



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection and Health
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By
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SB 593 – RELATING TO ANIMALS

Chair Baker, Vice Chair Nishihara and members of the committee:

The University of Hawai'i (UH) offers comments on this measure to clear up recent misinformation in public testimony and the resulting misconceptions regarding its animal research practices on dogs and cats.

The University of Hawai'i finds that the opening paragraph of SB 593 troubling as it leads to a general public misconception that UH is one of the many institutions across the country that uses dogs and cats for research:

“The legislature finds that every year over one hundred million animals are used as subjects of scientific and medical research, as well as for educational purposes. As recently as 2015, over 19,000 cats and 61,000 dogs were used in research... The legislature further finds that many of the animals used for research and education are euthanized after they are used.”

While UH is the only institution in the State of Hawai'i that is authorized to conduct research on animals for the purpose of science, medicine and education – it does not use dogs and cats in this capacity.

Previous public testimony incorrectly attributed UH's use of 188 dogs and 87 cats for “testing and research.” These numbers were taken out of context from Windward Community College's Veterinary Technology Program, which trains students in proper veterinary techniques and standards involving general care, husbandry (i.e., learning proper restraint, ear cleaning, nail trimming, etc.), assisting the veterinarians with surgery (neutering) and dentistry – using dogs and cats in conjunction with animal shelters and and/or TNRM (trap neuter release manage) caretakers. In actuality, this approach creates a “win-win” situation for all – the animal shelters receive assistance from UH, the dogs and cats receive needed care and UH students receive hands-on veterinary technician training.

While UH supports the intent of the measure, it finds that the legislation is unnecessary and unfortunately stirring up public emotion by creating an unnecessary platform for an issue that does not exist in the state.

The University of Hawai'i appreciates the opportunity to comment on this measure.