

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

232

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 06 , 2025

RE: H.B. No. 547
H.D. 1

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2025
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems, to which was referred H.B. No. 547 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE SPAYING AND NEUTERING OF ANIMALS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish and appropriate funds into a Spay and Neuter Special Fund to reduce pet overpopulation and the reproduction of free-roaming cats; and
- (2) Establish various revenue and fundraising sources for the Special Fund.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Animal Interfaith Alliance in Britain; Animal Rights Hawai'i; AdvoCATS, Inc.; Hawaiian Humane Society; Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition; Aloha Animal Advocates; Pele Lani Farm, LLC; Big Island Invasive Species Committee; and numerous individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from one individual. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Budget and Finance; Department of Land and Natural Resources; Department of Taxation; and Tax Foundation of Hawaii.

2025-1482 HB547 HD1 HSCR HMSO



Your Committee finds that feral cats have become a significant issue in Hawaii, particularly in suburban and urban areas, where their growing population threatens native wildlife, disrupts ecosystems, and raises public health concerns. Spaying and neutering are effective methods for reducing pet overpopulation and humanely managing free-roaming cat populations. Despite the benefits, the State currently provides no dedicated funding to address these issues. Therefore, to support these efforts, this measure establishes a Spay and Neuter Special Fund, along with various revenue and fundraising sources, to help control pet overpopulation and reduce the number of free-roaming cats in a humane and sustainable manner.

Your Committee notes the concerns of the Department of Budget and Finance regarding its lack of subject-matter expertise to properly administer the Spay and Neuter Special Fund and possibly appropriating funds directly to the counties, who have historically been responsible for animal control functions.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Moving language that authorizes the proposed check-off option for the spaying and neutering of animals for income tax purposes to section 235-102.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes;
- (2) Changing the appropriation amounts to unspecified amounts;
- (3) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (4) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

Your Committee respectfully respects your Committee on Finance, should it deliberate on this measure, to consider an appropriation amount of \$50,000 to be appropriated into and out of the Spay and Neuter Special Fund to reduce pet overpopulation and the reproduction of free-roaming cats.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems that is attached to this



report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 547, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 547, H.D. 1, and be referred to your Committee on Culture & Arts.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Agriculture & Food
Systems,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kirstin Kahaloa".

KIRSTIN KAHALOA, Chair



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Bill/Resolution No.: HB 547		Committee Referral: AGR, CAA, FIN		Date:
<input type="checkbox"/> The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on the measure.				
The recommendation is to: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended (as is) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments (HD) <input type="checkbox"/> Hold <input type="checkbox"/> Pass short form bill with HD to recommit for future public hearing (recommit)				
AGR Members	Ayes	Ayes (WR)	Nays	Excused
1. KAHALOA, Kirstin (C)	X			
2. KUSCH, Matthias (VC)	X			
3. LOWEN, Nicole E.	X			
4. PERRUSO, Amy A.	X			
5. QUINLAN, Sean				X
6. WARD, Gene				X
TOTAL (6)	4	0	0	2
The recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted If joint referral, _____ did not support recommendation. <div style="text-align: center;">committee acronym(s) </div>				
Vice Chair's or designee's signature: _____				
Distribution: Original (White) – Committee Duplicate (Yellow) – Chief Clerk's Office Duplicate (Pink) – HMSO				