, HI 96720
(808) 933-3340
www.biisc.org



February 11, 2025

Hearing: Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

RE: HB364

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

We would like to express our strong support for this measure.

There are very few organizations on our island that can (occasionally) accept unwanted kittens or cats, and so many cats end up callously dumped, a terrible outcome not only for the lives of those animals but also for our native ecosystems. As in many other island environments, cats are a very destructive invasive species in Hawai'i. Many of our native endangered animals, found nowhere else in the world, are threatened by cats. Not only do cats directly predate on our vulnerable native birds, they carry and spread the disease toxoplasmosis which has already killed several Hawaiian monk seals.

We believe that the key to ending the problem of unwanted cats is to “turn off the tap” – stop the flow at its source, sterilizing all pet cats and dogs and encouraging that these domestic pets remain where they belong, in a household. This bill, requiring sterilization for pet cats and limiting breeding to only permitted individuals, is a huge step in working toward solving this overpopulation problem humanely.

We appreciate that this requirement is being paired with funds to support spaying/neutering. On the Big Island, we have many low-income and working class families who would benefit greatly from enhanced access to these surgeries for their family pets, and prevent this bill from placing an unfair burden on those who are truly just wanting a loving family pet.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.

Franny Kinslow Brewer
Program Manager
fbrewer@hawaii.edu
(808) 933-3340

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 11:22:45 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elke Johnston	Cat Fancier Association of Hawaii	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Our names are Elke Johnston and Robert Shin. We are OPPOSITION of HB364.

As an exhibitor of the Cat Fanciers of Hawaii Club (CFH) cat shows, we have relationships with the breeders in the club and feel that they are being unfairly targeted by the introduction of this bill. The club is governed but the overall Cat Fanciers Association (CFA) body that is an internationally recognized body. The CFA has rules, regulations, and standards that the breeders must abide by in order to have a cattery in good standing. Breeders do not need to be regulated by the state as well.

I respectfully ask that you oppose HB364.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Elke Johnston and Robert Shin

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 1:01:26 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jordan Lerma	Nene Research and Conservation	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jordan Lerma, and I am the Executive Director of Nene Research and Conservation (nene.org). I am writing to express my strong support for HB364, which mandates the sterilization of cats over three months of age and establishes a dedicated spay and neuter fund that cannot be used for programs releasing cats back into the environment.

As a member of Hawai'i's conservation community, I have witnessed firsthand the devastating impacts feral cats have on our native birds, marine mammals, and fragile ecosystems. Feral cats are a primary vector for toxoplasmosis, a disease that has proven fatal to native wildlife, including endangered Nēnē geese. Tragically, we have documented cases, such as the recent loss of Nēnē goslings due to toxoplasmosis, highlighting the urgency of this issue. Toxoplasmosis also poses a serious risk to human health. Just yesterday, our colleagues at the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) spoke with a group in Hilo who had contracted toxoplasmosis and are experiencing lasting side effects. This underscores the broader public health implications of unchecked feral cat populations.

HB364 represents a critical step in addressing Hawai'i's feral cat crisis. By providing funding for the sterilization of pet cats at low or no cost to owners, this bill will help curb the source of feral cat populations while reducing the strain on animal shelters and humane societies. These organizations can then redirect their limited resources toward animal care and adoption services rather than being overwhelmed by the continuous influx of unsterilized cats.

Importantly, HB364 ensures that spay and neuter funds are allocated exclusively to programs that focus on responsible pet ownership, not on ineffective and costly methods like Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR). Peer-reviewed research consistently shows that TNR fails to control feral cat populations effectively and requires ongoing, unsustainable funding. Moreover, the majority of Hawai'i's residents do not support the maintenance of outdoor cat colonies, which pose a persistent threat to our native wildlife.

At Nene Research and Conservation, we have developed the Cat Map tool, which tracks cat colonies across the state. The data collected through this tool shows no evidence that TNR programs effectively reduce feral cat populations. Instead, the data highlights persistent colony growth and the continued risks posed to native wildlife.

Additionally, it is crucial that these funds support and incentivize responsible pet ownership by reducing the financial burden associated with spay and neuter services. Making sterilization more accessible and affordable encourages pet owners to take proactive steps in managing their pets responsibly, ultimately contributing to the reduction of feral cat populations statewide.

I urge you to prioritize this funding for sterilizing pet cats, a proven and essential public service that effectively reduces cat populations over time.

Mahalo for considering my testimony in support of HB364.

Respectfully,

Jordan Lerma
Executive Director
Nene Research and Conservation

February 11, 2025

To: Chair Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs (JHA))

Subject: House Bill (H.B.) 364 Relating to Animal Control

Hearing Date: February 12, 2025

My name is Catherine Painter.

I strongly oppose HB364 as it is currently written.

As a director of the Cat Fanciers of Hawaii Club (CFH), I have relationships with the breeders in the club and feel that they are being unfairly targeted by the introduction of this bill. The club is governed but the overall Cat Fanciers Association (CFA) body that is an internationally recognized body. The CFA has rules, regulations, and standards that the breeders must abide by in order to have a cattery in good standing. Breeders do not need to be regulated by the state as well.

Asking the responsible cat breeders in Hawaii (of which there are less than 20 in the state) to fund the feral cat spay/neuter program is a shameless money grab that will in no way impact Hawaii's feral cat problem. Responsible breeders should not be required or expected to finance the state's solution to this problem.

I respectfully ask that you oppose HB364.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Catherine Painter

500 Lunalilo Home Road, Unit 41B

Honolulu, HI 96825

Mobile: 808-754-0375

Email: cathy@form-ideas.com

Testimony in Opposition to HB 364 HD1

Date of Hearing: Wednesday, February 12, 2025

Submitted by: Hawaii HulaCat Club

Members of the House committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs:

The Hawaii Hulacat Club respectfully submits it's testimony in opposition to SB 364 HD1

In reading HB364 HD1, it seems like the issues are the age of spay/neutering , establishing a spay neuter/neuter fund, setting up a breeder permit system, plus our local communities and conservationists regarding free roaming cats - "lumped in" with concerns with the role our Hawaii Cat Fancy plays in the problem at hand.

Hawaii Cat Fanciers breed cats in order to preserve their breeds, be able to show their cats at cat shows to the public who are interested in cats, educate about their care and ownership. In addition to cat shows, the Hawaii cat fancy also participates in Pet Expos, educational meetings revolving around grooming, vaccination, worming, feeding and care of cats, and in local TV shows, including news programs, to promote the same.

Our Hawaii cat fanciers not only belong to our local clubs but also are members of the Cat Fanciers Association (CFA). CFA is our national/international breed registry. It is like AKC for dogs but, unlike dogs, CFA maintains an international breed registry. CFA is a very large organization with thousands of members worldwide.

Our members are already guided and governed and are required to follow very precise rules pertaining to the management, breeding, and showing of cats in countries around the world. Our cats are not members of the "free roaming" group to which you are referring. Indeed, we are not your problem!

The state setting up a breeding permit system is not necessary as an **added** layer of control. Our cats are not outdoor cats, spreading disease and hunting for birds. Our cats are indoor cats and their progeny and not pushed outdoors. In fact, if a person/s cannot keep one of our pedigree cats in Hawaii, the individual breeders/clubs sponsor re-homing programs for the cat.

Our dear state, setting up a breeding permit system for the few Hawaii cat breeders seems not only punitive and pointless as we are not part of the feral cat problem, but would be an expensive and additional bureaucratic layer for the state and the breeder as well. I also fear, it would cause disruption and fear throughout our public programs and community outreach that our dedicated hobbyists and fancy don't need that. We assist with the cat education of our citizens!

Our Hawaii cat fancy has little impact on the death and destruction of Hawaii wildlife. Here on Kauai, our S/N/R program is almost free of charge and managed well by our own Kauai Humane Society. We even have forest bird protection projects that monitor our rare bird population and euthanize any predator endangering their wellbeing.

Charlee Abrams

Treasurer/ Hawaii Hulacat Club

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 11:30:44 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Bohlen	Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Hawaii Reef and Ocean Coalition **SUPPORTS** funding spay and neuter programs for cats. **Toxoplasmosis** is spread by a parasite carried by young cats. It can be fatal to warm-blooded animals including humans, especially with weakened immune systems, and **endangered monk seals. Controlling cat populations would help protect these people and marine mammals from toxoplasmosis.**

Please pass this bill!

Mahalo!

Hawaii Reef and Ocean Coalition (by Ted Bohlen)



850 Richards Street, Suite 505, Honolulu, HI 96813-4709

office@hiaudubon.org

<https://hiaudubon.org/>

**Testimony of the Hawaii Audubon Society
In Support of HB 364 Relating to Animal Control
House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce | January 29, 2025**

On behalf of the Hawaii Audubon Society, we strongly support HB 364 to address Hawai'i's cat overpopulation crisis, which threatens native wildlife, public health, and responsible pet ownership.

Free-roaming cats contributed to the extinction of the Lāna'i Hookbill and Moho (Hawaiian Rail), and now threaten the Palila, the 'A'o (Newell's Shearwater) and 'U'au (Hawaiian Petrel) as well as other endemic birds. Additionally, cats transmit diseases such as toxoplasmosis, which endangers Hawaiian Monk Seals and poses health risks to residents.

HB 364 provides a practical solution by:

1. Mandating spaying or neutering of pet cats with limited exemptions;
2. Establishing a responsible framework for regulated breeding; and
3. Allocating resources to humanely manage free-roaming cat populations.

A 2024 Griffith University study found two-thirds of Hawai'i residents support mandatory pet cat sterilization. Many pet owners already comply, but additional measures are needed to reduce overpopulation and its consequences.

HB 364 aligns with wildlife conservation, animal welfare, and public health goals. We respectfully urge the Committee to support this bill.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Keith Swindle, Executive Director

Hawaii Audubon Society

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/7/2025 3:12:43 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Douglas Perrine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Feral cats pose an existential threat to our endemic and endangered wildlife in Hawaii, including nene, Hawaiian monks seals, spinner dolphins, Hawaiian petrels, palila, and more, both from direct predation, and from the spread of toxoplasmosis, for which cats are the required host. Please pass HB364 to start taking some measure of responsibility for this. Time is short. There may be as few as 300 palila left alive in the world, and cats continue to kill them.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/7/2025 3:13:21 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Duane Inoue	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs (JHA))

Subject: House Bill (H.B.) 364 Relating to Animal Control

Hearing Date: February 12, 2025

My name is Duane Inoue, and I am a concerned citizen, testifying against H.B. 364, as written.

The bill requires that that cats over the age of three months be surgically sterilized, with certain exceptions. Authorizes county animal control authorities to establish and enforce a permit program to allow the responsible breeding of cats. Establishes minimum requirements for breeding permits and penalties. Establishes the Spay and Neuter Special Fund to reduce pet overpopulation, including the free-roaming cat population, and various revenue and fundraising sources for the special fund. Appropriates funds

I oppose this bill based on following concerns:

1. What studies did the State conduct in developing the proposed bill? Did State coordinate with all stake holders (i.e., veterinarians, animal welfare organizations, Cat Fanciers Association (CFA), The International Cat Association (TICA), cat clubs, cat owners, etc.) on this matter? Cat Fanciers of Hawaii club and CFA did not know about the proposed bill until it was introduced.

Is the breeding permit requirement based on animal ordinance from City Of Los Angeles, which is known to be unfriendly to cat and dog breeders with its complicated animal ordinance? See <https://legislative.cfa.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/integrated-text-dog-breeding-permit-moratorium-and-sec.-53.15.2.-breeding-and-transfer-of-dogs-and-cats-1.pdf>.

I recommend that State analyze the ordinance to see what can be used in Hawaii. I think that State consider language similar to City of Los Angeles ordinance, to allow exception to show cats bred under national or international breed registry. See following para:

"A. The dog or cat is a breed approved by and registered with a national or international breed registry or association which, at a minimum, requires identification of the breed, date of birth, names of registered sire and dam, the name of the breeder and recordkeeping relating to

breeding, transfer of ownership and death. In addition, the animal must actively show or compete and shall have competed in at least one show or sporting competition hosted or staged by, or under the approval of, a national association, unless it is too young to compete. The owner shall provide verified proof to the satisfaction of the General Manager of the Department with each application for a new or renewal license. The Board of Animal Services Commissioners may issue further guidelines for enforcement of this Subsection.”

I contacted one of the cosponsors for the HB 364 and found out that Representative Luke Evslin, drafted and introduced it. He provided additional information about the proposed bill:

"1) The bill was developed in collaboration with a large number of pro-wildlife groups from around the state. I was working to identify low hanging fruit that both bird and cat advocates could rally around. I did consult extensively with the Kaua'i Humane Society and the bill draft was circulated by KHS to the other humane societies for review and comment.

2) No estimates have been made in that regard.

3) The bill envisions mandatory sterilization to reduce overpopulation by ensuring that cat owners are responsible stewards of the law. Less breeding cats means lower population growth.

4) Rhode Island has similar statewide legislation. I don't know if they have data yet showing that it's been effective. Their law has been in effective since 2006. “

I think that the State needs to carefully analyze the Rhode Island’s program to ensure that it will work properly in Hawaii. It should be noted that Rhode Island does require a cat breeding permit. However, it is in addition to "intact permits” to be issued by animal control authority to cat owners who refuse to have them fixed.

As written, the proposed HB364, is inadequate and needs to be revised, as necessary.

2. What is the rational for surgical sterilization at age of 3 months for females and 5 months for male cats. As noted by Today’s Veterinary Practice, a peer-reviewed clinical journal, the optimal age to spay/neuter a cat is before it reaches 5 months of age. See <https://todaysveterinarypractice.com/preventive-medicine/optimal-age-spay-neuter-cat/>

They recommend that for “owned cats”, the optimal age would be 4 to 5 months.

They note that: “Most practices have defined kitten wellness protocols and schedule appointments for vaccinations and parasite control for kittens from about 6 weeks to 4 months of age. Early spay/neuter involves simply adding one more appointment 2 to 3 weeks after the last vaccination. In that manner, cats are fully immunized before being admitted to the hospital for surgery and sterilized before becoming sexually active.”

For cats in shelters, the optimal age could be as early as 8 weeks.

Please note that Hawaii Board of Veterinary Medicine testified and recommended a change of 3 months to 5 months for male cats because of medical reasons. They did not address whether a female cat should be sterilized at the age of 3 months.

It would seem that sterilization at age of 5 months for both sexes of cats would simplify the proposed bill.

Please note that Revised Ordinances of Honolulu, Supplement 7, 6-2024, Ordinance No. 24-1 through Ordinance No. 24-21, June 30, 2024, Section 12-6.6, already mandates that cats over age of six months to be sterilized by a veterinarian if the cats are to be "at large" (i.e., on a public street, on public or private school grounds, or in any other public place...). City and County of Honolulu, and other counties may need to revise similar ordinances to mirror the state's requirement.

3. Breeding Permit exemption from sterilization requirement. How does the cat breeding permit reduce pet overpopulation and free-roaming cat population?

Was the intent to impose this cost to cat breeders to offset the cost of spay/neuter through permit cost and penalties?

Did the State determine how many cat breeders are in Hawaii? You would need this to determine how much funds can be collected via breeding permit under the proposed bill, as well as, projected penalties.

The number should include the breeders who follow the guidance and rules of Cat Fanciers of America (CFA) and The International Cat Association (TICA). The total number of breeders should also include "backyard" breeders who do not follow best breeding practices from CFA and TICA.

Based on the Internet, there are only 10 breeders under CFA and 8 breeders under TICA in Hawaii. Assuming that each breeder has at least 2 breeding cats, that only equates to \$9,000 to fund the spay and neuter special fund per year. BTW, if the State wants to increase "spay and neuter" funds to decrease pet overpopulation, it could include dog breeding permits. Based on the Internet, there are 58 American Kennel Club (AKC). Assuming that each breeder has at least 2 breeding dogs, that equates to \$29,000 for funding.

The only way to get sufficient funds will be to require "backyard" breeders to purchase breeding permits. However, how will the State identify these backyard breeders and enforce the requirement?

I doubt that the State will be able to identify and collect funds from these backyard breeders, therefore, the burden will fall on very small number of CFA and TICA breeders. Accordingly, the requirement for cat breeding permit should NOT be imposed.

This proposed bill has failed to identify the magnitude of the "cat breeding" problem and cost of enforcement to "correct the problem". Please note that Hawaii State Auditor identified that

State's proposed licensing of large dog breeders was problematic because it did not identify "magnitude of the problem of unscrupulous breeders" and, accordingly, the cost of enforcement was unknown. See Sunrise Analysis: Regulation of Large-Scale Dog Breeders and Facilities Report No. 11-02, October 2011.

The cost of cat breeding permit of \$250 per each intact cat on an annual basis is NOT reasonable. Please note that the State is proposing SB593 which create a dog breeding license of \$500 on a biennial basis for "large dog breeders" (defined as breeder with more than ten dogs over the age of twelve months with intact sexual organs).

4. The proposed bill identifies "animal control authority" to collect annual fee of \$250 per breeding cat, administer the permit program, etc. Did State coordinate with all "animal control authority" to ensure that they will be able to collect and administer the program? How will the authority identify cat breeders? The animal control authority will be able to search the Internet and/or contact CFA/TICA to identify hobby breeders. However, how will they identify backyard breeders? Will they patrol and canvas neighborhoods, search classified ads, ask veterinarians, etc.? How will the animal control authority ensure that annual fees are collected from all pet breeders? How will they collect penalties from breeders that do not obtain permits or sell pets without permits?

5. How will the State determine which cats older than specified months will need to be spayed or neutered?

It's difficult to ascertain the age of a cat. It's even harder to determine if a cat has been spayed or neutered. You can examine if a cat has a spay scar, tattoo, ear notch, or even do a blood test called "Anti-Müllerian Hormone Assay" which is very effective in determining whether a cat is spayed or still intact. Veterinarians would have a difficult time identifying female unspayed cats without medical records and/or careful physical examination. There would be no way that an animal control authority will be able to make such determinations out in the field.

Accordingly, the State will only know the age and status of the cat, if the owner voluntarily provides the information to the State and take necessary actions; or if veterinarians are required to report unspayed/unneutered cats over the age of 3 months.

Will veterinarian be required by law to report such information? Will they be required to report this to the Animal Control Authority? How will the Animal Control Authority enforce the spay/neuter requirement?

6. The bill will establish 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 purpose of proposed bill is to reduce "pet overpopulation". However, para 143-B(4)(b), adds "including free-roaming cat population", which could imply that "special funds" could be used for spay/neuter of "non cat" species. If the purpose of the bill is to reduce cat population, it

should specify that funds be used only for that purpose only. The use off these funds for spay/neuter of dogs, rabbits, etc., will not reduce free-roaming cat population.

Recommend that language be revised to specify that special fund be used only for reduction of “pet overpopulation” in cats only. If the intent, is to use the funds to spay/neuter other pets, the bill should clearly state that fact.

7. The proposed bill authorizes country animal authority to establish and enforce a permit program to allow the “responsible breeding of cats”. We feel strongly that the State should not be able to mandate best practices since they do not specialize in cat breeding. CFA and TICA are both cat fancy organizations that provide detailed breeding standards for its members. We do not need the State to establish and mandate is its own standards.

In any case, we do not agree with following requirement to show proof that cat in a breeding program:

a. “(iii) Is not genetically similar to any cat the breeding cat is bred with;” (Comment: We do not understand what this means. All cats bred will be genetically similar to cats bred with.)

b. “(vi) Is at least eighteen months of age and less than seven years of age; and”. (Comment: We do not understand why these age limits are included? Are these age limits based on science?)

c. “(vii) For a female cat, has not had more than one litter a year and less than four litters in its lifetime; and”. (Comment: The number of litter per year and in a lifetime should be based on cat’s health, veterinarian recommendation, and owner’s preference. What happens if the female cat has already had one litter or has had four litters in its lifetime and presents with another pregnancy?)

8. The State has revised the effective date of the Act to 1 July 3000 although Section 3 (i.e. income checkoff) and Sections 4/5 (I.e funding), effective 31 December 2025 and 1 July 2025, respectively. The effective date of Act was revised to a significantly future date to “encourage further discussion.” I feel strongly that this proposed and any future bill should be developed after adequate discussions have been made with all stakeholders. The State should include pet owners in future discussions relating to pets.

Duane Inoue

95-214 Paeheu Pl, Mililani, HI. 96789

(808) 372-1162

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/8/2025 12:14:33 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Linda Leveen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill!!!!

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 7:49:05 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lois Crozer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am so hopeful that finally we will be able to make a dent on these cat colonies and reduce unwanted pets. Dogs and cats were bred to be pets, and we need to be responsible caretakers and not abandon them to disease and homelessness. PLEASE help with spay and neutering NOW. The shelters are overfull, and yes, they are beginning to have to put down dogs that would have had a chance to be loved if we had more space and people to work with their traumas.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 1:41:37 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jane E Arnold	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I have a particular interest in legislation that addresses the number of free-roaming cats in Hawaii. I volunteer for Hawaiian Humane Society and for Catfriends, both of which offer low-cost spay/neutering of free-roaming cats. A recent survey of Oahu residents by the Humane Society found that the vast majority of those surveyed support TNR (trap/neuter/return) and spaying/neutering of unowned cats. This has been shown to be the most effective way to control the free-roaming cat population. It works much better than killing these cats. Every female cat that is spayed prevents 1000 cats from being born in the next ten years. And because TNR controls the cat population, it benefits wildlife. However, at present there is a shortage of appointments for low-cost spay/neuter surgeries.

HB364 would create state-wide spay/neuter grants to non-profit organizations that provide spay/neuter surgeries. Possible sources for this funding could come from a check-off box on tax returns, special license plates, or the general fund. Please support this bill.

Jane E Arnold

1763 Iwi Way

Apt D

Honolulu, HI. 96816

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 4:56:28 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joessie Antonio	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concern,

My name is Joessie Antonio, I am in OPPOSITION of HB364.

As an exhibitor of the Cat Fanciers of Hawai'i Club (CFH) cat shows, I have relationships with the breeders in the club and feel that they are being unfairly targeted by the introduction of this bill. The club is governed but the overall Cat Fanciers Association (CFA) body that is an internationally recognized body. The CFA has rules, regulations, and standards that the breeders must abide by in order to have a cattery in good standing. Breeders do not need to be regulated by the state as well.

The free roaming cat population is an issue that can only be resolved with funds to help trap and release programs. Not by imposing more regulations on purebred breeders. CFA cat breeders have ethics and integrity and follow strict standard guidelines already put forth by the CFA.

I respectfully ask that you oppose HB364.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Joessie Antonio

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 5:14:19 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vivian S. Toellner	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha my name is Vivian S. Toellner, from the eastside of the Island of Hawai'i. I would like to see our State support free / low cost Spay Neuter Clinics held by volunteer 501c3 nonprofits here on the Big Island of Hawai'i. This would be a wise use of our tax dollars. 686 dogs and cats were fixed by Petfix Hawaii in January 2025. Just think what an impact that is on animal over-population in the community. Clearly people want this service. Yes, there are that many out there to fix. If other methods, such as round up and kill worked, we would not be discussing this problem today.

I too love our native birds and animals and want us to increase their safety with this spay neuter bill. TNRM cats need to be eligible for these funds, as not doing so only creates more cats. Please support the humane reduction in animal overpopulation, the veterinarians, vet techs, volunteers, pet owners, TNRM caretakers, are supporting spay/neuter with their long hours of community work and donations.

Cats are free roaming by nature. Even indoor pet cats get out and never return home. Cats are abandoned at parks and transfer stations. Turning away Trap Neuter Return cats is not productive. **It is far better to sterilize all cats that come to a clinic.** The breeding of cats in the open environment is the **Cat-Tastrophe** we have now!! Consider funding organizations that specialize in Trap-neuter-release practices, provided that they be encouraged not to release back into the environment whenever possible.

In fact, Petfix requires all cats at their clinics to have the ear tipped to show sterilization. This prevents cats returning to the clinic and thereby up much needed appointments! Please understand that animal issues are complicated and require looking at all possibilities.

Also, I would like to see the Bill to stipulate that volunteer 501c3 nonprofits that provide no cost / low cost spay/neuter services are the organizations eligible for these funds. As most veterinary businesses charge well over \$200 for just one spay!

The Veterinary advisory board representative needs to be an experienced high volume sterilization surgeon that knows what a high-volume clinic needs.

I would also like to see the advisory committee have an active spay neuter advocate from each island. Either as a voting or nonvoting member and without expense reimbursement. These

people truly have an ACTIVE INTEREST in the humane method of animal overpopulation here in Hawaii.

The reimbursement of advisory committee members should be limited to a low percentage, to ensure the funds are truly used as intended. The annual report and other information should be public information and easily available.

Special number plate design should be kept simple. A paw print with the words "Spay Neuter" is enough and no design fee paid. Are these fundraising fees in line with the other special license plates offered by the State? Again, keep expenses low so funds are spent on spay neuter surgeries.

Support the \$500,000 in yearly funding. The sooner and harder we attack this problem the sooner the results, thereby saving more native animals.

There is outer island apprehension about the distribution of funds. An allocation based on population and land area would be fair to each county.

Please realize the magnitude of this problem. We need to spay neuter every cat we can get our hands on. This is no joke, please do not euthanize this bill. I urge you to support this bill with amendments.

Sincerely, thank you for your time and Mahalo for allowing me to submit testimony.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 8:46:16 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Fukumoto	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Susan Fukumoto, and I am submitting this testimony in strong opposition to HB364 as it is written.

As a lifelong cat owner and an exhibitor with the Cat Fanciers of Hawaii (CFH), I work closely with ethical breeders within our club, who are being unfairly included and targeted by this bill. The CFH operates under the governance of the Cat Fanciers' Association (CFA), an internationally recognized organization that has enforced rigorous breeding standards, ethical guidelines, and welfare protections since 1906. Responsible breeders within the CFA must adhere to these strict regulations to maintain a cattery in good standing. Because of these well-established and comprehensive guidelines, additional state regulation regarding breeding cats is redundant and unnecessary.

Furthermore, I have worked in the veterinary industry since 1995 and have seen firsthand the care, responsibility, and commitment exhibited by ethical breeders. The regulations proposed in HB364 would impose undue burdens on those who are already held to the highest standards while failing to address the root causes of irresponsible breeding and pet overpopulation. Instead of penalizing responsible breeders, legislative efforts should focus on education and enforcement against unethical, unregulated breeding practices.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to oppose HB364. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Susan Fukumoto

309 N. Circle Makai St.

Wahiawa, HI 96786

808-392-4168

Susan@lovecat.com

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 9:02:48 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hector Wong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. Every effort matters to eliminate our homeless cat problem. I raise 2 street cat rescues and 3 breed cats. I am well versed with both populations and its issues. Pet breeders should contribute via paid permits to each breeding animal. This added expense will moderate current existing cat "puppy mills" on Oahu. This added expense and paperwork will moderate new pet owners prior deciding to buy a pet from a breeder. We should also criminalize feeding street cats. My moto is NOT "Adopt Don't Shop." My moto is "Neuter then feed." Our community is putting too much effort feeding homeless cats, instead, the community should first put all efforsts neutering. It is best to starve cats than to die a birth on the streets. We have hundreds of of cats dying on the streets everyday. 1 adoption success meand 100 other stree kittens died.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/9/2025 9:20:36 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Medeline Harkins	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear State Representative (Ewa Beach District)

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my strong opposition to HI HB 3564, which is currently under consideration in the state legislature. As a constituent of your district, I believe this bill would have a negative impact on our community, and I urge you to vote against it.

I fully understand the intentions behind this bill and the importance of regulating breeding practices. However, as a responsible and ethical breeder, I already adhere to the guidelines, rules, and regulations set forth to ensure the well-being of the animals I work with. Breeding purebred felines is a labor of love, part of my goal to preserve specific breeds, and it requires substantial financial and personal investment.

Hawai'i's import and quarantine fees, along with veterinarian visits, testing, microchipping, and associated administrative costs, make breeding both a costly and meticulous process. Additionally, running a cattery involves registering my business as an LLC, maintaining the cattery space, attending cat shows, managing contracts, and complying with HI GET paperwork. These expenses, in addition to the daily care and upkeep of the animals, make breeding a hobby rather than a profitable business.

A portion of the proceeds from the adoption of my kittens is donated to reputable organizations such as the Hawai'i Humane Society, ASPCA, and the Lanai Cat Sanctuary. The remaining funds are reinvested into my cattery to maintain its operations and provide the best care possible for the cats. The added financial burden imposed by this bill could jeopardize the sustainability of small, ethical breeders like myself, who already operate under the constraints of Hawai'i's regulatory framework.

I urge you to consider the consequences this bill may have on ethical breeders and the preservation of certain cat breeds in our state. I strongly believe that the intent to regulate breeding should not inadvertently hinder small businesses or well-intentioned hobbyists who care deeply about the animals they breed.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my perspective. I trust you will carefully evaluate the impact of this bill and its potential to disproportionately affect those of us who follow the

rules and operate with integrity. I would appreciate any updates on the bill's progress and any actions taken in response to the concerns raised by responsible breeders like myself.

As your constituent, I respectfully ask that you stand with the people you represent and vote **no** on HI HB 3564. I trust you will carefully consider the implications of this bill and make a decision that prioritizes the well-being of our community.

Thank you for your time and for considering my perspective. I would be grateful for any updates on the bill's progress and any actions you take in response to constituent concerns like mine.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Medeline Harkins

Myztic Coons & Cattery

[Myztic Coons & Cattery provides Community Service – Myztic Coons](#)

February 9, 2025

Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
Representative David A. Tarnas, Chair
Representative Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

RE: HB 364 HD1, Relating to Animal Control

Dear Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs,

As a practicing veterinarian in Hawaii dedicated to animal health and conservation of native wildlife, I am writing to express my support of HB 364 HD1. I am grateful for the support of so many legislators in desiring to address our animal overpopulation crisis and reduce the free-roaming cat population. Out of the multiple bills regarding spay and neuter funds introduced this legislative session, HB 364 HD1 alone ensures that public funds would be used toward effective sterilization and animal population control programs that restrict re-release of sterilized animals.

While there are conflicting published studies and data regarding the effectiveness of spay and neuter programs that re-release animals back to free-roaming populations (commonly known as “trap-neuter-release” or TNR programs), most scientific reviews and mathematical models of population growth support the conclusion that TNR is ineffective in decreasing free-roaming populations in real world situations. The failure of this approach is multifactorial: high breeding frequency and large litter sizes, lower actual rates of trapping and sterilization than necessary to stop population growth, overabundance of food provided to free-roaming colonies, and continual abandonment of unwanted pet cats. Any successful population reduction with TNR programs has been attributed primarily to concurrent adoption and/or euthanasia of over 50% of the estimated colony population.

The negative health impacts of free-roaming cats on native wildlife are especially poignant in Hawaii due to our unique native biodiversity that is threatened by increasing environmental pressures. Native birds such as honeycreepers, nene, and alala, and marine mammals such as monk seals and spinner dolphins are increasingly at risk from either direct predation or indirect spread of disease such as toxoplasmosis which is only spread by infected cats.

Additionally, free-roaming cat colonies are often afflicted with infectious diseases such as upper respiratory viruses, leukemia and immunodeficiency viruses, internal and external parasites, and ringworm, which lead to chronic health issues and poor quality of life for affected animals. TNR programs do not focus on finding permanent homes for cats or improving the quality of life for cats that are re-released, and can inadvertently increase cat abandonment rather than encouraging responsible pet ownership or surrender of unwanted pets to shelter or rescue groups.

HB 364 HD1 will provide funds to help address the animal overpopulation crisis in Hawaii while also supporting responsible pet ownership and encouraging appropriate housing and care for cats in Hawaii rather than perpetuating the free-roaming population that is so detrimental to native wildlife and public health. Please SUPPORT HB 364 HD1 as written and retain the specification that these funds will not be used for spaying or neutering animals that are re-released into the environment. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. Please contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Jill Yoshicedo, DVM

To whom it may concern,

My name is Robert Anthony Fisher, 91-1049 Kaihohonu Street, Ewa Beach, HI 96706.

I am in OPPOSITION of HB364.

As a member of the Cat Fanciers of Hawaii Club (CFH), I have relationships with the breeders in the club and feel that they are being unfairly targeted by the introduction of this bill. The club is governed by the overall Cat Fanciers Association (CFA) body that is an internationally recognized body. The CFA has rules, regulations, and standards that the breeders must abide by in order to have a cattery in good standing. Breeders do not need to be regulated by the State as well.

I respectfully ask that you oppose HB364.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Robert A. Fisher

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 7:47:19 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marian Okada	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in OPPOSITION of HB364.

As an exhibitor of the Cat Fanciers of Hawaii Club (CFH) cat shows. I have relationships with the breeders in the club and feel that they are being unfairly singled out because (i) there are not that many in the state of Hawaii and (ii) regarded as an easy target.

Why should a small number of cat breeders in Hawaii be required to foot the bill for feral cat population control? The breeders did not create the feral cat population problem. While the feral cat population is indeed a problem in need of a solution, targeting a small group of cat breeders to pay for a state wide problem is hardly fair nor effective. In fact, it is a good example of misguided overreach - the only common denominator here is cats. Many of the breeders are devoted cat lovers and are not in the business to make money per se; there are of course costs involved but the breeders love what they do and there is a demand for their cats. Having said that, efforts should be made to solve the feral cat population. But penalizing cat breeders is not the best answer.

The club is governed by the overall Cat Fanciers Association (CFA) body that is internationally recognized. The CFA has rules, regulations and standards that the breeders must abide by in order to have a cattery in good standing. Breeders do not need to be regulated by the state as well.

I am disappointed that such a misguided bill has made it this far. A bill that Incentivize rather than penalize to control the feral population is a more effective course of action than a sledgehammer approach that requires those not responsible for creating the problem to foot the costs. It would be like requiring all drivers to pay a fee for the costs incurred by drunk drivers on the road and in public spaces.

Respectfully ask that you oppose HB364. Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely

Marian Okada

To whom it may concern,

My name is Marc Becnel. I am in OPPOSITION of HB364.

As a member of the Cat Fanciers of Hawaii Club (CFH), I have relationships with the breeders in the club and feel that they are being unfairly targeted by the introduction of this bill. The club is governed but the overall Cat Fanciers Association (CFA) body that is an internationally recognized body. The CFA has rules, regulations, and standards that the breeders must abide by in order to have a cattery in good standing. Breeders do not need to be regulated by the state as well.

I respectfully ask that you oppose HB364.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'MR' followed by a large, stylized loop that extends to the right and then curves back down.

To whom it may concern,

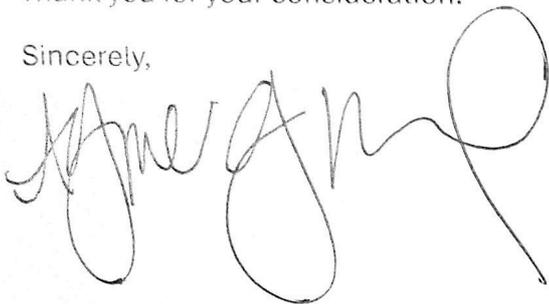
My name is Ayme Becnel. I am in OPPOSITION of HB364.

As a member of the Cat Fanciers of Hawaii Club (CFH), I have relationships with the breeders in the club and feel that they are being unfairly targeted by the introduction of this bill. The club is governed but the overall Cat Fanciers Association (CFA) body that is an internationally recognized body. The CFA has rules, regulations, and standards that the breeders must abide by in order to have a cattery in good standing. Breeders do not need to be regulated by the state as well.

I respectfully ask that you oppose HB364.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ayme Becnel'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 11:35:02 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brian Kessler	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in OPPOSITION of HB364.

While the spirit of the bill to control the pet population is with merit, adding a Cat Breeding Fee to this bill is not advisable nor needed.

As an exhibitor of the Cat Fanciers of Hawaii Club (CFH) cat shows, I have relationships with the breeders in the Hawaii club and feel that cat breeders are being unfairly and unnecessarily targeted by the introduction of this bill. The club is governed by the Cat Fanciers Association (CFA), an internationally recognized body. The CFA has rules, regulations, and standards the breeders must abide by in order to have a cattery in good standing. Breeders do not need to be regulated by the State as well.

I respectfully ask that you oppose HB364 as written.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 1:19:34 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carita Inoue	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Carita Inoue and I am testifying as both a concerned citizen, preservation breeder.

A preservation breeder is a breeder who works on the betterment of their breed to ensure that it will carry on into the future. We approach this as a passion to keep the breed healthy and pertinent.

I am concerned about the Breeding Cat Permit Program. What is the rationale behind this and why is it connected to a bill to control feral cats?

As preservation breeders, our cattery is registered with Cat Fanciers Association. The world's largest pet registry. We are bound by their ethics and follow their best practices in breeding management. Why does the State want to impart their control on top of this. Has a cat registry like CFA or TICA been involved in developing these guidelines? Was a veterinarian consulted? Is this bill meant for backyard breeders? If so, how will they be identified and regulated.

As preservation breeders, we provide a service to the people of Hawai'i by offering them healthy animals with predictable traits and behaviors. We are deeply committed to this work, investing significantly in acquiring high-quality breeding stock. In addition to these costs, our cats and kittens receive comprehensive veterinary care. Along with all this and the expenses associated with their daily care, our cattery has never operated at a profit and likely never will. The fees that are being imposed with the breeding permit program will be devastating to our cattery. We must either raise prices or abandon our passion.

How would this breeding cat permit be feasible to raise funds for spay neuter? Have you checked to see how many cat breeders there are in Hawai'i? I can count less than 20. How would this even pay for a position to regulate this program? It makes no sense.

I support the effort to control feral cats but do not understand... what is the connection between Feral Cats and the Breeding Cat permit? Our cats are not adding to the feral cat population, our cats are sold with the contract stipulation that they must be indoor only pets and fixed by the age of 6 months. We require veterinary proof and follow up on each kitten sold to be sure that it is sterilized. Our contract, as well as many of our fellow breeders, states that we will take the cat

back if the family can no longer care for them. Our cats are not in the feral cat population. Why are we being targeted in a feral cat bill?

In conclusion, please reconsider the Breeding Cat Permit. The cost to legitimate breeders would be crushing and the fees raised from it would not support any sort of effort to fund a spay/neuter program.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 1:26:13 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Heidi Schemp	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I'm the proud cat mama of 3 kitties, all rescued from the streets of Kauai. All of my cats are now 100% INDOOR cats. I prefer this due to not wanting to deal with cats fighting and because cats love to hunt and I don't want them hunting birds outside. All of my cats have been fixed and I passionately believe we need to take drastic measures to decrease our current cat population. What we've been doing is not working. This is a step in the right direction and I hope this bill passes.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 1:44:46 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rae Okawa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to express my **strong support** of HB364 HD1 relating to animal control, as it is currently written. I am a Hawai'i resident, born and raised on O'ahu, with a degree in Biology and a Masters in Environmental Studies. I am providing this testimony on behalf of myself, and not on behalf of any other individual, group or organization.

Something needs to be done to stop the growth of the cat population in our islands and support responsible pet ownership. Spaying and neutering pets is a great start towards this goal. I also understand that these critical procedures require financial resources – both for the pet owner that wants to do the right thing and for the veterinary professionals providing the service. Having a source of designated funding will help provide that support.

I also STRONGLY SUPPORT that this bill includes language that wisely restricts the use of funds, not allowing it to be used for animals that would be released into the environment and into communities. If amendments are made to this bill, I implore you to keep this requirement. If this language is removed, then any designated funding risks being siphoned from responsible pet owners and community members wanting to do the right thing into the coffers of those increasing free-roaming cats on the landscape. Releasing cats into the environment and into our communities is not good for anyone – community members, wildlife, and even the cats themselves. This restriction is a safeguard and must be kept intact.

Please move HB364 forward, keeping the use of any potential funds only for animals that will not be abandoned back onto the landscape. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 2:06:01 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Malea Buhlman	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concern,

My name is Malea Buhlman. I am in OPPOSITION of HB364.

As an exhibitor of the Cat Fanciers of Hawai'i Club (CFH) cat shows, I have relationships with the breeders in the club and feel that they are being unfairly targeted by the introduction of this bill. The club is governed but the overall Cat Fanciers Association (CFA) body that is an internationally recognized body. The CFA has rules, regulations, and standards that the breeders must abide by in order to have a cattery in good standing. Breeders do not need to be regulated by the state as well.

Further, the bill calls for sterilization of cats over the age of 3 months unless they have a permit. But in order to be eligible for the permit, they must be over 18 months old. This would require any cats to be used for a breeding program to be imported from outside of the State.

Legitimate breeders, of which there are only a handful of in the State, working with organizations like CFA and The International Cat Association (TICA) ensure that the kittens that they sell have had veterinary care and will fixed, often before they go home. This portion of the bill only penalizes those who are already doing the right thing. It does nothing to address those who end up with litters of kittens because they can't afford, or just haven't bothered, to sterilize their cat.

I respectfully ask that you oppose HB364.

Thank you for your consideration.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 2:33:50 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Megan Vynne	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 2:49:57 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Holly Parsons	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure because I'm in favor of albatross conservation.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 3:21:28 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
helen raine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB364, a bill requiring the surgical sterilization of cats. This legislation is crucial for reducing the number of feral cats across the Hawaiian Islands.

Hawai‘i is home to numerous endangered and endemic native birds and other unique wildlife, found nowhere else in the world. These species hold deep cultural significance and are critically at risk. For example, fewer than 700 ‘Alae ‘Ula (Hawaiian Common Gallinule) remain globally (Gorreson et al., 2024), and the ‘A‘o (Newell’s Shearwater) population has declined by over 94% in just 35 years (Raine et al.). These birds evolved without mammalian predators and have no natural defenses against them. It is our *kuleana* (responsibility) to protect them from introduced species.

Feral cats also pose a serious human health risk, as they spread *Toxoplasma gondii*, a parasite transmitted through cat feces. Toxoplasmosis can cause miscarriages, birth defects, and even fatalities in humans (Kheirandish et al., 2019; Aguirre et al., 2019).

The impact extends to our marine life as well. Hawaiian Monk Seals, Spinner Dolphins (NOAA, 2020), and even Humpback Whales have been harmed or killed by toxoplasmosis, highlighting the far-reaching consequences of unmanaged feral cat populations.

Mandatory sterilization will reduce the number of reproductive feral cats, helping to restore ecological balance in our fragile island environment. This measure is not only beneficial for cats but is essential for the survival of our endangered native species, which are legally protected under both federal and state law. It is also better for cats, which have a poor quality of life when they are abandoned outdoors, leaving them at risk of disease, car accidents, and dog attacks.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 3:28:02 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lynn Bowen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB364.

Lynn Bowen

Kalaheo, HI

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 3:33:01 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kim Falinski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

I support efforts to sterilize our cat population in hopes that it can decrease over time. Our seabird populations, and our monk seals, are at risk from cats.

Thank you,

Kim

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 3:39:00 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marc	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need to protect people and native wildlife from cats and their associated diseases.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 3:44:55 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joseph Leibrecht	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB 364, which aims to mandate spaying or neutering for all pet cats over three months old, with some exceptions. This bill is crucial for reducing the overpopulation of cats in Hawai'i and mitigating the devastating impact of feral cats on our unique and endangered wildlife.

Hawai'i is home to numerous endemic species found nowhere else in the world. The 'alae 'ula, for instance, has fewer than 700 individuals remaining globally, while the 'a'o population has declined by over 94% in just 35 years. These species are not only culturally significant but also ecologically vital. It's our kuleana to safeguard them from introduced predators like feral cats.

Furthermore, feral cats pose a significant risk to human health. They can transmit toxoplasmosis, a disease spread through cat feces, which can cause miscarriages, birth defects, and even fatalities. Our beloved marine animals, such as Hawaiian Monk Seals, Spinner Dolphins, and Humpback Whales, are also vulnerable to toxoplasmosis.

By requiring cat sterilization, we can reduce the number of reproductive feral animals, protecting our delicate ecosystems and preserving the balance of nature in Hawai'i. This bill is a crucial step forward, and I urge you to support it.

Mahalo for considering my testimony.

Joseph Leibrecht

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 3:45:27 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Rothe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

- I support bill HB364, requiring that cats over the age of three months be surgically sterilized. This bill will reduce the number of feral cats on the landscape in the islands. The funds from the Spay/Neuter Fund should only be applied to cats that will not be released back into the environment.

- That is important because Hawai‘i has multiple endangered and endemic native Hawaiian birds and other unique wildlife. These are culturally important and are found nowhere else in the world. There are less than 700 individuals of ‘alaie ‘ula (Hawaiian Common Gallinule) in the world (Gorreson et al., 2024), and the ‘a‘o (Newell’s Shearwater) declined by more than 94% during a 35 year period up to 2015 (Raine et al.). They evolved without mammalian predators and have no defenses against them. It is our kuleana to protect them from introduced species.

- Human health is also at stake. Outdoor feral cats pose a health risk to humans, as they are a vector for toxoplasmosis (Aguirre et al., 2019), which is spread through cat feces. Toxoplasmosis can cause miscarriage in humans (Kheirandish, et al., 2019), birth defects, and can be fatal.

- Our beloved Hawaiian Monk Seals, Hawaiian Spinner Dolphins (NOAA, 2020) and Humpback Whales are also at risk, as toxoplasmosis can, and does, kill marine mammals.

- Requiring cats to be sterilized will reduce the number of reproductive feral animals on the landscape and protect the delicate balance of our ecosystems in the isolated Hawaiian Islands; it is better for the cats, and it is essential for the threatened and endangered birds, which are legally protected by the Federal and State of Hawai‘i’s Endangered Species Act. Thank you for your consideration.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 3:46:02 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caren Loebel-Fried	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concern,

I support bill HB364, requiring that cats over the age of three months be surgically sterilized. This bill will reduce the number of feral cats on the islands.

That is important because Hawai‘i has multiple endangered and endemic native Hawaiian birds and other unique wildlife. These are culturally important and are found nowhere else in the world. There are less than 700 individuals of ‘alae ‘ula (Hawaiian Common Gallinule) in the world (Gorreson et al., 2024), and the ‘a‘o (Newell’s Shearwater) declined by more than 94% during a 35 year period up to 2015 (Raine et al.). They evolved without mammalian predators and have no defenses against them. It is our kuleana to protect them from introduced species.

Human health is also at stake. Outdoor feral cats pose a health risk to humans, as they are a vector for toxoplasmosis (Aguirre et al., 2019), which is spread through cat feces. Toxoplasmosis can cause miscarriage in humans (Kheirandish, et al., 2019), birth defects, and can be fatal.

Our beloved Hawaiian Monk Seals, Hawaiian Spinner Dolphins (NOAA, 2020) and Humpback Whales are also at risk, as toxoplasmosis can, and does, kill marine mammals.

Requiring cats to be sterilized will reduce the number of reproductive feral animals on the landscape and protect the delicate balance of our ecosystems in the isolated Hawaiian Islands; it is better for the cats, and it is essential for the threatened and endangered birds, which are legally protected by the Federal and State of Hawai‘i’s Endangered Species Act.

Thank you for your consideration.

Caren Loebel-Fried

PO Box 1354

Volcano, HI 96785

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 3:49:27 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Natalie Graham-Wood	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB364 HD1. My name is Natalie Graham-Wood and I live at Sunset Beach, Oahu.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 3:59:30 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elena Arinaga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this very important bill.

A Cat-Borne Threat to Monk Seals

Mauka to Makai: How *Toxoplasma gondii* Makes Its Way from Mountains to Ocean

A Microscopic Parasite

Toxoplasma gondii (*T. gondii*) is a parasite that causes the disease toxoplasmosis.



T. gondii



Develops in the Guts of Cats

T. gondii can infect any warm-blooded animal (including humans, birds, and seals), but it only reproduces in the digestive system of a cat.

Spreads Via Cat Feces

Millions of *T. gondii* eggs can be spread into the environment—surviving for many months—via the feces of just one cat. These eggs are the source of *T. gondii* infection in monk seals. It only takes one egg to cause an infection.



Contaminates Natural Resources

T. gondii eggs contaminate water and soil, along with the plants that grow in it. Wildlife and livestock can consume the eggs and become infected. Even people can get infected by accidentally ingesting cat litter/fecal particles or consuming under-cooked meat or unwashed produce.

Travels Through Waterways

Rainwater and runoff transport the eggs to the ocean through streams and gutters.



Exacerbated by Human Behavior

People unintentionally contribute to the spread of *T. gondii* by allowing pet cats to roam outdoors, abandoning unwanted cats, and not controlling feral cat populations.

Impacts Marine Environment

Hawaiian monk seals become infected with *T. gondii* by consuming contaminated water or prey.



NOAA
FISHERIES



Hawaiian Monk Seals and Toxoplasmosis

Why is toxoplasmosis a major threat to monk seals?

Toxoplasmosis is a leading cause of Hawaiian monk seal mortality and a growing concern for the species in the populated main Hawaiian Islands. Eradicating toxoplasmosis requires dealing with the threat at the source—free-roaming cats.

Difficult to Treat

A seal suffering from toxoplasmosis is difficult to detect and treatment options are extremely limited. Once a seal becomes sick with toxoplasmosis, it often dies rapidly.

No Vaccination

There is no preventative vaccine for toxoplasmosis in monk seals.

What is the outlook?

The continued growth of outdoor cat populations in Hawai'i (estimated in the hundreds of thousands) increases the number of infectious eggs being spread in the environment. This increases the risk of monk seals being exposed. NOAA Fisheries and its partners continue to study the relationship of seals and *T. gondii*. The lack of treatment options for infected seals and other species means that solving this problem requires multiple approaches aimed at preventing cat feces from contaminating Hawai'i—mauka to makai (mountains to ocean).

Where can you go for more information?

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov/parasites/toxoplasmosis/
- Toxoplasmosis and Its Effects on Hawai'i Marine Wildlife: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/pacific-islands/endangered-species-conservation/toxoplasmosis-and-its-effects-hawaii-marine>
- Hawai'i Veterinary Medical Association: <https://hawaiiivetmed.org/pono-pet-parent/>

How can you help?

You can prevent toxoplasmosis from affecting monk seals and other wild animals by doing your part to reduce the spread of infectious eggs from the *Toxoplasma gondii* parasite.

- Keep cats exclusively indoors to prevent the spread of toxoplasmosis to Hawaiian monk seals and native birds. This also protects native birds from cat predation while increasing your pet's lifespan.
- Spay and neuter your cats to prevent contributing to the free-roaming cat populations across Hawai'i.
- Surrender your cat to a local animal shelter for adoption if you are no longer able to care for your pet.
- Properly dispose of cat feces and litter in the trash—and not into the environment.
- Do not feed feral cats. This may perpetuate colony growth and poor quality of life for these free-roaming cats, and put precious island resources at risk.



NOAA
FISHERIES

National Marine Fisheries Service
Pacific Islands Region

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 4:24:31 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andre Raine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Sterilizing pet cats is critical for protecting Hawai‘i’s unique native wildlife, many of which are highly endangered and found nowhere else in the world. Cats, as non-native predators, pose a serious threat to native bird species like the ‘alae ‘ula (Hawaiian Common Gallinule) and the ‘a‘o (Newell’s Shearwater), which evolved without defenses against mammalian predators. By ensuring that pet cats are sterilized, we can help reduce the number of reproductive feral animals on the landscape and reduce the severe impact they have on these vulnerable bird species, whose numbers are declining at a shocking rate. This action not only helps preserve Hawai‘i’s biodiversity but also ensures the protection of delicate ecosystems that depend on these birds for their survival. In a place as isolated as Hawai‘i, managing invasive species like cats is a vital and necessary step to maintain the balance of our natural environment.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 4:30:13 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ellen Awai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I stand in support of HB364.HD1 for animal population control. I personally have had issues with people at my residence who pay the \$5 for neutering about 20 of the feral cat population and are microchipped for our address. The people who do this, bring the cats back and expect management to care for them, since St. Francis saved all animals and believed that they were here before the Franciscan Vistas was built. These cats are sickly having to fend the weather and daily for their meals by these women and passerbys, since they are not trained to catch mice in the fields surrounding us. They defecate all over the grounds, and the dogs who are kept inside or leashed were constantly blamed! This causes issues between residents who see rental contract rules being broken.

I myself turned in a kitten I had found to Ewa Humane Society, but basically signed my life away if they couldn't find an owner. The property manager here has a rule that if a cat is kept inside the house then you need a doctor's slip. I did this for my service dog and would not go through the problems of a doctor say that I needed an Emotional Support Animal for a mental health issue. To give such authority to doctors is not right, especially if the doctor or others do not understand HIPAA law protects consumers from medical issues. But doctors will call the police to do a welfare check with a blue and white car at a senior residence, if I do not comply with their instructions to take medications that ruin my body organs! Gossip here spreads to this day!

I found another baby kitten and nursed it back to health a couple months. I intended on keep, but free neutering and microchipping are only for feral cats, otherwise it was \$60. At the time, I could not afford it, because my service dog needed an annual checkup the same month. Please support free neutering for all cats that are found homeless in HB364 HD1. Mahalo!

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 4:41:29 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Benton Kealii Pang, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Benton Keali'i Pang, and I write today in strong support of HB364. With 35 years of experience working on invasive species management and conservation restoration in Hawai'i, I have witnessed firsthand the devastating impact that unregulated cat populations have on our unique and imperiled native wildlife.

Hawai'i's ecosystems are home to some of the world's most endangered species, including the 'alae 'ula (Hawaiian Common Gallinule), of which fewer than 700 individuals remain, and the 'a'o (Newell's Shearwater), which has suffered a catastrophic 94% decline over 35 years. These birds, along with many other native species, evolved in an environment free from mammalian predators and are highly vulnerable to predation by feral and free-roaming cats.

HB364 is a critical step toward reducing the overpopulation of cats in Hawai'i through mandated sterilization, responsible breeding practices, and statewide support for pet cat sterilization. The bill ensures that funds allocated for sterilization are used effectively by prohibiting the re-release of sterilized cats into the environment, an essential measure to prevent further harm to native species.

In addition to ecological impacts, outdoor feral cats pose a public health risk. Cats are a known vector for toxoplasmosis, a disease that spreads through their feces and can have severe consequences for human health, including miscarriage and birth defects. Toxoplasmosis has also been linked to fatalities in Hawaiian Monk Seals, Hawaiian Spinner Dolphins, and even Humpback Whales. Addressing the issue at its root—by controlling the population of unsterilized, free-roaming cats—will help mitigate these risks and protect both human and animal health.

As a conservation professional dedicated to the stewardship of Hawai'i's natural resources, I urge the Committee to pass HB364. This bill provides a long-overdue, science-based solution to an ongoing environmental and public health crisis. By supporting HB364, you are taking an essential step toward protecting Hawai'i's fragile ecosystems, safeguarding our native species, and ensuring a healthier future for our communities.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Benton Keali'i Pang
Biologist and Conservationist
Honolulu, Hawai'i

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 4:49:14 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Adrian Burke	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Please support HB364 to help control the scourge of feral cats that devastate native wildlife in Hawai'i. We need to spay and neuter cats and NOT release those cats back onto the landscape. Our native waterbirds (ae'o, 'alae'ula, 'alae ke'oke'o, nene, koloa, kolea, etc.), seabirds ('ua'u, 'a'o, 'ua'u kani, etc.), and songbirds are regularly killed by feral or domestic cats, and their populations are very much threatened in the long-term by cat predation. Cats on the landscape also spread toxoplasmosis, a disease which kills 'ilio-holo-i-ka-uaua (monk seals) and nene and affects humans as well. We ought to look to New Zealand and Australia for what to do about cats, as they are doing a great job: we need to eradicate them from the landscape (people can still have pets inside) to protect our native wildlife! HB364 is a good first step, but we need to take much more action including working towards complete lethal (humane) removal of cats from the landscape in Hawai'i.

Mahalo nui loa for helping Hawai'i's very unique and very endangered species!

Adrian Burke, 'Ele'ele, Kaua'i

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 5:08:46 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melanie Kim	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill that authorizes animal country staff to create and enforce a program that supports responsible breeding of cats, establishes minimum requirements for breeding permits and penalties establishes a Spay and Neuter fund to reduce pet overpopulation. Better regulation is needed for breeders to prevent pet overpopulation which is already a crisis in Hawaii.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 5:35:03 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alice Saul	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Am writing in support of HB364 HD1 relating to Animal Control

Responsible breeding of cats. Need more be said? We have to recognize that it's time we had some regulation of pet breeders who can be relied upon to observe reasonable minimum requirements for the health and safety of animals in their care.

It is also time to recognize that resources need to be allocated for spay and neuter programs to reduce overpopulation among free-roaming cats.

Both of these will positively affect the animals, and our well-being as pet owners.

Thank you.

**Alice Saul
Hawaii Kai, Honolulu**

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 6:35:54 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Wood	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I support HB547 to help address pet overpopulation in a humane way. It's so important to provide funding the vets and animal welfare organizations, such as the Hawaiian Humane Society, who are struggling to control overpopulation in cats.

I encourage you to pass this bill and provide the funding necessary to do this important job.

Thank you,

Jennifer Wood

808-221-2779

Nuuanu

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 6:40:02 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Helen Josypenko	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a resident of Kaneohe, I am concerned that we are not seriously addressing cat overpopulation and the reproduction of free-roaming cats and **Support HB 364 HD1 WITH AMMENDMENTS**. I support requiring spay and neuter after five months of age and establishing a breeding permit program for responsible breeding, as well as penalties for those who do not follow the criteria established. **However, I urge an amendment to the Bill be made to include funding for enforcement of Breeding Permit Violations.**

I am confident the advisory committee will ensure that the Fund is responsibly managed, distributing funds to organizations dedicated to reducing pet overpopulation and the number of free-roaming cats statewide, supporting this Bill's funding aspect.

These monies should not be restricted from those who trap and release outdoor cats. This is the primary means of gaining control of our free-roaming population.

The means to provide funds for the Special Fund provides for community involvement at all levels with the Optional State Income Tax Refund Tax Check-Off, Special License Plate Sales, and Private Donations which makes this Bill even more appealing.

Failure to **AMMEND HB 364 HD1** will result in unchecked cat overpopulation, increased number of abandoned (stray) cats, higher euthanasia rates, and greater strain on animal welfare resources. Free-Roaming cat populations will remain difficult to manage.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 8:46:51 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Crawford	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I love cats.

I also recognize that they are ecological menaces! Especially to our native and seabird populations.

I support a requirement that all cats be spayed or neutered, with reasonable exceptions, to help manage the wildly out of control cat population on our island and give our native ecosystems some protection.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 9:05:43 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephanie McLaughlin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this important bill. It will help Hawaii's animals.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 9:25:27 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathleen M. Rex	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in full support of HB364 to include the amendments suggested by the Hawaiian Humane Society. Thank you.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 10:23:56 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
MICHAEL ING	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/10/2025 10:56:36 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Renee Rabb	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on HB 364. While I am sure that this legislation is well intentioned, it really does need some work. There are other spay/neuter bills moving through the legislative process that have much simpler and more workable approaches.

Unfortunately there are elements in this version that would be problematic if put into practice. A major concern is restricting funding for organizations that practice TNRM. While my foster work has a focus on "adopt" as the end result, some of the cats are adopted as working cats on farms. That provides a service to local agriculture. It also provides homes for cats unlikely to be successful in urban environments.

The lack of state funding will be a problem for the counties whose resources for animal control are already overloaded. I'd hate to see a breeder regulation program take away limited county resources from other current programs like dangerous dog enforcement and animal cruelty investigations.

I believe that the Humane Society will have some amendments that will improve the problematic language that exists in the bill. I support those amendments strongly.

We do have a problem in Hawai'i with cat over-population. Free spay/neuter programs available for all cats on all the islands are urgent. We should be doing things that make it possible for us to spay/neuter as many cats as we can.

Renee Rabb

Keaau, HI 96749

Big Island

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 1:12:19 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patti K	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha State Semators:

I am writing to strongly support this bill (HB 364) to support only responsible breeding, and to provide state funding for free /spay neuter clinic (at HHS or subsidized private veterinarians) to help many colony caregivers to manage feral cat population in a safe and humane manner. Cats are God's creation on earth and part of ecosystem for thousands of years, They are natural pest controls of rodents. Working together as a community, we can achieve a peaceful solution.

Thank you for your consideration.

Aloha, Patti Kawano

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 3:57:33 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Chiwa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Representative Tarnas, Vice Chair Representative Poepoe and Members of the Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs.

Please vote for HB 364 HD 1, which I strongly support, to reduce pet overpopulation. Please also support the two amendments being asked for by the Hawaiian Humane Society which, to my understanding, would strengthen this bill and increase its effectiveness.

Mahalo.

Jennifer Chiwa

Makiki and life long resident of Oahu

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 7:08:40 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bill Dixon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Bill Dixon, and I live with my wife in Kaneohe. We support humane living conditions for pets and protections for the environment against feral animals. HB364, HD1 will help the state provide both.

This bill requires that cats over the age of five months be surgically sterilized, with certain exceptions. It also authorizes county animal control authorities to establish and enforce a permit program to allow the responsible breeding of cats, establishes minimum requirements for breeding permits and penalties, and establishes the Spay and Neuter Special Fund to reduce pet overpopulation, including the free-roaming cat population, and various revenue and fundraising sources for the special fund.

We support the regulation of pet breeders and the funding dedicated to spay/neuter initiatives in this measure. We urge the committee to do the same by advancing this bill.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 8:25:36 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erin Lamay	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill 100%

I have purchased 2 purebred cats in the state and have watched one breeder completely go downhill. She has become what we would call a "backyard breeder" and has so many kittens she can't keep seem to keep up with them. I believe this bill will promote responsible and ethical breeding.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 8:43:12 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carole R. Richelieu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support the regulation of pet breeders and the funding dedicated to spay/neuter initiatives in this measure.

support amendments to:

- Include funding for enforcement, which the state is delegating to the counties;
- Remove the restriction that grants cannot be used to spay/neuter free-roaming cats who will be returned to their outdoor homes.

Hawai'i Kai

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 9:15:57 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
K Puaokamele Dizon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My position is that HB364 is necessary to protect our manu oiwi (native birds). Our manu oiwi have a right to exist here in Hawaii, their one and only home. As stewards of this land, it is our responsibility to protect them. The feral cat population threatens the survival of our endangered and critically endangered manu oiwi.

HB364 proposes a valid strategy for controlling the feral cat population. It is not the final solution, for feral cats are a threat to manu oiwi whether spayed and neutered or not. However, HB364 is an important first step toward reducing the feral cat population in the future.

Aloha,

I am writing to you today to voice my enthusiastic support for **HB364** which would require the sterilization of cats over the age of 3 months and which would establish a spay and neuter fund which **cannot** be used for programs which release cats onto the landscape. As a wildlife biologist working with invasive species in Hawai'i I have seen firsthand the harms caused by feral cats to our native birds, marine mammals, and ecosystems. Feral cats not only directly kill our native birds, which can be found mauka to makai, but also spread the deadly *Toxoplasma gondii* parasite which kills our native marine mammals and poses a human health threat. This bill is an essential step in reducing the feral cat population in Hawai'i while also providing funding for the public to get pet cats sterilized at low or no cost to the owner. In addition, this bill will ease the burden of the cat overpopulation on shelters and humane societies, allowing them to focus on animal care and adoption services.

It is essential that the funds for sterilization services be provided to the public for the care of their pets, and not for the maintenance of outdoor cat populations through methods such as "Trap-Neuter-Return/Release" or "TNRM." In peer-reviewed studies TNR has been proven to be not only ineffective for controlling feral cat populations but also extraordinarily expensive, especially when compared to other methods of control. Furthermore, it has been proven that TNR can actually increase local cat populations in the managed 'colonies' and their surrounding areas and is considered inhumane for the cats it intends to control (Castillo and Clarke 2003, Hostetler et al. 2020, Lohr et al. 2013). In a public surveys of Hawai'i residents, cat activists, biologists, hunters, agriculturalists, and native Hawaiians, lethal cat control was ranked as best and TNR as worst for feral cat management with the goal of reducing feral cat populations, and 78% of Hawaii residents support the permanent removal of feral cats from the environment and that it is a very small percent of the public who enjoy seeing feral cats (Lohr et al. 2014, Lohr and Lepczyk 2014). **The priority for this funding MUST be for spaying and neutering pets, which IS publicly supported and is an essential public service.** Especially with highly pathogenic H5N1 on the rise, to which cats are especially susceptible, we must be supporting keeping cats indoors away from the public and our native wildlife (New York Times, Feb 6, 2025).

Sincerely,

Alex Dutcher

References:

Castillo, D., and A. L. Clarke. 2003. Trap/Neuter/Release Methods Ineffective in Controlling Domestic Cat "Colonies" on Public Lands. *Natural Areas Journal*. 23(3): 247-253.

Hostetler, M., S. M. Wisely, S. Johnson, E. F. Pienaar, and M. Main. 2020. How Effective and Humane is Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) for Feral Cats? WEC423/UW468 03/2020. edis. 2020 Mar 27;(2):1-8.

Lohr, C. A., L. J. Cox, and C. A. Lepczyk. 2013. Costs and benefits of trap-neuter-release and euthanasia for removal of urban cats in Oahu, Hawaii. *Conservation Biology*, 27(1), 64-73.

Lohr, C. A., C. A. Lepczyk, and L. J. Cox. 2014. Identifying people's most preferred management technique for feral cats in Hawaii. *Human-Wildlife Interactions*, 8(1), 56-66.

Lohr, C. A., and C. A. Lepczyk, C. A. 2014. Desires and management preferences of stakeholders regarding feral cats in the Hawaiian Islands. *Conservation Biology*, 28(2), 392-403.

Mandavilli, A., and E. Anthes. 2025. C.D.C. Post, Then Deletes, Data on Bird Flu Spread Between Cats and People. *New York Times*, Feb. 8, 2025: Section A, Page 17.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/02/06/health/cdc-bird-flu-cats-people.html>

RE: Testimony for HB3564

To whom it may concern,

My name is Aisha Aoki, Vice President of the Cat Fanciers of Hawaii Cat Club, show manager of our local cat shows, and a preservation breeder with the Cat Fanciers Association, recognized worldwide.

As a preservation breeder in Hawaii, I highly oppose this bill. As is, costs within Hawaii is a challenge to provide our breeding cats and litters with the best quality care that we can give them. The cost of quality food, vet care, medications if needed, and spay/neuter, etc. all add up. These costs are already shared with the potential owners within the rehoming fees that we charge. Adding on another \$250 annually **per breeding cat** will only assist in driving up costs for the potential owners. It is a false idea that reputable/ responsible breeders make "tons of money" from homing fees. Majority of the money from kitten sales go back into our breeding programs so we can provide the best care and quality animals. Personally, I require all owners to sign a contract that highlights a health agreement, and expectations of the owner and myself, as the breeder. Within these expectations, the cats are expected to be indoor cats only, never allowed outside of the house without a leash/ harness or in a stroller. All of my personal breeding cats are currently microchipped, regularly vaccinated in-home, by myself, the breeder, and see the vet annually. They are all insured with pet insurance and have all been genetically tested with Wisdom Panel DNA health kits. I keep strict track of which breeding cats can be paired and who are related to each other. The males and females are kept completely separate from each other. Again, personally, my large breed kittens are spay/ neutered (to ensure they do not add to the feral cat population should they accidentally go missing from their homes), microchipped, and vaccinated twice by 13-14 weeks of age. However, it is unrealistic to ask breeders to ensure their kittens are spay/neutered by 3 months of age as many do not have access to low cost spay/ neuter clinics or affordable vets in general. It is also found that early spay/ neuter is not the best course of action for cats as it can hamper development in skeletal growth and long-term overall health. For small breed cat breeders, early spay/ neuter may not be safe or possible at all for their size. Please take this into consideration.

As for the age and litter restrictions for the breeding cats, it is a different "beast" in Hawaii as import restrictions make it difficult for us to get new breeding cats easily. We do only breed a female once per year, especially given consideration on how well it recuperates from birthing and nursing. However, less than four litters in its lifetime is not reasonable. It is based on a cat by cat determination. I have spayed females after one litter because they weren't "cut out to be mothers" and I have had a female continue to breed past 5 years old. Limiting the number of litters and ages of breeding females will accrue yet another cost of needing to import new breeding cats more often. For some of our specific breeds, we are the only breeders within Hawaii and cannot use breeding cats from breeders. Importing new breeding cats is the only way to ensure genetic

diversity but yet another cost we have to consider and specifically plan for. It is not easy to find breeders willing to send cats to Hawaii due to the import restrictions as well as we would have to wait until they have breeding cats available, which could possibly stall our breeding programs.

This bill seeks to unreasonably target preservation cat breeders that already take the steps to uphold the highest integrity of our catteries. If registered with the Cat Fanciers Association, we are monitored by this body to stay within a certain number of litters per year as well as follow standards and guidelines to be responsible preservation breeders.

These examples are specific to me as a breeder. Other breeders have their own standards and guidelines.

Please do not allow this bill to go any further. Please oppose this bill.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Aisha Aoki

RE: Testimony for HB3564

To whom it may concern,

My name is Carlos Arial, President of the Cat Fanciers of Hawaii Cat Club and a preservation breeder with the Cat Fanciers Association, recognized worldwide.

As a preservation breeder in Hawaii, I highly oppose this bill. As is, costs within Hawaii is a challenge to provide our breeding cats and litters with the best quality care that we can give them. The cost of quality food, vet care, medications if needed, and spay/neuter, etc. all add up. These costs are already shared with the potential owners within the rehoming fees that we charge. Adding on another \$250 annually **per breeding cat** will only assist in driving up costs for the potential owners. It is a false idea that reputable/ responsible breeders make "tons of money" from homing fees. Majority of the money from kitten sales go back into our breeding programs so we can provide the best care and quality animals. Personally, I require all owners to sign a contract that highlights a health agreement, and expectations of the owner and myself, as the breeder. Within these expectations, the cats are expected to be indoor cats only, never allowed outside of the house without a leash/ harness or in a stroller. All of my personal breeding cats are currently microchipped, regularly vaccinated in-home, by myself, the breeder, and see the vet annually. They are all insured with pet insurance and have all been genetically tested with Wisdom Panel DNA health kits. I keep strict track of which breeding cats can be paired and who are related to each other. The males and females are kept completely separate from each other. Again, personally, my large breed kittens are spay/ neutered (to ensure they do not add to the feral cat population should they accidentally go missing from their homes), microchipped, and vaccinated twice by 13-14 weeks of age. However, it is unrealistic to ask breeders to ensure their kittens are spay/neutered by 3 months of age as many do not have access to low cost spay/ neuter clinics or affordable vets in general. It is also found that early spay/ neuter is not the best course of action for cats as it can hamper development in skeletal growth and long-term overall health. For small breed cat breeders, early spay/ neuter may not be safe or possible at all for their size. Please take this into consideration.

As for the age and litter restrictions for the breeding cats, it is a different "beast" in Hawaii as import restrictions make it difficult for us to get new breeding cats easily. We do only breed a female once per year, especially given consideration on how well it recuperates from birthing and nursing. However, less than four litters in its lifetime is not reasonable. It is based on a cat by cat determination. I have spayed females after one litter because they weren't "cut out to be mothers" and I have had a female continue to breed past 5 years old. Limiting the number of litters and ages of breeding females will accrue yet another cost of needing to import new breeding cats more often. For some of our specific breeds, we are the only breeders within Hawaii and cannot use breeding cats from breeders. Importing new breeding cats is the only way to ensure genetic diversity but yet another cost we have to consider and specifically plan for. It is not easy

to find breeders willing to send cats to Hawaii due to the import restrictions as well as we would have to wait until they have breeding cats available, which could possibly stall our breeding programs. On the other hand, extended periods of time between breeding a female increases the risk of her developing Pyometra, a uterine infection that could possibly be fatal.

This bill seeks to unreasonably target preservation cat breeders that already take the steps to uphold the highest integrity of our catteries. If registered with the Cat Fanciers Association, we are monitored by this worldwide governing body to stay within a certain number of litters per year as well as follow standards and guidelines to be responsible preservation breeders.

These examples are specific to me as a breeder. Other breeders have their own standards and guidelines.

Please do not allow this bill to go any further. Please oppose this bill.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Carlos Arial

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 9:51:33 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Liat Portner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Liat Portner, Hale‘iwa, O‘ahu and I am writing to you today to voice my enthusiastic support for HB364 which would require the sterilization of cats over the age of 3 months and which would establish a spay and neuter fund which cannot be used for programs which release cats onto the landscape.

As a member of the conservation community in Hawai‘i I have seen firsthand the harms caused by feral cats to our native birds, marine mammals, and ecosystems. As a compassionate human, I am horrified by the potential impact of toxoplasmosis on humans. They say that every human is connected by no more than 6 degrees of separation--I was shocked to learn that a friend of mine has a cousin who contracted toxoplasmosis and was rendered blind among other complications. Furthermore, I understand that disease loading is a direct effect of overpopulation. The relationships between feral cats, toxoplasmosis, human and environmental health are clearly defined.

This bill is an essential step in reducing the feral cat population in Hawai‘i while also providing funding for the public to get pet cats sterilized at low or no cost to the owner. Furthermore this bill will ease the burden of the cat overpopulation on shelters and humane societies, allowing them to focus on animal care and adoption services. It is essential that the funds for sterilization services be provided to the public for the care of their pets, and not for the maintenance of outdoor cat populations through methods such as “Trap-Neuter–Return.” TNR has been proven in peer-reviewed research to be extraordinarily expensive and ineffective for controlling feral cat populations and is not publicly supported by the majority of constituents in Hawai‘i. The priority for this funding MUST be for spaying and neutering pets, which IS proven to effectively reduce cat populations and is an essential public service.

Mahalo for your service!

Sincerely,

Liat Portner

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 9:55:14 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Weslee Lawrence	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I OPPOSE this bill. It does not create a feasible plan to decrease Hawaii's feral cat population. Asking people to trap and fix but to NOT release a cat back into their environment only leaves limited options for that cat. If that cat is not "re-homeable" the only choice is to euthanize. Shelters, fosters and rescues are already at capacity, so where will all these street cats go if not released back to their communities. A TNR program is a great and much needed idea, but limiting it to "pet owners" and breeders (who actually DON'T contribute to the feral cat population) makes no sense. Those who need it most are the TNR/ foster community. Focus on helping them and not controlling pet owners and breeders with ridiculous fees, rules, and a program you cannot realistically regulate.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 9:55:41 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Heather Quintana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to you today to voice my enthusiastic support for HB364 which would require the sterilization of cats over the age of 3 months and which would establish a spay and neuter fund which cannot be used for programs which release cats onto the landscape. As a member of the conservation community in Hawai'i I have seen firsthand the harms caused by feral cats to our native birds, marine mammals, and ecosystems. This bill is an essential step in reducing the feral cat population in Hawai'i while also providing funding for the public to get pet cats sterilized at low or no cost to the owner. Furthermore this bill will ease the burden of the cat overpopulation on shelters and humane societies, allowing them to focus on animal care and adoption services. **It is essential that the funds for sterilization services be provided to the public for the care of their pets, and not for the maintenance of outdoor cat populations through methods such as "Trap-Neuter-Return."** TNR has been proven in peer-reviewed research to be **extraordinarily expensive and ineffective for controlling feral cat populations and is not publicly supported by the majority of constituents in Hawai'i.** The priority for this funding **MUST** be for spaying and neutering pets, which IS proven to effectively reduce cat populations and is an essential public service.

Mahalo for your service!

Sincerely,

Heather Quintana

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 10:06:25 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kallie Barnes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please move this legislation through. Hawai'i just get a hold of the feral and stay cat crisis. Our native Landscape and animal are different due to a lack of management and forward movement in dealing with this problem. Enough is enough!!

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 10:18:54 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Serafina Gajate	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

I would like to submit my OVERWHELMING support for HB364 which would require the sterilization of cats over the age of 3 months and which would establish a spay and neuter fund which cannot be used for programs which release cats onto the landscape. As a member of the conservation community in Hawai'i I have seen firsthand the harms caused by feral cats to our native birds, marine mammals, and ecosystems. This bill is an essential step in reducing the feral cat population in Hawai'i while also providing funding for the public to get pet cats sterilized at low or no cost to the owner. Furthermore this bill will ease the burden of the cat overpopulation on shelters and humane societies, allowing them to focus on animal care and adoption services. It is essential that the funds for sterilization services be provided to the public for the care of their pets, and not for the maintenance of outdoor cat populations through methods such as "Trap-Neuter-Return." TNR has been proven in peer-reviewed research to be extraordinarily expensive and ineffective for controlling feral cat populations and is not publicly supported by the majority of constituents in Hawai'i. The priority for this funding MUST be for spaying and neutering pets, which IS proven to effectively reduce cat populations and is an essential public service.

Me ka ha'aha'a,

Serafina Gajate

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 10:21:53 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lori Coad	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support this bill. It is a vital step in the right direction for the sake of Hawaii's delicate ecosystem.

I have enjoyed having cats as pets. But the cat population in Hawaii is out of control and causing problems. There is a storm drain under my property and it has become a gathering place for neighborhood cats. I don't own any cats now, but I have counted 20 (yes, 20) cats in my yard. I have to constantly clean up after them. My yard stinks from cat feces and urine and I always have lots of flies around. The same problem exists on public property. When I worked at UH Manoa parts of the campus constantly reeked of cats. Besides being unpleasant, the cat waste can spread toxoplasmosis. Since bird flu is now in the islands, there is a risk of cats contracting the disease and spreading it to people. The huge numbers of cats roaming the islands also pose a constant threat to Hawaii's native wildlife, especially our endangered native birds. I strongly support mandatory pet cat sterilization. The passage of HB 364 would help protect Hawaii's native birds, the cats themselves, and the people of Hawaii.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 11:00:43 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Danny Patino	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I OPPOSE this bill. It does not create a feasible plan to decrease Hawaii's feral cat population. Asking people to trap and fix but to NOT release a cat back into their environment only leaves limited options for that cat. If that cat is not "re-homeable" the only choice is to euthanize it as shelters, fosters and rescues are already at capacity; so where will all these street cats go if not released back to their communities. The problem is that we are looking at the feral cat population as pets, when they should be considered vermin. A kitten released back into the community might live another 15 yrs where it can wreak havoc on our native wildlife. A statewide time limited culling might be a more effective option. Breeders and responsible pet owners are not the problem. You need to educate the public about the hazards of allowing free roaming cats in the community and its impact on the environment. Breeders require their homed animals to be in-door cats only. Buyers do not invest money just to allow the animal to free roam and potentially get hurt or perish. This bill seems to target the wrong people.

I OPPOSE this bill. It does not create a feasible plan to decrease Hawaii's feral cat population. Asking people to trap and fix but to NOT release a cat back into their environment only leaves limited options for that cat. If that cat is not "re-homeable" the only choice is to euthanize it as shelters, fosters and rescues are already at capacity; so where will all these street cats go if not released back to their communities. The problem is that we are looking at the feral cat population as pets, when they should be considered vermin. A kitten released back into the community might live another 15 yrs where it can wreak havoc on our native wildlife. A statewide time limited culling might be a more effective option. Breeders and responsible pet owners are not the problem. You need to educate the public about the hazards of allowing free roaming cats in the community and its impact on the environment. Breeders require their homed animals to be in-door cats only. Buyers do not invest money just to allow the animal to free roam and potentially get hurt or perish. This bill seems to target the wrong people.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 11:32:20 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
lynne matusow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This excellent bill will reduce the pet overpopulation, including free roaming cats. It will reduce diseases and their spread to other animals, including monk seals. Please move this bill forward.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 11:34:17 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Linda Elliott	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am submitting testimony to strongly support mandatory **pet cat** sterilization. Hawai'i is experiencing a cat overpopulation crisis, and this legislation is an essential solution to protecting cats, wildlife, and communities. I submit my support only if the funds from the Spay/Neuter Fund are only to be applied to **pet cats** that will not be released back into the environment.

This bill should require all **pet cats** be sterilized, and with certain exceptions such as registered, responsible breeders with established guidelines. This bill should only be for **pet cats** that have a home and owner and are not feral. And with authorized resources to support statewide spaying and neutering of **pet cats**. This action will benefit the health and welfare of Hawai'i's endangered native wildlife, humane care of **pet cats** and health of our communities.

Thank you to the Legislature for considering HB364 for protecting our communities, native endangered wildlife and for the humane care of pet cats.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this critically important issue.

Linda Elliott, Hāwī, HI 96719

To whom it may concern,

My name is Allycia Watanabe. I am in OPPOSITION of HB364.

As a civil servant currently under the Department of Health and a foster volunteer for the Hawaiian Humane Society specializing in neonate kittens, I have firsthand experience of the impact of cat overpopulation and understand the intent behind HB 364. However, I strongly believe that a more balanced, community-driven approach would be far more effective than a broad sterilization mandate.

Along with serving my community as a foster to orphan kittens, I am a member of the Cat Fanciers of Hawaii (CFH) Association. The CFA has played a significant role in promoting responsible cat breeding and working to curb overpopulation through strict regulations, breeder accountability, and community outreach. CFA enforces strict breeding standards for catteries registered under its organization. Breeders must provide proper veterinary care, maintain clean and humane living conditions, and follow responsible breeding practices that prioritize genetic health and temperament over quantity. To remain in good standing, a cattery must uphold CFA's ethical guidelines, which include socializing kittens before placement, placing them in appropriate homes, and ensuring that cats are not sold to pet stores, brokers, or unethical mass breeders. Additionally, breeders are encouraged to include spay/neuter clauses in pet contracts to prevent uncontrolled reproduction among non-breeding pets.

CFA enforces strict breeding standards for catteries registered under its organization. Breeders must provide proper veterinary care, maintain clean and humane living conditions, and follow responsible breeding practices that prioritize genetic health and temperament over quantity. To remain in good standing, a cattery must uphold CFA's ethical guidelines, which include socializing kittens before placement, placing them in appropriate homes, and ensuring that cats are not sold to pet stores, brokers, or unethical mass breeders. Additionally, breeders are encouraged to include spay/neuter clauses in pet contracts to prevent uncontrolled reproduction among non-breeding pets.

Beyond breeder regulations, CFA also contributes to overpopulation reduction by promoting spay/neuter awareness. The organization supports early spay/neuter programs and has helped develop policies that encourage sterilization for pet-quality kittens before they are placed in homes. Additionally, CFA has been involved in educational outreach, partnering with shelters and rescue groups to educate the public on responsible cat ownership, the importance of adoption, and the impact of overpopulation. Some CFA-affiliated clubs even organize low-cost spay/neuter clinics and adoption events to directly assist communities with managing stray and abandoned cat populations.

By enforcing responsible breeding standards, supporting sterilization initiatives, and advocating for public education, CFA helps ensure that purebred cats are bred ethically while also addressing the larger issue of feline overpopulation. Instead of blanket sterilization mandates that may disproportionately affect responsible pet owners, CFA's approach demonstrates that education, ethical breeding, and community-based initiatives can lead to more sustainable and humane solutions. Breeders who maintain CFA-recognized catteries already adhere to stringent ethical and health standards, making additional state regulations unnecessary and punitive.

While responsible population control is necessary, imposing strict regulations on pet owners and ethical breeders alike may have unintended consequences, including financial burdens, bureaucratic red tape, and potential health risks for young kittens subjected to early sterilization. Furthermore, early sterilization at three months can negatively impact a kitten's physical development, hormonal balance, and immune system, leading to long-term health issues.

Instead of a strict mandate, the state should invest in expanding Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) programs with adequate funding and volunteer support to create managed cat colonies, where sterilized and vaccinated cats are monitored to prevent uncontrolled breeding while addressing environmental concerns. Additionally, incentivized spay/neuter programs offering free or low-cost services, tax incentives for responsible pet owners, and accessible sterilization resources would be far more effective in curbing overpopulation without penalizing responsible owners. Strengthening public education efforts through partnerships with schools and community groups, promoting responsible pet ownership, and engaging businesses in sterilization and adoption sponsorships can create a culture of responsibility and compassion. Moreover, targeted efforts to protect native wildlife could focus on promoting safe outdoor enclosures, enforcing supervised outdoor time in vulnerable areas, and funding research into innovative feline contraceptive vaccines as a long-term solution. Rather than an enforcement-heavy policy that may disproportionately burden pet owners and ethical breeders while failing to address the root causes of overpopulation, I urge lawmakers to consider a comprehensive, community-driven strategy that prioritizes humane and sustainable solutions.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask that you oppose HB 364. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Allycia Watanabe

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 11:51:12 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lee Cuccia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Given the large overpopulation issue we face, controlling breeding is imperative. Requiring spay/neuter is very important and having the special fund to help people in this work is necessary. Please consider this needs to be applicable to TNR animals too! Additionally, without a means to enforce it, it greatly lessens any meaningful impact.

mahalo!

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 11:54:06 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dylan Blanchard	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to you today to voice my enthusiastic support for HB364 which would require the sterilization of cats over the age of 3 months and which would establish a spay and neuter fund which cannot be used for programs which release cats onto the landscape. As a member of the conservation community in Hawai'i I have seen firsthand the harms caused by feral cats to our native birds, marine mammals, and ecosystems. This bill is an essential step in reducing the feral cat population in Hawai'i while also providing funding for the public to get pet cats sterilized at low or no cost to the owner. Furthermore this bill will ease the burden of the cat overpopulation on shelters and humane societies, allowing them to focus on animal care and adoption services. It is essential that the funds for sterilization services be provided to the public for the care of their pets, and not for the maintenance of outdoor cat populations through methods such as "Trap-Neuter-Return." TNR has been proven in peer-reviewed research to be extraordinarily expensive and ineffective for controlling feral cat populations and is not publicly supported by the majority of constituents in Hawai'i. The priority for this funding MUST be for spaying and neutering pets, which IS proven to effectively reduce cat populations and is an essential public service.

Mahalo for your service!

Sincerely,

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 12:33:42 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julia Whealin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please vote to approve 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. My family and I strongly support grants to organizations that spay/neuter pet animals and/or free-roaming cats, because it will reduce overpopulation across the board.

Mahalo!

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 12:36:17 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephen Rossiter	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support bill HB364, requiring that cats over the age of three months be surgically sterilized. This bill will reduce the HUGE number of feral cats on the islands. Those cats prey on and spread disease to rare native wildlife. This bill will help reduce suffering overall.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 1:13:37 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
H. Justman	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a once longtime exhibitor of registered pedigreed cats in Hawaii I oppose HB364.

Since the early 90's I have worked diligently along with many other members of the Cat Fancy including the Cat Fanciers of Hawaii Club (CFH) towards the deserved recognition, betterment, and protection of purebred cats within the United States and Internationally. We are "NOT" by any means kitten mills.

The CFH is governed by the Cat Fanciers Association (CFA) This body was established in the United States in 1906 and is the largest registry of pedigreed cats. The home office is located in Alliance, Ohio. The Cat Fanciers Association has also established a presence in Japan, China, Europe, and Canada. Their mission as well as ours is multi-layered. The Cat Fanciers Association sets show standards, breeding guidelines, as well as sending judges through rigorous training which may at times last several years. They provide genetic testing, and disseminate the very latest research on health issues, publishing books and magazines for the public. Another extremely important aspect of their organization is providing animals and their human counterparts disaster relief during hurricanes, floods, and fires. Catastrophic events have become much too frequent in 2024 and 2025.

With their outstanding leadership, The Hawaii Cat Club was one of the first organizations to spring into action and quickly organize and raise thousands of dollars to assist victims of the deadly fire that claimed homes and so many lives in Lahaina, Maui.

The Cat Fanciers Club of Hawaii has been a shining example of winning numerous awards for the ir spectacular breeds claiming both State and Regional wins on the mainland year after year. What not many people are aware of is that members of this club have served as messengers of ALOHA attracting many visitors to come to Hawaii simply because of their outstanding hospitality and the message they are able to send because of their beautiful felines. Their ability to serve as good stewards may not remain possible should they loose their beloved hobby. Passing HB364 would only serve to place a burden on the members of the Cat Fanciers of Hawaii Club by the measure becoming a penalizing tax burden along with the cost of punitive permits.

Respectfully submitted, Honey Justman Ph.(808) 753-7726

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 2:18:41 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
bobbie becker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support the mandatory sterilization of cats, pet and feral alike. In the 24 years that I have lived on Maui I have seen the number of cats loose on the streets, in our forests and at the humane society, soar. Every year there are more. We have animal welfare groups that oppose the euthanasia of even homeless cats, so we must begin to reduce their overall numbers somehow.. A realistic way of doing this is to spay and neuter all cats that come into contact with a veterinarian, an animal shelter, or a no-kill facility. CATS are descimating our bird populations.

PLEASE support this legislation. Thank-you.

Bobbie Becker

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 2:30:56 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dianne Stewart	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a breeder and a member of the Cat Fancier's of Hawaii and oppose this bill as currently written. I appreciate the effort to introduce measures that will help in controlling the feral cat population in Hawaii and personally managed a feral colony of cat's on the island, the colony I managed started with a population of over 120 cats and we worked to reduce this number to 63, over a 6 year period using Trap, Neuter, Release & Managed measures. I completely understand the need to get this issue under control in Hawaii, for this reason I support the intent of the bill. That said, I oppose the restrictions that will be place on responsible breeders and member in good standing with Cat Fancier's or America and Cat Fanciers of Hawaii. We as members are al subject to restrictions and ruled imposed by CFA as responsible breeders. Yet, the measures being proposed limiting breeders to the number of times they can breed a cat or age limits as well as exhorbitant feese for permits annually is unjust. There are a only about 12 to 15 CFA recognized reeders at any given time in Hawaii, each breeder may maintain from 3 to 5 active breeding cats, the fees you would accumulate from these breeders are inconsequential in the face of the problem and create a burden on the breeders who already are paying large ampounts to import new cats for breeding purposes. Responsible breeders are placing cats with applicants that are carfully screened and no cat I have ever placed has been allowed to roam free or reproduce amongst the feral population. I can account for every cat I have ever rehomed in Hawaii and none have ever contributed to the feral population. I also oppose the mandatory spay and neuter of our pedigreed cats at the age of 3 months, as vetranarians have previously testified, early spay or neuter of the cats can lead to negative impacts on the devlopementy of the urinary tract and some cats are prone to issue effecting their urinary tract health, therefor I encourage perspective owners to wait to 6 to 8 months of age to spay and nueter. As a breeder, once I receive proof of spay or neuter, then and only then do I release ownership to the cat in question. We ensure that the cats we place are not used for reproduction unless authorized by the breeder. CFGA guidelines state that a female should not produce more that 3 litters in a 24 month period, queens should not be bred beyond 7 years of age and males should be screened as they age for health before continuing breeding. There is no reason a healthy female cannot breede until age 6 to 7 and a male in good health until age 9 to 10, limiting this places a burden on the breeders and also requires we bring even more cats into Hawaii for breeding purposes and retiring cats senselessly at a young age. Likewise, due to the climate in Hawaii our females are cycling continuously in and out of heat and not breeding could place tham at risk for pyometra, a potentially life threatening condition. No breeder in Hawaii is profiting from their breeding programs it is a passion, not a business. I personally was audited by rthe state when I attempted to claim my cattery as a business and after three years of showing losses, was informed that it was not a business but was a hobby and thus fined by the state for back taxes and penalties. Yet,

now that state intends to punish me again for helping in maintaining an endangered cat breed, less than 200 cats of my breed type were registered within CFA globally last year. Every breeder I work with is recognized as a responsible breeder and abides by the rules and guideline imposed by CFA. The bottom line is that CFA recognized responsible breeders are not contributing to the feral cat population in Hawaii, we all are not gaining income from this endeavor and the state imposing unreasonable fees and limits on us will only lead to many breeders losing the ability to continue to breed pedigreed cats that so many people desire. Do not punish those that are already practicing good standards and are also involved with helping control the feral population out of their own pockets.

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 3:40:05 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Harnish	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concern,

My name Patricia Harnish. I am in OPPOSITION of HB364.

As an exhibitor of the Cat Fanciers of Hawaii Club (CFH) cat shows, I have relationships with the breeders in the club and feel that they are being unfairly targeted by the introduction of this bill. The club is governed but the overall Cat Fanciers Association (CFA) body that is an internationally recognized body. The CFA has rules, regulations, and standards that the breeders must abide by in order to have a cattery in good standing. Breeders do not need to be regulated by the state as well.

I respectfully ask that you oppose HB364.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Patricia Harnish

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 4:15:34 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaleiheana-a-Pohaku Stormcrow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe and Committee Members,

My name is Kaleiheana Stormcrow, and I am writing in strong SUPPORT for HB364, which would establish the Spay and Neuter Special Fund to reduce pet overpopulation, including the feral and free-roaming cat population, require that cats be surgically sterilized, and authorize county animal control authorities to establish and enforce a permit program to allow the responsible breeding of cats.

I strongly support mandatory pet cat sterilization. Hawaii is experiencing a cat overpopulation crisis, which is negatively affecting our fragile native ecosystems through predation on endemic species who evolved in the absence of predators and disease, like *Toxoplasmosis gondii*, which affects Nēnē and marine mammals.

This legislation is an essential first step to protecting cats, wildlife, and communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Kaleiheana Stormcrow, Kapu'euhi (Mountain View)

**Testimony from Margaux Solari
IN SUPPORT OF HB364 HD1 RELATING TO ANIMAL CONTROL
Before House of Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs Committee
February 12, 2025
2:00 pm, conference room 325**

Aloha Chair David A. Tarnas, Vice Chair Mahina Poepoe, and members of the committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs,

Thank you for taking the time to listen to my testimony. My name is Margaux Solari, and I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB364 HD1, which establishes responsible sterilization and breeding regulations for cats in Hawai'i. As a resident, I recognize the urgent need for policies that address the growing population of free-roaming and feral cats humanely and effectively.

I write not only as a concerned citizen but as someone who has witnessed these animals' suffering and the devastating consequences of unchecked populations. I would like to share my personal experience with you. I was never a cat person until I moved to Hawaii because a few years ago, I was driving home late at night when I noticed something dart across the road. I barely missed it. I pulled over, my heart racing, and stepped out into the dim streetlight's glow. That's when I saw them, a mother cat and her three tiny kittens, barely old enough to walk, huddled near a storm drain. The mother looked weak, her body thin and frail from malnutrition. Her eyes were sunken, and her ears twitched constantly as if she was on high alert, always searching for food and always struggling to keep her kittens alive.

I knelt and extended my hand, but she flinched and backed away. She didn't trust me. She had no reason to trust humans. Her life had been nothing but struggle. That night, I left a can of food by the curb and promised myself I would return.

For weeks, I visited them, always at a distance, always trying to earn the mother's trust. I watched as her kittens grew, their tiny bellies still hollow, their fur matted from fleas and dirt. Then, one day, I arrived at a horrifying sight. One of the kittens was gone.

Panicked, I searched the area. That's when I saw it, a lifeless little body by the roadside. Hit by a car, left alone, unnoticed by anyone except its grieving mother. The pain in her eyes was undeniable, even for an animal that had learned to survive in silence. She had no choice but to keep going, to keep searching for food, to keep trying to save the kittens she had left.

That night, I realized something important: this cycle will never stop on its own. It will continue, again and again, unless we step in to make a difference. Without action, more kittens will be born into suffering. More cats will die alone. More of our endangered wildlife will be lost to predation. Hawai'i has one of the highest populations of free-roaming and feral cats in the country. The result is a crisis that affects not only the animals themselves but also the environment and public health. Every year, thousands of unwanted kittens are born into a life of hardship. Many don't survive past a few months. Those that do often endure malnutrition, disease, and injury, living short, difficult lives.

HB364 HD1 is a necessary, humane, and proactive step toward real change. By requiring sterilization and implementing responsible breeding regulations, we can prevent thousands of unwanted litters from being born into suffering. By funding accessible spay and neuter programs, we can give pet owners and caregivers the resources they need to act responsibly. By reducing free-roaming cat populations, we can help protect Hawai'i's native species while also ensuring that fewer cats struggle to survive on the streets.

After weeks of effort, I was able to rescue the mother cat and her two surviving kittens. I took them in, and for the first time, they experienced warmth, safety, and love. But this story is rare. Most stray cats never find safety. Most die alone, unnoticed, unloved. That is why HB364 HD1 is so important. It is not just a policy, it is a promise that we will do better. It is a commitment to compassion, to responsibility, and to building a future where fewer animals suffer needlessly.

I urge this committee to pass this bill and take a stand for humane, effective change. Let's end the cycle of suffering before it begins. Let's create a future where every cat has a chance at life, love, and a home.

Mahalo for your time, compassion, and consideration of this crucial piece of legislation.

Sincerely,
Margaux Solari

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/11/2025 8:13:16 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathy Shimata	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support mandatory pet cat sterilization. Hawaii is experiencing a cat overpopulation crisis, and this legislation is an essential solution to protecting cats, wildlife, and communities. We in Hawaii have an especially serious problem with the loss of our native birds. Taking strong steps to reduce cat numbers will go a long way to help our native birds.

Mahalo.

Kathy Shimata

Honolulu. 96822

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2025 8:18:07 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ian W Cole	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in strong support of HB364. A concerted effort must be made to cotrol the overpopulation of cats envading our public spaces, leaving there waste, creating feeding litter, endangering our wildlife and trespassing on private lands when freeroaming.

Thank you

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2025 12:11:11 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Karim Hanna	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill

HB-364-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/12/2025 1:57:30 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/12/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emily Sarasa	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Emily Sarasa. I am testifying **in support of HB364** because it reflects a modest compromise between different interest groups trying to address the free-roaming cat problem in Hawaii. I am a recent graduate of the William S. Richardson School of Law, where I earned a certificate in Environmental Law and served as President of the UH Student Animal Legal Defense Fund. I wrote my second-year seminar law thesis on the free-roaming cat issue in Hawaii. Before law school, I worked for three national animal rights organizations.

Free-roaming cats have devastated Hawaii’s endemic species. This bill encourages responsible companion animal ownership practices to "turn off the tap."

My main suggestion is to amend Section 2, subsection (f) to lower the fine for violations of subsection (a) to \$100 and allow for the fine to be waived if the cat owner shows proof of sterilization within 30 days of the violation issuance. I also recommend directing HDOA to amend [Chapter 4-29 Hawaii Administrative Rules](#) to require that cats imported to the state are sterilized, or part of the permit program before entering the state.

Briefly, here are common concerns I noted in opposition testimony and my response:

1. Opposition to cat breeding permits: All breeders in the state are commercially selling an invasive species, and the self-identified “legitimate” breeders testifying in opposition to this bill do not represent all cat breeders or cat breeding practices in the State. The State has an interest in ensuring that all cat breeding is regulated. (Some animal rights and welfare organizations lobby for a complete ban on cat/dog breeding. If the legislature wants to encourage the adoption of shelter cats in our overburdened shelters, it could ban the retail sale of cats in the state entirely. Pet stores could showcase kittens from local shelters, rather than bred cats.)

2. Opposition to mandatory sterilization because of economic burdens: This bill creates a free spay/neuter fund, which should subsidize or make free spay/neuter services for low-income individuals. (I also want to note that there is a major gap in enforcement because the counties have outsourced most of their animal control services to humane societies. State and county law enforcement are not typically cat trapping.)

3. Opposition to the spay/neuter fund being limited to non-TNR cats: It is my understanding that this bill will not affect any funds currently used for TNR sterilization, so this additional

sterilization funding source for low-income families should not be opposed. This limitation will ensure that low-income community members can access free spay/neuter services for their owned cats, and that conservation groups opposed to TNR continue supporting this bill.

Please **support HB364** and consider my proposed amendments.

Mahalo nui for your consideration,

Emily Sarasa