



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Agriculture
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by

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SB 593 SD1 – RELATING TO ANIMALS

Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite and members of the committee:

The University of Hawai'i (UH) first would like to reiterate and clarify the preconceived notion and 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 SD1, continues to be troubling as it leads to a general public misunderstanding 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.

The University of Hawai'i has never used cats and dogs (e.g. confining them for science, education or research) for the purposes that this particular bill attempts to address and it doesn't intend to do so in the future. Thus, UH finds that the proposed legislation is truly unnecessary and unfortunately continues to stir up deep public

emotion and controversy by creating an unnecessary platform for an issue that does not exist in the state. It seems as though the proposed legislation actually encourages such uses that UH has no interest in pursuing. Should future practices change, UH would support the intent of this measure. However, at this time – UH finds it truly unnecessary to enact legislation and create a law that does not have any current impact or application.

The University of Hawai'i respectfully requests that this bill be rightfully held. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.