



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2025**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. NO. 698, H.D. 1, PROPOSED S.D. 1, RELATING TO ANIMAL CRUELTY.

BEFORE THE:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

DATE: Friday, March 28, 2025 **TIME:** 10:00 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 016 and Videoconference

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Mark S. Tom, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General (Department) provides the following comments on the Proposed S.D. 1, which is being considered at this hearing.

The purpose of the bill is to increase the criminal penalties for the offense of cruelty to animals in the first degree (section 711-1108.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS)), and the offense of cruelty to animals in the second degree (section 711-1109, HRS), by increasing the category of offense when certain criminal acts are involved.

While increased penalties should provide a greater deterrent to animal cruelty offenses, the Department recommends formatting the penalty sections of Proposed S.D. 1 in section 2, page 2, line 17, through page 3, line 5, and section 3, page 3, lines 8-15, differently. Penalty statutes that combine various levels of petty misdemeanor, misdemeanor, or felony classifications within the same section, are unnecessarily confusing and should be avoided when possible. For purposes of clarity in charging a criminal case, transparency to the defendant on the penalty associated with the alleged offense, and potential record-keeping purposes, the Department recommends separating each classification of penalty into its own respective provision. To accomplish this, the Department suggests the following amendments.

Amendments to section 2, on page 2, line 17, to page 3, line 5:

Because our recommendation involves amending more than subsection (5) of section 711-1108.5, the full text of section 711-1108.5, HRS, needs to be set forth. Our suggested amendments to section 2 are to:

- Amend the prefatory wording;
- Amend subsection (5) to delete the new proviso and some of the original wording;
- Add subsections (6) and (7); and
- Renumber subsection (6) to subsection (8).

The suggested amendments to section 2 read as follows (complete wording for section 711-1108.5(1), (2), (3), (4), and the renumbered (6) is omitted because that wording is unchanged in our recommendation):

SECTION 2. Section 711-1108.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

"§711-1108.5 Cruelty to animals in the first degree. (1) . . .

(2) . . .

(3) . . .

(4) . . .

(5) Cruelty to animals in the first degree ~~[is]~~ shall be a class C felony. ~~[In addition to any fines and imprisonment imposed under this section, any person convicted under this section shall be prohibited from possessing or owning any pet animal or equine animal for a minimum of five years from the date of conviction].~~

(6) Any person who violates subsection (1)(a) or (b) and a pet animal is involved shall be guilty of a class B felony.

(7) In addition to any fines and imprisonment imposed under this section, any person convicted under this section shall be prohibited from possessing or owning any pet animal or equine animal for a minimum of five years from the date of conviction.

~~[(6)]~~ (8) For the purposes of this section,"

Amendments to section 3, on page 3, lines 6-15:

Because our recommendation involves amending more than subsection (4) of section 711-1109, the full text of section 711-1109, HRS, needs to be set forth. Our suggested amendments to section 3 are to:

- Amend the prefatory wording;
- Amend subsection (4) to delete the amended proviso and the added wording; and
- Add subsection (5)

The suggested amendments to section 3 read as follows (complete wording for section 711-1109(1), (2), and (3) is omitted because that wording is unchanged in our recommendation):

SECTION 3. Section 711-1109, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

"§711-1108.5 Cruelty to animals in the second degree. (1) . . .

(2) . . .

(3) . . .

(4) Cruelty to animals in the second degree [~~is~~] shall be a misdemeanor~~[-, except that if the offense involves ten or more pet animals in any one instance, then cruelty to animals in the second degree is a class C felony].~~

(5) Any person who violates subsection (1) involving ten or more pet animals in any one instance or the death of a pet animal shall be guilty of a class B felony. In addition to any other penalties imposed, the person shall be prohibited from possessing or owning any pet animal for a minimum of five years from the date of conviction.

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

JON N. IKENAGA
PUBLIC DEFENDER

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STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

March 27, 2025

HB698 HD1: RELATING TO ANIMAL CRUELTY

Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary:

The Office of the Public Defender (OPD) **opposes HB698 HD1**. This bill proposes to amend HRS sections 711-1108.5, 711-1109, 711-1109.3, 711-1109.35, 711-1109.37, 711-1109.4, 711-1109.7 and 711-1109.8 for the purpose of increasing the penalties for various crimes relating to cruelty to animals. While the OPD does not condone the mistreatment, neglect or abuse of any animal the OPD does not agree that increased penalties for said offenses will have any deterrent effect upon the community in general.

Increasing the penalty for an offense does not deter the prohibited conduct. In its publication "Five Things About Deterrence,"¹ the National Institute of Justice sets forth several² relevant precepts regarding deterrence: (1) "The certainty of being caught is a vastly more powerful deterrent than the punishment"; (2) "Sending an individual convicted of a crime to prison isn't a very effective way to deter crime"; (3) "Police deter crime by increasing the perception that criminal will be caught and punished"; and (4) "Increasing the severity of punishment does little to deter crime." Increasing the severity of the offenses listed in this bill and exposing violators to up to twenty years of imprisonment will not deter others from committing acts of animal abuse.

The Legislature's objective should be to focus resources on enforcing existing laws, preventing cruelty cases and rehabilitating offenders. Instead of increasing the penalties for existing animal cruelty offenses, which will result in added costs for the prosecution and incarceration of offenders, a more productive approach would be to increase education regarding animal welfare, increase enforcement of existing laws relating to cruelty to

¹ "Five Things About Deterrence," May 2016, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice. <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/247350.pdf>

² The fifth precept, "There is no proof that the death penalty deters criminals," is not relevant to the instant bill.

animals, increase the enforcement presence in the community and to focus on rehabilitating offenders using non-carceral, non-punitive practices. According to the National Institute of Health, “[a]nimal welfare legislation is routinely underenforced by the state.”³ Further, “[e]nforcement does not necessarily need to involve carceral outcomes, and indeed, sometimes ‘in the field’ educational or supportive responses to offending – as an alternative to criminal or regulatory response – are more appropriate.”⁴ For example, the Benchmark Animal Rehabilitative Curriculum’s (B.A.R.C.) online Animal Cruelty Prevention and Education Course is designed to “inspire change in attitudes and actions toward individuals who have mistreated them.”⁵ B.A.R.C. emphasizes the value of education as preventing repetitive animal abuse.

By failing to include some form of education as part of whatever other measures the criminal justice system takes against those who mistreat animals, we’re virtually guaranteeing that nothing about the offenders’ thoughts and attitudes toward animals will change. A system that punishes animal abuse offenders, but ignores the need for rehabilitation, means many will reoffend. If the criminal justice system desires to reduce the likelihood that offenders will repeat their abusive behavior toward animals, it’s imperative that in most, if not all, cases of animal abuse, an educational component be included as part of the pre- or post-conviction terms or conditions.

Educating animal owners in general regarding the needs of animals, and what the law requires owners to provide for their animals, is a critical element in the prevention of animal cruelty cases.

(Emphasis added). Indeed, even the Hawaiian Humane Society notes the importance of education as a response to animal abuse or cruelty.⁶

³ Rodriguez Ferrere, M. B., “Animal Welfare Underenforcement as a Rule of Law Problem,” June 12, 2022, National Institute of Health, National Library of Medicine, National Center for Biotechnology Information.

⁴ Id.

⁵ See <https://barceducation.org/>

⁶ See “Investigations, Rescues & Laws,” Hawaiian Humane Society (“We walk a fine line between education, advocacy, and enforcement, using an outreach-based approach for animal welfare. Often, we find that where the laws fall short, our influence as advisors and partners with pet owners, yields positive results.”) <https://hawaiianhumane.org/investigations-rescues-laws/>

In sum, the OPD does not condone animal mistreatment, neglect or abuse, and urges the Legislature to focus on education and rehabilitation as more effectual and corrective efforts when preventing cruelty to animals.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

Date: March 26, 2025

To: Chair Sen. Karl Rhoads
Vice Chair Sen. Mike Gabbard
and Members of the Committee on Judiciary

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

RE: Testimony in strong support of HB 698, HD1, Proposed SD1:
Relating to Animal Cruelty
Friday, March 28, 2025, 10:00 a.m., Room 016 & Videoconference

On behalf of the Hawaiian Humane Society, thank you for considering our strong support for House Bill 698, HD1, Proposed SD1, which amends the criminal penalties for various animal cruelty offenses by increasing the category of offense.

Animal cruelty is a difficult crime to prosecute for a variety of reasons. Its victims cannot seek justice for themselves. Many offenses take place behind closed doors. Witnesses frequently know the perpetrators and are unwilling to testify, often out of fear.

Those fears are not irrational. Decades of research has established correlations between animal abuse, child abuse and neglect, domestic violence, elder abuse, and other forms of violence. In recognition of this mounting body of evidence, the FBI added four types of animal abuse to the National Incident Based Reporting System in 2016: Physical abuse or torture; simple or gross neglect; animal sexual abuse; and organized animal abuse (animal fighting). In minimizing the consequences of animal cruelty, which our state legal system currently does, we are putting both people and animals at risk.

When there is sufficient evidence to bring an animal cruelty case to trial, the hard work and bravery it takes to bear witness on behalf of vulnerable animals results in minor penalties, almost never including jail time. This measure would elevate the penalties in the case of first- or second-degree cruelty against a pet animal or animals, which is appropriate given that only the most egregious abuse is ever brought to trial.

Please pass Bill 698, HD1, Proposed SD1, for the protection of animals and people. Mahalo for your consideration.



Date: March 27, 2025

To: Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair, and Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair, and Other Members of Senate Judiciary Committee

Submitted by: Smeeta Narang, Communications Coordinator

Kaua'i Humane Society, (808) 632 - 0610

Re: Support for HB 698 – Relating to Animal Cruelty

Friday, March 28th, 2025 TIME: 10:00 a.m. ROOM: CR 016 and Videoconference

The Kaua'i Humane Society is a nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering respect, responsibility, and compassion for all animals, enriching lives by nurturing healthy relationships between pets and people on the island of Kaua'i and beyond.

We strongly support HB 698, which seeks to amend the criminal penalties for various animal cruelty offenses by increasing the category of offense.

Animal cruelty is not only a grave concern for the well-being of animals but also poses a significant threat to community safety. Research indicates that 70% of violent criminals began by abusing animals, and children who witness animal abuse are more likely to become abusers themselves.

In Hawaii, the prevalence of animal cruelty crimes has been rising, with 73 cases reported in 2023 compared to 58 in 2018. This trend underscores the urgent need for stricter penalties to deter such offenses and protect our community.

By elevating first-degree animal cruelty to a Class B felony and imposing mandatory prohibitions on animal ownership for convicted offenders, HB 698 will ensure that perpetrators are held accountable and prevent future abuse.

We urge the committee to pass HB 698 to safeguard both animals and the residents of Hawaii.

Mahalo for considering our testimony.

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Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

HB698 HD1
RELATING TO ANIMAL CRUELTY

Friday, March 28, 2025, 10:00 AM
Conference Room 016 & Videoconference

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **opposes HB698 HD1** related to animal cruelty.

Animal health and well-being is a top priority for the Hawaii Cattlemen's Council. Livestock producers practice responsible animal husbandry and low-stress animal handling for the benefit of the livestock as well as for the ranching operation. While the intent of this bill is to target pet animals, it will have unintended consequences for animal agriculture. Specifically, on page 5, line 19, it should specify "pet animals" rather than just animals. Throughout the bill, it does not specify where the animal industry is exempt, and if the intent is to curb dog fighting, the language needs to be more specific to that.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure. The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council (HCC) is the Statewide umbrella organization comprised of the four county-level Cattlemen's Associations. Our member ranchers represent over 60,000 head of beef cows; more than 75% of all the beef cows in the State. Ranchers are the stewards of over 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or 20% of the State's total land mass. We represent the interests of Hawaii's cattle producers.

Nicole Galase
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council
Managing Director



LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 6:02:51 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Wood	Testifying for Hawaii Cattlemen's Council	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Animal health and well-being is the highest priority for our ranchers and farmers. While the intent of this bill is noble, the language needs to be more specific to pet animals to avoid inadvertently impacting production animals.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 5:08:39 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tiffany Kim	Testifying for FUR-ANGEL FOUNDATION	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of Hawai'i House Bill 698 – Relating to Animal Cruelty

Tiffany Kim
590 Farrington Hwy #524-224
Kapolei, Hawai'i 96707
furangelfoundation@gmail.com
March 25, 2025

Aloha Members of the Committee,
As a passionate advocate for animal welfare and a supporter of local rescue organizations, I am submitting this testimony in strong support of House Bill 698. It is imperative that we create harsher punishments for animal abusers to deter people from offending our most vulnerable. Animals are solely dependent upon their human caregivers and we have been seeing an increase in heinous crimes against animals. To ensure the health of our communities we must pass stricter laws to ensure the safety of all.

Mahalo,

Tiffany Kim

President

Fur-Angel Foundation

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 5:23:11 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

The Senate draft of the bill focuses specifically on increasing penalties for first- and second-degree animal cruelty. This targeted approach represents a strategic compromise that increases the chances of passing meaningful legislation as soon as possible.

Increasing penalties for the most severe forms of cruelty toward pet animals ensures that the most egregious offences face stricter consequences.

As well as raising penalties for first- and second-degree animal cruelty, the Bill also aligns with FBI and worldwide recognition that animal abuse is a predictor of broader violent behaviour, so it will be of great benefit to society generally.

We beg to support this Bill.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 7:32:24 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chantell Moniz	Testifying for Hina's Legacy Rescue Foundation	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha

I am writing this in support of this bill. I am the founder and president of Hina's Legacy Rescue Foundation. On a daily basis I receive calls, messages, emails regarding cases of animal cruelty. I am constantly asked what can I do. When I suggest to call HPD and humane society to make reports the first response is usually, I did and nothing happened or why should I do that they don't do anything. The battle is a constant struggle as we all feel like our hands are tied. Cases don't exist because our law doesn't enforce the punishment, and people don't take the law seriously because the penalties are very minimal. It's a slap on the wrist or nothing at all.

I feel if there were stricter penalties then maybe people will actually think about it before doing it. Something has to change, and this is a great start to a better protection to these helpless animals. They are constantly tethered and abused or even sexually assaulted. This is inhumane. We hold the Lifeless animals while sometimes taking their last breath because of animal cruelty, it's an image that no one will ever be able to unsee, unfeel, unknow. We owe them more then that.

Please pass this bill, please help us to help these animals.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 3:00:59 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amber Tynanes	Testifying for Hina's Legacy Foundation	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha,

As a Hawai'i State Citizen, I feel our current legislators have completely dropped the ball and have allowed for years of violent criminals to not only rain terror across the islands but rain terror on defenseless animals. These precious lives are completely helpless and dependent on the care of humans. Allowing people to commit heinous, violent, cruel crimes against animals and ongoing abuse of every type is completely NEGLIGENT, SHOCKING and DISAPPOINTING to say the least. By not taking action by not implementing harsher punishments, the message is very clear from our Hawai'i state legislators . The lives of the innocent and vulnerable do not matter! Who will help these innocent animals if not us? Who will be the brave men and women to stand up to generational abuse and cruelty. What is it going to take to put a stop to it? How much more heinous does the act have to be for it to be considered unlawful? Is strangulation , chopping off limbs, dislocating bones not allowing a dog to sit or lay for over 24 hours? These are just some of the things that have happened to these poor animals so I need to know how much more severe does the animal abuse have to be before you guys will consider it a felony? I do believe with my whole heart that people who hurt animals will hurt people. With all the animal abuse cases that means there's a lot of people out there that could potentially if not certainly hurt other people. With a rise in crime and violence overall I have heard talks of preventing gun violence preventing crime looking for the signs. Well we have all the signs in front of us. We have all the evidence, why in the world would you allow these animals to continue to suffer under the hands of abusers? Why in the world would you not prosecute somebody of the Type?

When you know better, you do better! You've heard that saying?

Well you all know better and as a citizen of the state along with thousands of others, we are asking and begging and pleading for you to do better. You have the information, you have the evidence. PLEASE PROTECT our INNOCENT and VOLNERABLE and that goes for animals and people.

Lastly, close your eyes for a moment. Imagine you have a rope around your neck , you're tied to a tree so tight you are unable to ever sit or lay down, no water no food, only enough to keep you alive so your abuser can continue. Imagine every person that comes near you kicks you, punches you, beats you relentlessly for your entire life. After your abuser has brought you death, you are

discarded like trash. Those are just some of the things these abused animals have had to suffer through.

There is absolutely no excuse for Animal abuse! **NO EXCUSE FOR ABUSE!**

Please support Bill HB698. Make animal cruelty a FELONY. If you do not support the Bill, then you might as well be the one inflicting the abuse on the animals. I truly hope and pray the right thing will be done!

Sincerely,

Amber Tynanes

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 12:00:57 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shawne Schmidt	Testifying for Paw Posse 'Ohana	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am support of this bill of animal cruelty.

Animal Law Section
A Section of the Hawai'i State Bar Association

Chair: Savannah Sherman, Esq.
shermansavannah8@gmail.com

The Animal Law Section of HSBA **supports** HB 698: Relating to Animal Cruelty.

HB698 does not only protect the welfare of animals, but it also protects humans from violence. Animal cruelty is a strong predictor of violence towards intimate partners, children, and the elderly.¹

HB698 would have the effect of increasing the enforcement of animal cruelty laws because felony offenses are treated more seriously in the justice system. A greater level of discretion is involved in the decision to arrest a suspect for a misdemeanor offense, while felony offenses generally require more strict action.²

Passing HB698 is a method of improving the enforcement of animal crimes in Hawai'i, thereby protecting animals and humans alike from violence.

This testimony represents the views of the Animal Law Section only and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Hawaii State Bar Association as a whole.

Respectfully,



Savannah Sherman, Esq.
Animal Law Section Chair

¹ See National Link Coalition, <https://nationallinkcoalition.org/> (last visited Mar. 26, 2025).

² See Emily M. Glazener, et al., *Understanding misdemeanor enforcement: The roles of calls for service and community characteristics*, Journal of Community Psychology Wiley, 15 (2019), https://ccjs.umd.edu/sites/ccjs.umd.edu/files/pubs/Glazener_2020.pdf.



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3/28/2025

Memorandum of Support – HB 698 SD1
Relating to Animal Cruelty

Dear Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

On behalf of the Animal Legal Defense Fund—the nation’s preeminent legal advocacy organization for animals—and our supporters in Hawai’i, I submit this memo in strong support of HB 698 SD1, a bill to increase penalties for first-degree and second-degree animal cruelty. Specifically, the bill would elevate first-degree animal cruelty to a Class B felony when the offense involves a pet animal and second-degree animal cruelty to a Class B felony when an animal dies or 10 or more animals are involved. It would also impose a mandatory possession ban for convicted offenders for second-degree animal cruelty. These changes would be a strong step in improving Hawai’i’s animal cruelty laws and ensuring that violence against animals, and humans, is being adequately addressed.

The Link Between Cruelty to Animals and Violence Toward Humans

While animals deserve protection in their own right, it is imperative that we recognize the link between violence toward animals and violence toward humans. When humans or animals in a home are abused or neglected, it creates a warning signal that others in the household may not be safe. Numerous studies document multifaceted links between acts of cruelty to animals and violence toward others, including domestic violence, child abuse, elder abuse, and other antisocial behavior. This complex web is commonly referred to as “The Link.”

Despite popular perception, it is not always the case that a person will first commit animal abuse and then graduate to violence against humans. Instead, most research suggests that animal cruelty is one of several antisocial or deviant behaviors that a person may engage in concurrently or over the course of their life. Put simply, violence is violence; and those who commit violence rarely limit their victim pool to a single species. This means that animal abuse can be an indicator of other forms of deviant behavior and conversely, familial violence may also be an indicator that animals in the home are in danger.¹

For example, In homes where serious animal abuse has occurred, there is an increased probability that some other type of family violence is also happening. According to one study, women in domestic violence shelters were 11 times more likely to report that their partner hurt or killed a pet, as compared with women who have not suffered domestic abuse.² In another study, 89% of women who had companion animals during an abusive relationship reported their animals were threatened, harmed, or killed by their abuser.³

¹ See Arnold Arluke et al., The Relationship of Animal Abuse to Violence and Other Forms of Antisocial Behavior, 14 J. Interpersonal Violence 963 (1999); see also Tia Hoffer Et Al., Violence in Animal Cruelty Offenders, (2018).

² Frank Ascione et al., Battered Pets and Domestic Violence: Animal Abuse Reported by Women Experiencing Intimate Violence and by Nonabused Women, 13 Violence Against Women 354 (2007).

³ Betty Jo Barrett et al., Animal Maltreatment as a Risk Marker of More Frequent and Severe Forms of Intimate Partner Violence, 26 J. Interpersonal Violence 5131 (2020).

Further, between 62-76% of animal cruelty in the home occurs in the presence of a child, which is a form of psychological trauma and negatively impacts children’s development.⁴ Conversely, if a child is cruel to animals, then it may be a sign that the child has experienced serious abuse or neglect. Children who exhibit cruelty towards animals are more than twice as likely to have suffered maltreatment themselves.⁵

In order to keep whole communities safe, we must take animal cruelty seriously and, among other strategies, impose penalties that actually deter offenders and mitigate recidivism.

Possession bans protect animals post-conviction from animal cruelty.

Possession bans are one of the most effective ways to ensure a person convicted of animal cruelty does not reoffend. Along with mandatory psychological evaluation and treatment, these sentencing measures can ensure that the root of the issue is being addressed and protect additional animals from harm.

Director of the Animal Legal Defense Fund’s Criminal Justice Program, Lora Dunn, explains, “Possession bans are crucial to protecting future animal victims from harm. Without pragmatic repercussions like bans on future animal ownership or contact, convicted offenders are statistically proven to prey on more animals in the future. That’s why it’s so important that animal protection laws are enforced—and that sentencing schemes reflect a comprehensive approach that addresses both offender and victim.”

While Hawai’i already has a possession ban requirement for first-degree animal cruelty, expanding this tool to cover second degree felony animal cruelty will ensure that more animals are protected from convicted offenders who are likely to repeat their crimes.

Each year, the Animal Legal Defense Fund publishes its [U.S. State Animal Protection Laws Ranking Report](#). In [2021](#), Hawai’i was named the most improved state after rising 12 ranks by criminalizing sexual assault of animals and requiring veterinarians to report suspected animal cruelty. By passing HB 698 and increasing penalties for some of the most egregious acts taken against animals, this legislature will further solidify the state’s commitment to protecting animals and enacting laws that actually work to keep our communities safe.

It is for these reasons that the Animal Legal Defense Fund urges you to support the enactment of HB 698 SD1. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Vierheilig
Legislative Affairs Manager
Animal Legal Defense Fund
lvierheilig@aldf.org

⁴ Roshni Trehan Ladny & Laura Meyer, Traumatized Witnesses: Review of Childhood Exposure to Animal Cruelty, 13 J. child & Adolescent Trauma 527 (2019).

⁵ Fiona S. McEwen et al., Is Childhood Cruelty to Animals a Marker for Physical Maltreatment in a Prospective Cohort Study of Children?, 38 CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT 533 (2014); see also Sarah DeGue & David DiLillo, Is Animal Cruelty a “Red Flag” for Family Violence?: Investigating Co-occurring Violence Toward Children, Partners, and Pets, 24 J. Interpersonal Violence 1036 (2009).

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 11:46:36 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Galanto	Testifying for HHBA	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

I oppose bill HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 1:04:04 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rachelle Teruya Alameida	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Testimony in Support of HB698

Submitted by: Rachelle Teruya Alameida

To: the Chair, Vice chair and Members of the Senate Committee

I am writing in strong support of HB698, a bill that seeks to strengthen penalties for animal cruelty in Hawaii.

I have witnessed firsthand the devastating consequences of animal abuse. Have you ever had to comfort an innocent animal who was abused by a human—an animal so broken and suffering that no matter how much care and love you give, it’s not enough? I have. And despite everything I did to ease their pain, they still died. It’s heartbreaking. It’s gut-wrenching. It’s unnecessary.

No animal should ever have to endure that kind of pain, and yet, it happens far too often. What’s worse is that without stronger penalties, these abusers disregard the law, and the cycle continues. I know this will likely not be the last time I have to hold a suffering animal in my arms, and that reality is unbearable.

HB698 is a critical step toward preventing this kind of cruelty and ensuring that those who harm animals face real consequences. Passing this bill is not just about protecting animals—it’s about protecting our community. The link between animal abuse and violence against people is undeniable. Stronger laws will not only save innocent lives but also create a safer, more compassionate society.

Please, I urge you to pass HB698 and stand up for those who cannot speak for themselves. Our animals—and our community—deserve better.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachelle Teruya Alameida

LATE

Testimony to House Bill 698 Animal Cruelty Penalties

Honorable Chairperson and members of the Senate Committee,

It is an honor to present my testimony today concerning House Bill 698. This bill, which aims to increase the penalties for first-degree and second-degree animal cruelty and elevates first-degree animal cruelty to a Class B felony along with other provisions, holds significant implications for our community. My testimony intends to shed light on the importance of passing this bill and how its enactment may have an impact that neither you nor I can see.

Over the years we have seen the horrific acts of animal cruelty within our community. We have heard of the horrendous injuries, maiming, and torture of animals that only look toward humans for care and compassion. We watched in dismay as these abusers continue to walk amongst us. We hear the experts tell us that those who abuse animals are likely to engage in violence against those within their community.

This cycle is tragic, and some seem numb to it. Or an attitude of indifference exists. Some may only see an animal and not see the impact that these vile acts have on our community but even more so, what these acts of cruelty have on our Keiki. Just as an animal has no voice, our Keiki who are witnessing these acts, have no voice either.

Share personal experience.

Our Keiki may not always share what they see or feel as their pet or an animal is beaten, tortured, or maimed as a means of power and control by a family member. The horror that they witness toward their pet or an animal they cherished can leave lifelong scars.

I ask any of you who are hesitant to vote yes to consider the silent voices of our Keiki. This bill might be the first intervention for an individual who considers acts of animal cruelty and might be the determining factor that breaks the cycle of violence in a person's life.

I believe this bill achieves its intended goals to hold those who engage in acts of cruelty to animals accountable for their actions and will enhance the wellbeing of our community.

I urge the members of the Senate Committee to consider my testimony, and the insights provided as they deliberate on the bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen A Josypenko
Kaneohe
(808) 391-2168

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 9:41:02 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ginny tiu	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB698. As a civilized community, we should not tolerate any form of cruelty to another living creature. It should be of great concern if it doesn't bother us. Additionally, we all know that animal cruelty leads to cruelty to humans, especially another vulnerable population- our Keiki and kupuna. I ask you to PLEASE do the right and humane thing and pass HB698.

Mahalo,

Ginny Tiu

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/24/2025 11:26:24 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gregory Misakian	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

I strongly support HB698 HD1.

Gregory Misakian

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 7:17:33 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chantell Moniz	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

As an animal advocate i see numerous animal cruelty cases. I personally have to hold them while in so much pain, scared, and suffering from the abuse of the hands of human beings. I can never get rid of the images I am faced with daily, hearing them whimper in pain, seeing the cowl in discomfort. These animals have feeling,as, they feel what we feel, they suffer way more because there is no one to protect them. The heartless abuse from people because they see animals as objects, yet they are the most loyal beings that would give their lives to save ours. Whether it's by emotional support, or protection. They deserve better from us. They deserve to have human beings be their voices, because they have non. I am in string support of this bill in hopes that people are finally held accountable.

Please help us in being the voice for them as well. Please pass this bill.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 9:58:52 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dagmar Bramer	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

I am submitting my support for HB698 begging for accountability. Animal cruelty has become a complete crisis in Hawai'i and shameful that we aren't holding the cruel humans accountable for their actions. Our laws not only need to be enforced by our prosecutors but harsher punishments. I also recommend looking into those who are so against this bill. Many are not even hiding their cruelty. The time is NOW to do the right thing and stand up against animal cruelty and anything else these kind if horrible humans are obviously capable of.

LATE

Oral Testimony in Support of HB698 HD1 - Animal Cruelty

Tatiana Bertolino

March 28th at 10 am

SW 326- Dr. Kevin Thompson

Good morning Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and committee members, my name is Tatiana Bertolino. I am a Social Work student at UH Manoa and an intern at the Kaneohe State Hospital. I am grateful to be here today to offer my strong support for House Bill 698, House Draft 1, relating to animal cruelty.

This bill is a crucial step forward in protecting vulnerable animals in our state and strengthening the safety of our communities. The legislature has rightly recognized, as stated in the bill, that animal cruelty offenders pose a threat to the health and safety of all members of our communities, especially vulnerable populations.

The findings presented in this bill are deeply concerning and underscore the urgent need for increased penalties. We know that recent research has shown that animal cruelty is a predictive and co-occurring crime with violence against humans, including children, intimate partners, and the elderly. Furthermore, psychological studies indicate that seventy percent of violent criminals began by abusing animals. Tragically, children who witness animal abuse are also more likely to abuse animals as teenagers and adults.

The bill also highlights a troubling trend in our state, noting that there has been a significant increase in animal cruelty cases in Hawaii over the past five years. According to the

Honolulu Police Department, animal cruelty crimes rose from fifty-eight in 2018 to seventy-three in 2023. This increase clearly demonstrates that the current penalties are insufficient to deter these acts.

HB698 HD1 directly addresses this issue by amending the criminal penalties for various animal cruelty offenses by increasing the category of offense. This will send a clear message that animal cruelty will not be tolerated in Hawaii and will be met with more serious consequences.

Specifically, this bill proposes that cruelty to animals in the first degree will be elevated from a class G felony to a class B felony. Additionally, those convicted will be prohibited from possessing or owning any pet animal or equine animal for a minimum of five years from the date of conviction. Causing injury or death to a service animal or law enforcement animal will remain a class C felony for the first offense, but a second or subsequent offense will be a class B felony. Furthermore, those convicted will be ordered to make restitution for veterinary bills and the cost of retraining or replacing the animal.

These increased penalties reflect the seriousness of animal cruelty and its potential link to other violent crimes. By strengthening these laws, we can better protect animals, deter future acts of cruelty, and ultimately contribute to safer communities for everyone.

I urge you to support HB698 HD1 and enact these vital changes to our animal cruelty laws. Thank you for your time and consideration.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/24/2025 6:57:45 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dara Carlin, M.A.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Stand in Support

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/24/2025 9:08:22 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Debra Bringman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in favor of this bill.

My neighbor had dogs. You could see their rib cages. They were being starved to death. During COVID I befriended them, so I could bring treats to the dogs. One day the dogs were crying and crying. I went to the house, but no one was home. I asked the other neighbor if she could contact him; he was staying in Waikiki. She asked him if I could go on the property, to check on the dogs. He allowed me. I found 5 dogs. None of them had food, four had no water; urine was in their water bowls and their small cages had feces everywhere. As I was trying to get food and fill up their water dishes, I noticed two puppies; one close to death. I went crying to the neighbor, asking her if she could contact him again, to ask if I could take the puppy to the Humane Society. He said no. I took pictures and video, then I got more food and water for them. I ended up contacting the Hawaiian Humane Society, but they said their hands are tied with going onto the property without an invitation, even with the video and pictures. My wish is stiffer penalties on these owners, and please, please give these officers the power to go on the property to save these precious animals from long suffering and a slow death.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 8:39:51 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Please support HB698, which would increase penalties for animal cruelty. Perpetrators of animal cruelty are often given light sentences and even allowed to continue possessing the animals that they abused! Studies have shown a link between animal cruelty and subsequent cruelty toward other humans.

Jane Arnold

1763 Iwi Way

Honolulu HI. 96816

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 9:50:46 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Peter Saron	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I Oppose HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 12:42:37 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I am in full support. Many of us consider our pets as members of the family, not as possessions to do whatever we want with.
Please move this bill forward.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 1:22:23 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael EKM Olderr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 4:09:55 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

This evil person who abused MaxFor years does not deserve getting off he will only go out, and abuse animals. Why do we have these laws in place all it does is protect the abusers. This dog max did not ask for this individual to be his owner. If these animal abusers keep getting off or just get a slap on the wrist animal abuse will not go away it will only get worse. Look at the cats that are being shot at in Hawaii kai been going on for years. And now someone is putting food out on the sidewalks with poison in Palolo.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 5:19:13 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sheri Iha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB698. Please **vote to support this bill** to give voice to those unable to speak for themselves. Mahalo!

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 5:29:01 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
joanna p milo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

i and approve and support all animals

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 6:11:44 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Please support this bill. Hawaii needs stronger laws to arrest, convict and punish offenders who abuse, torture and abuse animals. Individuals who maim, poison, shoot, torture or kill defenseless animals often escalate to more severe acts of violence. Please stop this cycle of violence. Please support HB698.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 6:48:52 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
anthony padilla	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

oppose hb698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 6:50:10 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jonovan Tuinei	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly oppose.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 6:51:20 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cole B Kashimoto	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong opposition

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 6:52:10 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anapuni Coleman	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly oppose.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 6:52:11 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Liam Wilmott	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 6:53:07 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Imiloa Koka	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong opposition of HB698.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 6:53:39 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaleo Buck	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support of HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 6:54:21 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bryson Wailehua-Hansen	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly oppose HB698.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 6:54:47 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Dolan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 6:55:24 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Enriquez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly oppose HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 6:59:08 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Darby ventura	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I Darby Ventura strongly oppose HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 7:12:15 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alfonso Pitolo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 7:13:07 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kona Makaula	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

N/A

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 7:16:20 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cameron kama	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 7:19:49 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Conan K Donahue	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 7:21:45 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aaron Miyashiro	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong opposition to HB698.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 7:30:29 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

PLEASE pass this bill!! Our furry friends need protection from crazy insensitive people.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 7:32:58 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wade Terlep	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 7:33:34 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joshua Mueller	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 7:45:28 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Al Savea	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong favor of opposing HB698.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 8:05:47 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hunter Mako Morton	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 8:14:24 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keone Bee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 8:18:37 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sierra Revilla	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong support

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 8:19:50 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Debra Ono	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of HB698. Animal cruelty in Hawai'i is increasing. This is a disturbing trend as it can eventually lead to the hating of humans. Please support this for both the animals and human safety and welfare.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 8:26:15 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christopher Cook	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong opposition of HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 8:27:06 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Collin Mansanas	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 9:03:03 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Blake Soares	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 9:07:14 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Testimony in support of HB698 Relating to Animal Cruelty

It is always with a heavy heart that I learn about cruelty inflicted on animals in the community and wish more could be done to prevent it.

This bill offers hope that awareness of the consequences and the prospect of meaningful penalties for such behavior will help to bring that about.

Thank you.

Aloha,

**Alice Saul
Hawai'i Kai, Honolulu**

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 9:13:42 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jarred Burns	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly oppose

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 9:53:47 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Phlynn	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose of HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 10:00:04 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Please support this important bill. It will help animals in Hawaii who are suffering terrible cruelty at the hands of heartless humans.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/25/2025 10:37:09 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James K. Rzonca	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill. A lot of this bill is too vague. Pet owners decide how they want to keep their animals. The way someone in authority "feels" could make responsible pet owners into criminals even if it's just an opinion, not fact, that they are basing their decision on. I disagree, many things mentioned in this bill are not even animal cruelty

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 12:50:18 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Senator Rhoads, Vice Chair Senator Gabbard and Members of the Committee on Judiciary.

Please vote for HB 698 HD 1 which I strongly support. The criminal penalties for the offense of cruelty to animals should definitely be increased to demonstrate that Hawaii is taking a strong stand on this issue. Pet animals to most people are members of the family. Cruelty, whether to humans or animals, should be met with strong punishment.

Mahalo.

Jennifer Chiwa

Makiki and life long resident of Oahu

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 5:04:13 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hopena Pokipala	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am opposed to HB698 as it currently stands. I don't believe those who participate in chicken fights should receive the same penalty as those who engage in dog fights. The latter is clearly more heinous in my perspective.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 5:40:40 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wayne Niide	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this Bill. We need to take a strong position on animal cruelty. The carry over of this type of behavior can affect members of our society as noted below (#2).

1. The bill elevates penalties for first and second degree animal cruelty.
2. It aligns with FBI recognition that animal abuse is a predictor of broader violent behavior.

Thank you!

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 5:57:33 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keola	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello, I am writing my testimony in opposition of HB698. It is already a penalty, and we should be focusing more on our major issues that we are facing. We have far greater issues that we need to address. We should be focusing on sex and child trafficking and violent crime. Thank you

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 6:32:49 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support HB698. My name is Natalie Graham-Wood and I live at Sunset Beach, Oahu.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 7:13:16 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sheldin cortez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose of bill HB698 as a bird raiser / hunter in Hawaii.. it's our culture and lifestyle!!! If you understand what we do an y then you would know why we do what we do!!!! Making something illegal will make it much dangerous an wanna do it more with will cause it to be a more dangerous situation.. we as the people stand foward an will fight for what's right!!! Chicken fighting an hunting as been around bfor any of us so by u guys trynna change that will make us as the people react in ways not need all can be prevented by letting us do what we be doing for years!!

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 8:41:59 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Justin Dunhour	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose HB698 Strongly

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 8:47:39 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marcus Malepeai	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this Bill HB698.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 8:47:47 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dakota Papapa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 8:49:57 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lyle Nicely	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 8:51:38 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tiva Tatofi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose this bill thanks.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 8:53:45 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Troy Maruoka	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose hb698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 8:54:02 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cora Dagdagan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 8:54:36 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

We need to stop continued lack of justice for the voiceless animals and lenient treatment of animal abuse. Abuse should not be tolerated, including shootings. Hawaii Kai

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:04:39 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tyler	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:07:15 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Warren Burchett	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill as it categories me as a felon. I raise chickens ducks for eggs as well as food consumption. I feel this bill is unconstitutional towards people like me who depend on animals for food. I strongly oppose bill HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:11:00 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support HB698.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:16:48 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Eder	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:18:10 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Makana Fronda	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly disagree with this bill

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:17:20 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ikaika	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:25:38 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Makakoa Richardson-Aragosa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:25:40 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tania Chong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB698. We need stricter penalties to protect the most vulnerable: animals. Those who commit these cruel offenses often don't face adequate consequences and continue to perpetuate these acts, endangering our entire community.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:35:08 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
MichaelVasquez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill. Thisbillwillmake farmers and ranchers as well as hunterscriminals

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:36:27 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christopher James Montizor	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:38:23 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Braxton Perez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is a tradition that's been here before you colonizers came along. Leave us locals and our game fowls alone!!

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:44:30 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Frank Schultz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this initiative.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:55:07 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Simon blair	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:07:37 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Roger Tabac	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:10:40 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ron	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose bill HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:12:59 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Donovan Gonsalves- bicoy	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:22:24 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Testimony in Support of Hawai‘i House Bill 698 – Relating to Animal Cruelty
March 26, 2025

Aloha,

My name is Dana De Silva, and I am here today because I have seen firsthand the horrors that this bill seeks to prevent. I have held abused animals in my arms, watched them take their final breaths, and fought to save them. I am here because they have no voice—but WE do.

Until you have personally picked up an animal that has been beaten, starved, or sexually assaulted, you cannot fully grasp why we fight so hard for them. I have held these victims in my arms—animals so weak, they could barely lift their heads, struggling to breathe, their bodies broken by human hands. I have attended to dogs who were victims of sexual abuse, their bodies, their souls, shutting down from the trauma. Until you are there, holding them as they take their final breaths, watching them fight to survive but ultimately lose that battle, you will not truly understand why this bill is necessary.

This is more than just legislation. This is about ensuring that no other living being endures the horrors I have seen firsthand. Without stronger penalties, these crimes will continue, and these animals will continue to suffer in silence.

The Facts – Why HB698 is Critical

- Animal cruelty is strongly linked to violent crime. Studies show that many violent offenders have a history of harming animals. Strengthening penalties isn’t just about protecting animals—it’s about preventing further violence.
- Hawaii has seen a rise in reported animal cruelty cases. According to the Honolulu Police Department, reports of animal cruelty increased from 58 in 2018 to 73 in 2023. However, experts agree that many cases go unreported, meaning the actual number is likely much higher.
- Weak penalties allow abusers to continue harming animals. Without stronger consequences, repeat offenders often escape with minimal penalties and go on to harm again. Research has shown that states with tougher animal cruelty laws experience lower rates of repeat offenses.

Some have argued that increasing penalties does not deter offenders. But what message do we send when we allow abusers to walk free with little to no consequence? Without real punishment, abusers continue their crimes, and innocent animals continue to suffer. We can provide education on animal welfare, it is important, but it cannot replace accountability.

Max's suffering should have led to justice. We had proof—videos, testimonies from neighbors, undeniable evidence of abuse. But despite everything, the system failed him. We failed him. We cannot let another Max suffer because of legal loopholes and weak penalties.

I urge you to pass HB698, animals cannot speak for themselves, but we can. They depend on us to fight for them, to ensure justice is served, and to stop the cycle of abuse that too often goes unchecked.

Every moment this bill is delayed, more animals suffer at the hands of abusers who face little to no consequences. How many more cases of abuse must we witness before we take real action?

The decision you make today is a matter of life and death for the most vulnerable among us. YOU have the power to stop this suffering. Will we choose to protect them, or will you allow cruelty to continue unchecked? Please, be their voice. Pass HB698.

Mahalo for your time, consideration, and commitment to a more compassionate Hawai'i.

V/R,

Dana De Silva

Hina's Legacy Rescue Foundation
Board Member, Operations Manager

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:27:44 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I Oppose HB698!

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:29:35 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cathy Matsuno	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I implore you to fully support this HB 698 to increase the penalties for animal abuse on O'ahu. The cases of animal abuse over the last few years are increasingly common. Horrendous crimes against animals need tougher consequences. What message do we send when there's little more than a slap on the wrist? In many cases there's no prosecution despite videos of abuse and witness testimonies. Please be a voice for the precious innocents and demand those that are charged are held accountable.

Mahalo

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:37:43 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jason Santos	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose bill HB698. This bill would strip the rights of the people who take very good care of their animals be it chickens, dogs that are used to hunt, or equine animals. You can't lump in all the citizens who do it legally and do not break any laws with the ones who do not follow the law! This is not fair to those families or persons involved.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:42:51 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shawn Barros	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:49:45 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeff	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:54:31 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jose Ortega	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I Oppose HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:59:35 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryder Sansano	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 11:02:30 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 698 by Rep. Kila. This bill elevates penalties for first and second degree animal cruelty.

I am sad that this bill has been dramatically weakened from the version that passed the house. I do not even have words for my anger at the people who engage in the monstrous crime of animal cruelty. However, raising penalties will perhaps get some of these people to take notice of their horrid behavior before they torture and kill their family members. At least, being charged will alert the community and the criminal justice system to the dangerous people in their neighborhoods who are violent predators in the making.

Please pass this bill so that the worst offenders will face some consequences for their actions.

Mahalo,

Renee Rabb

Keaau, HI 96749

Big Island

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 11:05:55 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kainalu fejeran	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 11:06:15 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Ranchez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose bill HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 11:06:52 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew Kaahanui	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I'm writing to oppose HB698.

Mahalo!

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 11:33:30 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alex Kaea-Pimentel	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am against bill "hb698"

there is no clear definition I'll be penalized for having My dog on leashes while I'm not home. As for a stiffer penalty for animal cruelty. There are already laws in place for that. The question is what is being done now? Before stiffening the penalty lets start with what's being done now.

the bill also state any training of my dogs for hunting , a traditional practice will be prohibited by law. That's outrageous

there for I'm against/ oppose bill

Hb698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 11:44:31 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andralyn Higa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 11:58:20 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brennon Abad	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB698!!

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 12:10:44 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
sean	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 12:22:02 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Cigainero	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Committee Chair and Members: I am writing to encourage your support of HB 698 which increases the penalties for the most egregious forms of animal abuse. I am disappointed that the provisions on animal abandonment were striped from the bill. I am actively involved in animal rescie and fostering for adoption. In my work I see on a daily basis the effects of animal abandment and it is, in my opinion, a serious matter. However, the measures that are currently in HB 698 are very important and worthy of your support.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Barbara Cigainero, Keaau, HI

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 12:27:56 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Russell Garcia	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill I have raise gamefowl all my life plus I own a animal fees store from 1996 this will surely affect all animal feed store big time . Probably close my doors because the pig hunters and gamefowl community supports my business and my passion gamefowl . Abraham Lincoln our president said only in America the land of the free the gamecock shall crow .

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 12:45:58 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kealohikeaokeanokakahaiaka	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698 !!

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 12:46:11 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristie Hernandez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

As an individual, I oppose this bill. Roosters are our animals, dogs are our animals. All these measures of what can and can't be done is taking away from our rights, our freedom. Dogs being in cages or tethered to a runner why is it not acceptable? what's wrong with that? Some may not have a yard that's fenced where are they going to put them. Most people rent and renters don't accept dogs in the house and must be put away.

As for having or raising chickens it's not wrong, it's been around for years and years in our society. It teaches us how to work hard, to be disciplined, to be determined.

If you take Culture away your taking away people's livelihood, your taking away from people which brings family, friends of all ages together. Taking away lives of many. As times are hard already this bill would make it even worse for people in Hawaii if this bill is passed.

think about the thousands of people this bill would have an effect on here in our Islands.

Please don't take away culture and our rights as people of the United States, People OF HAWAII that's been around this for centuries, decades before you or I were even born.

Mahalo

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 1:10:27 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeric bautista	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose hb698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 1:32:36 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
joey aruda	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose bill HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 1:49:13 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jordan Ozaki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Legislators,

Animal abuse is a violent crime, and our laws should reflect that. Anyone who harms a defenseless animal should face serious consequences and should never be allowed to own animals again. Cruelty to animals is not only inhumane, but also often a warning sign of deeper violence. The Hawaiian Humane Society and other animal advocates see first-hand the heartbreaking cases day in and day out. Please listen to them and act on this important measure.

Mahalo,

Jordan Ozaki

Downtown Honolulu

Senate District 13

House District 28

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 1:51:59 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kiana kahalekomo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose bill HB698. First of all We live in Hawaii and being from hawaii people WHO are BORN and raised here should have more say than people WHO are NOT from HAWAII period! There are more issues that deserve more focus, for example like the illegal occupation in hawaii. But again I oppose bill HB698!

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 2:02:08 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Theresa M Thompson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB 698 RELATING TO ANIMAL CRUELTY.

Mahalo,

Theresa Thompson

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 2:03:05 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lindsay Chambers	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support HB698 because animal cruelty is more than just an animal welfare issue, it's a warning sign of greater violence. Studies have shown a strong link between animal abuse and future violent behavior, and children who witness it are more likely to repeat the cycle. By strengthening penalties and preventing convicted abusers from owning animals, this bill takes an important step toward protecting both animals and our communities.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 2:19:40 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shaun Dydasco	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Opposition to HB698

Hearing Date: March 28, 2025

Hawaii State Legislature

Senate Judiciary Committee

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

I am submitting this testimony in opposition to HB698, not because I condone animal cruelty—on the contrary, I strongly oppose the mistreatment of animals—but because this bill, as written, risks unfairly criminalizing responsible individuals who raise and breed gamefowl or hunt for food.

Concerns Regarding Gamefowl Breeding and Raising:

Raising gamefowl is a long-standing cultural tradition in Hawaii, deeply rooted in our agricultural heritage and practiced responsibly by many breeders. This bill could unintentionally impose severe penalties on those who lawfully raise gamefowl, particularly if the broad language regarding animal cruelty is misapplied. Unlike dogfighting, gamefowl breeding is not inherently cruel, and responsible breeders ensure the health and well-being of their flocks.

By increasing penalties without clear distinctions between malicious cruelty and lawful animal husbandry, HB698 may disproportionately harm small farmers and breeders who already comply with existing animal welfare laws. It is crucial that this bill does not conflate responsible gamefowl breeding with illegal activities.

Concerns Regarding Hunting for Food:

Many in Hawaii hunt not for sport, but for sustenance. Traditional hunting provides families with fresh, organic meat and plays an essential role in controlling invasive species. This bill must ensure that responsible hunters are not unfairly targeted or restricted by overreaching definitions of animal cruelty.

A Call for Clearer Legislative Language:

While I support strong penalties for true cases of cruelty—such as organized dogfighting, intentional abuse, and sexual assault of animals—HB698 must not place unnecessary burdens on those who ethically raise animals or hunt for food. I urge the committee to amend the bill to protect the rights of farmers, breeders, and subsistence hunters, ensuring that well-intentioned individuals are not caught in the crosshairs of overly broad legal provisions.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Shaun Dydasco

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 2:19:43 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ginger edmunds	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing as a concerned resident of Hawaii. I am asking that you please please hold animal abusers of ALL KINDS accountable for their actions and punish them rightfully for the torture and pain that they have inflicted on others. It is a proven FACT that people who commit abuse on animals, abuse children and worse murder. It says a lot about a country, a state by how their animals and children are treated. The future of the USA is getting worse everyday, abusers of all kinds are allowed to walk away. I pray that you will change our laws, our state is already getting to a point that we are losing aloha daily please please punish animal abusers appropriately not just a slap on the hand. May your conscience guide to do the right thing.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 2:27:52 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aldine Hire-Burdett	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chairperson and Members of the Committee,

I am writing today to express my full support for House Bill 698, which seeks to increase criminal penalties for animal cruelty offenses, particularly those involving pet animals. As someone who cares deeply about the well-being of animals, I believe this bill is a necessary step toward protecting our furry companions and holding those who harm them accountable.

Pets are family members for many of us. They offer love, loyalty, and comfort, and they deserve to be treated with kindness and respect. Unfortunately, animal cruelty is still far too common, and it's heartbreaking to think of the suffering some animals endure at the hands of their abusers. By increasing penalties for those found guilty of cruelty, HB698 will send a strong message that our society does not tolerate the abuse or neglect of animals.

This bill isn't just about punishing wrongdoers—it's about preventing future cruelty. Tougher penalties can act as a deterrent, encouraging potential offenders to reconsider their actions. It also gives law enforcement and animal protection organizations more tools to pursue justice for these animals and work toward a safer environment for them.

Ultimately, by supporting HB698, we are standing up for those who cannot speak for themselves and ensuring that animals receive the care and protection they deserve.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge you to pass this important bill.

Sincerely,
Aldine Hire-Burdett

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 2:47:23 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lani Petrie	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 2:52:05 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Taurie Kinoshita	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the Honorable Committee

I am writing in urgently, desperately strong support of HB698 HD1.

Please, please, please pass this crucial bill.

I would be there in person Friday if my work schedule allowed me. I know dozens of others would too....

This vital bill elevates first-degree animal cruelty to a Class B felony and second-degree animal cruelty to a Class B felony when 10 or more animals are affected, or an animal dies.

This bill recognizes that animal cruelty is a predictor of human violence.

70% of violent criminals began by abusing animals.

Children witnessing animal abuse are more likely to become abusers!

There are many cases studies bearing these facts out. By criminalizing animal cruelty, we are literally preventing crime from happening with humans!

Also, this is the empathetic and compassionate thing to do (no living creature should suffer abuse...)

The continued lack of justice for the voiceless and lenient treatment of animal abuse increases the risk of violence to vulnerable populations such as children.

There are definitive correlations between animal and human violence--this bill would help prevent further violence from occurring.

Please prevent harm to humans by passing this important bill.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Taurie Kinoshita, Honolulu

Life long resident and voter

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 3:22:40 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Careyanne Serikawa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hi, My name is Careyanne Serikawa. I oppose bill HB698. I oppse this bill to the simple fact that chickens and dog hunting are included in this bill. Hunting with dogs is another way of being self sustainable. I was raised in hawaii my whole life and have always been around hunters and have also hunted for wild invasive pigs as food. We do not waste any meat of the pigs that we catch. This is NOT animal cruelty. Chickens are also invasive nuisance to the community. I do not see this as being animal cruelty!! Hunting and slottering pigs and chickens have been a generational cultural practice that have and will be passed on from generation to generation and on to the next generation. Thank you for your time and consideration. Careyanne Serikawa

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 3:44:07 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kenneth	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly oppose this bill.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 4:13:32 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chris Balmares	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose bill HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 4:25:33 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
kimo kaiama	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 4:34:20 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joshua kaina	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 4:41:19 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jurell	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose bill HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 4:42:20 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Beaudet	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 4:47:48 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Roy Fukushima	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha an thank you for reading my opposing of this bill alot of you only see one side I see how a family learns to grow an get together .. it's been generations passed down from our founding fathers george Washington an stuff . I feel if this bills passes they will be more crime . Why are people so in to this . When there ate worser crime out there wasting tax payers money for what it treopy for my helps me walk

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 5:01:39 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ilima Maiava	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 5:20:22 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Heide Kila	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Heide Kila

Waianae, 96792

03/26/25

Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs Hawai'i State Capitol 415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Testimony in Support of HB698 – Relating to Animal Cruelty

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Heide Kila , and I am submitting testimony in strong support of HB698, which seeks to amend the criminal penalties for various animal cruelty offenses by increasing the category of offense.

Animal cruelty is not only an egregious act of violence against defenseless creatures, but it is also closely linked to other forms of violence within our community. Research shows that individuals who commit animal abuse are more likely to engage in violent crimes against humans, including children, intimate partners, and the elderly. Alarming, Hawai'i has seen a notable increase in animal cruelty cases, with 73 reported incidents in 2023 compared to 58 in 2018. This upward trend necessitates immediate and decisive action.

HB698 is a critical step in protecting both animals and our broader community by increasing penalties for animal cruelty offenses. Key provisions of this measure include:

- Elevating cruelty to animals in the first degree to a Class B felony.
- Making cruelty to animals in the second degree a Class B felony if the offense involves the death of an animal or ten or more animals.
- Strengthening penalties for dog fighting, trapping, and sexual assault of animals.

- Prohibiting individuals convicted of animal cruelty from owning or possessing animals for at least five years.

These changes will serve as a stronger deterrent against animal abuse and reinforce the value we place on the welfare of all living beings in Hawai'i.

I respectfully urge the Committee to pass HB698 to ensure that perpetrators of animal cruelty are held accountable and that our communities remain safe and compassionate. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this important measure.

Mahalo,

Heide Kila

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 6:25:10 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jason Moniz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jason Moniz. I am a veterinarian licensed in Hawaii for the past 45 years. During my career I have worked closely with our livestock industries. I am **opposes HB698 HD1** related to animal cruelty because as written it could severely penalize livestock producers for losses that normally occurs in with livestock production.

I have bolded the part of Bill below that could be used to penalize livestock producers for loses experienced in normal livestock production.

*(5) If the offense involves the death of **an animal**, or if the offense involves ten or more pet animals in any one instance, cruelty to animals in the second degree shall be a class B felony. In addition to any other penalties imposed, the person shall be prohibited from possessing or owning any animal for a minimum of five years from the date of conviction."*

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 7:22:55 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
jaclyn lum	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

As someone who has always had a deep love for animals, I'm writing in strong support of HB698. It breaks my heart to see so many cases where animals suffer unimaginable cruelty, yet the people responsible face little to no consequences. Our laws need to do more to protect these innocent lives.

Animal abuse isn't just about hurting animals-- it's often a warning sign for violence against people. By strengthening those penalties, we're not only protecting animals, but also making our community safer.

Please pass HB698 and help ensure that abusers are held accountable. Our animals, and our community, deserve better.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

With gratitude,

Jaclyn Lum, DDS

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 8:24:25 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lyle K Holeso	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 8:28:05 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tatiana Liu	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I OPPOSE HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 8:29:33 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joseph P. Tavares Jr.	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We have bigger problems here in Hawaii, now they want to pass a law to throw everyone in prison who fights Roosters. This is part of the Hawaiian Culture, and it's been documented in Hawaii, all the way back to the 1700s

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 8:31:46 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Justin Aquino	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose bill HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 8:31:54 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

My name is Bill Dixon, and I live at 45-031 Lilipuna Road in Kaneohe. I write in strong support of HB 698, HD1 Relating to Animal Cruelty.

This bill would give our communities new tools to reverse a persistent increase in severe forms of abuse of pet animals. Specifically, the bill would make it a Class B felony to torture, starve, mutilate and/or cruelly confine pet animals. In addition it would make it a felony to engage in dog-fighting activities. These changes would align state law with federal categories of animal abuse and would be consistent with the FBI recognition that animal abuse is a predictor of broader violent behavior.

On the other hand, the bill would NOT create any new animal cruelty violations. Nor would it impose penalties for veterinary, scientific, farming or accepted pest control practices.

To summarize, HB 698, HD 1 is a carefully crafted measure that cracks down on depravity. I urge you vote for it.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 8:48:05 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ashley lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of HB 698, which seeks to impose stricter penalties for animal cruelty. The abuse, neglect, and outright torture that innocent animals endure at the hands of cruel individuals are beyond heartbreaking—it is infuriating. These acts of violence must be met with serious consequences, not just a slap on the wrist.

I don't know how those in animal rescue continue to do what they do. They bear witness to horrors that most of us can barely stomach seeing on social media. I see the cruelty daily, but I have the privilege of looking away. They don't. They carry the weight of every suffering animal they try to save, and yet the laws meant to protect these beings remain weak.

We need stronger deterrents. We need real consequences. And we need to send a clear message that animal cruelty will not be tolerated in our communities. Please pass HB 698 and give these voiceless victims the justice they deserve.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 8:57:07 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janis Matsunaga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly support HB698 HD1. I would ask any of you to ask yourselves, "why wouldn't you support such a serious issue?" It is unfathomable how many animal cruelty cases the public reports, witnesses, or sees on clear video online. It is completely unacceptable that most of these go unpunished, even after HHS investigators and animal cruelty advocates present very clear evidence and witness accounts. The State and the City and County must hold these criminals accountable for their actions or they will inflict harm again, either to other animals or to humans. Please, please vote YES for HB698 to strengthen Hawai'i's penalties for animal cruelty. We need the punishment to fit the crime or these offenders and other potential offenders will never think twice before continuing to commit these crimes. Please also consider strengthening enforcement of these laws and support for HHS Humane Investigators to protect our most innocent animals.

Many thanks,

Janis Matsunaga

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:01:56 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
April Matsuura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

HB 698

IN SUPPORT

March 28, 2025

Thank you for allowing me to testify in writing to support HB 698 HD 1, SD1 to increase penalties for cruelty to animals to a Class B felony, and to impose a mandatory prohibition on animal ownership for convicted offenders. My name is April Matsuura, and in my neighborhood, there have been violent pet owners, and this behavior is scary, evil, and continues to happen because these violent people feel that there is no punishment, and that no one cares. Violence and abuse against animals is wrong and should no longer be tolerated.

HB 698 will finally provide some protection to vulnerable animals. Without it, the lack of justice for the voiceless will continue, and the threat of violence in our local neighborhoods will continue to grow. That is not the Hawai'i that we all want or deserve.

Mahalo nui for this opportunity to testify and to be heard, and for your consideration.

Sincerely,

April Matsuura

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:13:55 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rex Kamakana	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill!!

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:14:45 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Todd tanaka	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose hb698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:15:11 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew Calma Jr.	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is my belief that we as a community have much bigger problems than this bill. It would be silly to back log our courts with minor infractions when we have sense less violence hitting our streets daily with slaps on the wrist penaltys, domestic abuse, corruption, and wasteful spending. we need to get back to ensuring that the community is safe. this practice has been around for a long time. Its a part of hawaii history and its culture with imigration and farming. Thank you for your time and Aloha

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:23:45 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paula Kava Mafua	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We have much bigger problems here in Hawaii and now they want to pass a law to throw everyone in prison who fights Roosters. This is part of the Hawaiian Culture, and it's been documented in Hawaii, all the way back to the 1700's.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:47:22 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brooke basuel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I have known people who raise chickens for 40 something years. It's like trading baseball cards. It's a way of life for many people they bread chickens to eat, egg layers to get eggs because we all know how much eggs are. To make different strains. I believe that with everything in life they will get the rotten apple that make a name for the people who raise chickens for a living

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 9:56:24 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tayler Sylva	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698!

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:03:30 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bronson Gambol	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I OPPOSE HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:16:50 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kehaunani Andrade	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, as a farmer we process and consume our own live stock. I don't believe that this bill is detailed enough to protect us farmers and others that choose to live a life that others may see as abuse or cruelty to animals. I strongly appose this bill. Thank you

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:20:51 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Douglas	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I opposed hb698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:49:34 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brandon Teruya	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this because something needs to be done towards eliminating animal cruelty and abuse.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/26/2025 10:51:19 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of HB 698, urging you to increase the punishment for those who commit acts of cruelty against animals. Time and time again, we see people abuse, torture, and neglect innocent animals, only to receive minimal consequences. These individuals are a danger not just to animals, but to our entire community.

We know that animal abuse is a precursor to violence against people, especially children. So why do we continue to allow these offenders to walk freely among our most vulnerable? Why do we tolerate their presence in a society where they pose a direct threat to those who cannot protect themselves? The cycle of violence will not stop until we take meaningful action.

It is long past time for stronger penalties. We must stop treating animal cruelty as a minor offense and recognize it for what it is—a violent crime that must be taken seriously. I urge you to pass HB 698 and ensure that those who harm animals face real consequences. Our communities, our children, and our animals deserve better!

Thank you for your time.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 12:18:18 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Natalie Parra	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in **strong support** of HB698 HD1. My partner and I began fostering animals and volunteering for rescues and spay/neuter clinics over the last few years. It has really opened our eyes to how prevalent animal cruelty is our community and throughout the islands. Every single day I witness animal cruelty, either in person or through a fellow community member reaching out to us for help. I understand that must sound like an exaggeration but I assure you *every single day*. It is nonstop and the only thing more frustrating than the horrific treatment of these animals is how it is almost never enforced. I think stronger penalties will discourage people from some of these awful acts and prevent perpetrators from committing these crimes again. I cannot urge you enough to support this bill. Thank you for the opporutnity to submit testimony.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 2:01:38 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tiffany Sabado	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the bill HB698. I support animal rights. No animal should endure any type of abuse, cruelty, neglect, harm, or death. Any human being that does such act should be punished to the full extent. It's sad to say that I don't see animal's rights being stronger in Hawai'i. So many problems need to be addressed like dogs loose in the back of owner's truck (which I've witnessed one fall out the bed into the freeway), dog fights, chicken fights, etc. It is only humane and pono to do the right thing for these animals. Mahalo for your time and attention.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 5:52:37 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrea Janas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

There must be harsher penalties for animal abusers. Our animals are our Ohana and they need to be protected and taken care of as such.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 6:32:11 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 6:33:02 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
zachary wakilina	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose bill HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 6:34:15 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Cambra III	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

I oppose HB 698!!!! We have animal cruelty bills in place already so I see no need to keep adding bills on. I am in strong opposition of this bill because it infringes on my rights as an owner of my pets and animal. My animals are my property not the governments..

I am very bother by the street violence happening in Waikiki, Kapolei, Ewa Beach, Waianae and other areas so why not use our energy to educate these young people. By increasing penalties will not deter crime education is the key.

I am very concerned about all of these bills and how our elected officials are seeking to provide harsher penalties for raising our animals and infringing on legal activities for us animal owners. A lot of us come from a farmer background and have been doing this for generation but now we have people that just observe or are brought up in a different social setting trying to force there ideas and ways of life on us. I strongly oppose these bills having to do with stronger penalties and ask your consideration in stopping bill HB 698.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 6:36:03 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rory Souza	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 6:53:40 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tesia Kaahanui	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Members of the Hawaii State Legislature,

I am writing to express my wholehearted support for Hawaii’s HB698 animal cruelty law. As an individual deeply passionate about animal welfare, I cannot overstate how critical this bill is in the fight against cruelty and inhumane treatment of animals in our state. This legislation stands as a vital step toward protecting our most vulnerable creatures and ensuring that they are treated with the respect and kindness they deserve.

Over the years, I have witnessed firsthand the profound bond between humans and animals. Our pets, whether they be dogs, cats, or other beloved companions, provide us with unconditional love, joy, and comfort. Animals are not just possessions; they are sentient beings with the ability to feel pain, fear, and joy, much like us. Unfortunately, not all animals are fortunate enough to experience compassion and care. Many suffer silently, subjected to abuse, neglect, and unspeakable cruelty.

This is why I believe HB698 is so necessary. By strengthening laws that hold individuals accountable for their actions toward animals, we are sending a clear message that abuse will not be tolerated in our community. Animals cannot speak for themselves, but this bill gives them a voice—one that is backed by law and protected by the legislature. It is our moral obligation to protect those who cannot protect themselves, and HB698 helps ensure that animals in Hawaii are given the legal protections they need and deserve.

This bill is not just about punishing offenders; it is about preventing future harm. By taking a stand now, we can deter animal cruelty before it starts, fostering a community where animals are treated with compassion and dignity. It is a step toward ensuring that Hawaii remains a place where all creatures, both wild and domestic, are protected from harm.

In closing, I ask that you support HB698 with the full force of your influence and your vote. The passage of this bill will not only bring justice to animals who have suffered but will also set a powerful precedent for future generations—a reminder that kindness, compassion, and respect for all living beings are core values that we must all uphold.

Thank you for your time and for considering the needs of animals in our state. I truly believe that HB698 is a critical piece of legislation, and I strongly urge you to vote in favor of its passage.

If not us who? If not now when? Enough is enough!!! Their lives are in YOUR (our) hands!!!
Come on Hawaii!!!

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 7:07:19 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Devnn Nishioka	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I Oppose Bill HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 7:27:22 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Domonique Boudreau	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. Animal cruelty needs to be backed up to the fullest! To many incidents have happened just in the last few years resulting in the most disgusting crimes towards helpless animals. My English bulldog Ziggy was shot 9 times by a 6 year old child in 2023 and nothing was done to hold him or his parents accountable because of the laws and prosecutors. They say that the crimes are a waste of court time and tax payers money which I do agree with. Ziggy along with many other animals deserved justice! Do the right thing and pass this law. Thank you.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 7:58:51 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew Cuello	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I a oppose this bill!!!

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 8:26:18 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Colleen Nakamoto-Inouye	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB 698 because the punishment for animal abusers is far too lenient. We continue to see cases of extreme cruelty—animals starved, beaten, tortured, and discarded like trash—yet those responsible often receive nothing more than a fine or a short sentence. This is unacceptable.

Animal abusers do not stop with animals. Studies have shown again and again that those who harm animals are more likely to harm people, especially children. So why do we allow these individuals to remain in our communities? If someone is capable of such cruelty toward a defenseless creature, how can we trust that they will not do the same to a vulnerable child?

Stronger penalties are not just about justice for the animals—they are about protecting society as a whole. We cannot continue to allow violent individuals to escape accountability. I urge you to pass HB 698 and ensure that those who commit these horrific acts face real consequences.

Thank you for your time in reading my testimony.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 8:34:56 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marjorie Sulse	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Animal abuse is a grave injustice that demands stronger penalties to deter such behavior and protect vulnerable creatures. Increasing penalties sends a clear message that society values the welfare of animals and will not tolerate cruelty. It also ensures that offenders face consequences proportionate to the harm they inflict, discouraging repeat offenses.

Animals are sentient beings capable of experiencing pain and suffering, yet they often lack the ability to defend themselves. By imposing harsher penalties, we acknowledge their intrinsic worth and take a stand against exploitation and neglect. This change would also align with the growing public awareness and advocacy for animal rights, reflecting our collective commitment to compassion and justice.

Strengthening penalties for animal abuse is not just about punishment—it's about fostering a culture of empathy and accountability. It's a step toward a more humane society where all living beings are treated with respect and dignity. Let's make this change for the sake of those who cannot speak for themselves.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 8:52:34 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Dear **Senate Committee on Judiciary,**

Please support HB698, proposed SD1 which increases criminal penalties for the offense of cruelty to animals. With the number of animal abuse cases increasing, action needs to be taken to deter and prevent cruelty against our most vulnerable members. Increasing penalties protects not only pet animals but addresses other violent crimes in our community. Those convicted of such heinous acts need to be held accountable and face appropriate consequences to keep everyone in our community safe.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 9:03:04 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Gehrke	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is imperative that HI increase and uphold laws holding animal abuse offenders accountable for their crimes. It is completely unacceptable that people are allowed to behave in this manner without serious consequences. Our laws need to be strict and be enforced to be effective. Many innocent and loving animals have been abused for years and this must be stopped! People that behave in this manner have no limits and often are abusive to others as well. Hawaii is a beautiful place and there is absolutely no place for abhorrent behavior here.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 9:28:18 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
KELVIN AWAYA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of HB698.

Animal cruelty should be equivalent to that of abuse of a child. Reason being, animals are like children. They have no voice to speak up, and they are defenseless against humans whom are bigger in stature. The fact that animal cruelty is in fact a felony, but punishments in recent times have been minimal to nothing. Fines don't suffice. Mandatory jail time and a hefty fine is what needs to be implemented to make it known that it will not be tolerated.

To add to this, human beings feel they have the right to pass judgement on to an animal when there is an attack made on a human being. In most if not all cases, the animals are put down. It should be the same on the flip side of that coin. Even more so because human beings are supposedly supposed to be the more intelligent beings. Nobody, and I mean nobody has the right to do so. It's sickening how city prosecutors and judges give slaps on the wrists if even that to those that commit animal cruelty. Seems as if they're views are animals are expendable like pieces of trash. The animals deserve to be here just the same as any human being or animal does. Feral or stray animals don't ask to be born into a life of homelessness on the streets. They live unbearably tough lives as it is, they don't need humans to magnify it.

This bill needs to be passed and enforced!

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 9:36:42 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terri	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill. I do not condone abuse of any animal, but this bill is too over reaching. You are trying to close loopholes whereby people are getting away with cruelty to animal charges and instead you are making it so vague, you are only creating more loopholes. What defines a "pet animal"? Who determines that? The law is already there, it is already a Class C felony, it needs to be enforced as is. You are trying to Increasing the penalty to a Class B felony which by definition is reserved for much more serious crimes ... especially against people. Having more serious penalties for crimes against animals rather than people, does not make sense. Increasing the penalty to a Class B will not meet your objective of deterring animal abuse, it will result in added costs for our judicial and prison systems. There must be a better way to address this problem. Do not pass this bill as written, take the time to look further into better solutions.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 9:46:16 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melvin Miranda	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose bill HB698

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 9:46:24 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leina'ala M.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Leina'ala McKeague and I am in strong support of Bill HB 698 relating to animal cruelty and stricter penalties for various animal cruelty offenses.

For as long as I can remember, I've always been surrounded by animals, especially dogs. As a child I've grown up with dogs which taught me unconditional love, compassion and responsibility for animals and others.

I currently have a rescue who I saved from Oahu SPCA in 2014 at 8 weeks old. He is now 10 years old and has been through various life experiences with me. When I moved away, my dog came with me. When I traveled across the continent, my dog came with me. When I returned home to Hawai'i, he was with me.

Owning an animal is a huge responsibility and sacrifice. They are part of the family who look to us for their care, love and safety. They depend on us.

I felt the need to testify today because it breaks my heart and it's outright disturbing to see the many animal cruelty cases in Hawaii where nothing is done to protect and save our innocent, defenseless animals. It's disgraceful! Even with video evidence. Please.. Hawaii needs to do better!

Hawaii needs stricter laws against animal abusers. Please amend the criminal penalties for various animal cruelty offenses by increasing the category of offense.

Thank you State of Hawai'i legislators for your consideration and for taking the time to read my testimony.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 9:56:06 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marla M Gomes	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Its our culture

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 10:00:09 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Renee Harada	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senate Committee,

I am writing in support of passing this legislation. As you are aware this bill failed to pass in the Senate last year, please do not let this happen again. We cannot fail to protect innocent animals AGAIN. This is common sense legislation, let's be better. Thank you.

Renee Harada (Moanalua Gardens)

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 10:11:12 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cheryl Hannahs-McWhite	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I definitely oppose this bill

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 10:13:48 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kapukonakona Bagood-Makanui	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In strong opposition of bill 698

LATE

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

I respectfully submit my testimony in strong opposition to HB698. I bring a valid and informed perspective to this discussion, particularly regarding the underlying issue of animal cruelty, which serves as the foundation for imposing harsher penalties on those involved in chicken fighting in the State of Hawai'i.

The Inconsistencies in Defining Animal Cruelty

It is important to acknowledge that even legally sanctioned practices, such as "culling" for population control or disease prevention, involve the intentional killing of animals. Many would argue that these practices are inherently cruel. Despite regulations, methods such as gassing, electrocution, and mass slaughter often cause immense distress and prolonged suffering. Documented cases have shown that improper execution of culling procedures has led to unnecessary and inhumane deaths.

If the goal of HB698 is to address animal cruelty meaningfully, it is crucial to examine the broader implications of existing practices and ensure consistency in how we define and respond to such issues.

A Question of Ethics and Cultural Recognition

Culling is widely accepted because it serves human interests, such as protecting agriculture and public health, while practices like cockfighting are condemned despite their deep cultural and traditional significance. This raises an important question: Is culling merely a practical solution that disregards animal suffering?

Even with regulations, culling still constitutes animal cruelty. In Hawai'i, cockfighting is more than just a practice—it is a deeply rooted cultural tradition passed down through generations. Yet, while society condemns cockfighting, the mass slaughter of animals through culling is justified for economic or environmental reasons.

This raises a critical ethical concern: Why is one form of killing considered acceptable while the other is criminalized? Culling operations take place behind closed doors, preventing public awareness of the suffering involved, while other forms of animal harm—such as cockfighting—are publicly vilified. Additionally, the disruption of ecosystems caused by the unnatural removal of animals can have unintended consequences, including disease outbreaks due to improper disposal of culled poultry.

In Hawai'i, the pua'a (pig) holds deep spiritual and cultural significance. Mass culling not only disrupts ecological balance but also deeply offends cultural beliefs and values, creating conflict within our communities. If we are to have a genuine conversation about animal welfare, we must examine all forms of harm—not just those that are socially convenient to condemn.

Recognizing the Full Scope of Chicken Fighting

How is it that one practice is framed as necessary while the other is framed as cruelty? Where do we draw the line? Enforcing stricter penalties disregards these complexities and fails to acknowledge the broader context of the issue.

There is much more to chicken fighting than what is commonly acknowledged. It involves breeding, feeding, and training—just a few aspects rarely, if ever, discussed. It also includes conditioning, veterinary care, medical assistance, and a scientific approach to raising and maintaining the health of these animals. Yet, these aspects are entirely overlooked in favor of a one-sided narrative.

If we are to have a fair and informed discussion, we must recognize the full scope of the practice rather than reducing it to a singular condemnation. I urge the committee to consider these perspectives and oppose HB698.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 10:24:02 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I am writing to express my strong support for the bill currently being considered to increase laws against animal cruelty in the state of Hawaii. This legislation is not just a step forward for the well-being of animals, but also an essential reflection of our values as a compassionate society that recognizes the inherent worth of all living beings.

Animal cruelty is a serious issue that impacts not only the animals directly harmed but also the communities in which these crimes occur. We must recognize that animals, like humans, are sentient beings capable of experiencing pain, fear, and distress. The continued existence of animal cruelty, whether through neglect, physical abuse, or exploitation, is an affront to the ethical standards that should define us as a society. It undermines the respect for life that is crucial for maintaining a just and humane society.

Hawaii has a unique and rich cultural history that values the natural world and all the creatures that inhabit it. However, this same state has seen numerous cases of animal cruelty, including the abuse of pets, neglect of farm animals, and mistreatment of wildlife. These incidents not only cause immeasurable suffering to the animals involved, but they also negatively affect the safety and welfare of our communities. Allowing animal cruelty to persist unchecked jeopardizes not just the well-being of animals but the safety of all residents in our state.

The proposed legislation is an important step in ensuring that those who engage in these horrific practices are held accountable. By strengthening animal cruelty laws, we send a clear message that such behavior will not be tolerated, and that Hawaii is a state that values the ethical treatment of all creatures. Moreover, this bill would provide necessary resources for animal protection efforts, empowering law enforcement and animal welfare organizations to more effectively prevent and respond to incidents of cruelty.

As a society, we have a moral obligation to protect those who cannot defend themselves, and animals are no exception. Strengthening laws against animal cruelty is not only about protecting animals; it's about cultivating a society where empathy, compassion, and responsibility are the cornerstones of our behavior toward all living beings.

I urge you to pass this legislation with full support, as it will not only safeguard the rights of animals but also help to ensure a safer and more just future for all members of our community.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 10:24:55 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Wofford	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 11:13:05 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

If you ever have thought hurting an innocent voiceless child was wrong then how can you not agree that these loving animals deserve the same protection. They cannot speak for themselves nor are their cries heard. When they are heard, they are being ignored. Imagine praying for help and no one comes. Imagine screaming in pain day after day and not knowing when the next hit comes. Imagine being killed and not getting justice towards your killer. A child or an animal has 5 things in common..they are innocent, they feel pain, they know fear, they both are helpless in stopping the abuse and they need someone to speak for them! This has to stop and you are the change. Don't dismiss this as normal because it isn't. Humans should be better but maybe if they are held accountable for their horrific actions can this finally be stopped. This is the time to stop abuse and unethical killings of innocent souls. Will you be the strength and common sense that abuse of any species is wrong? Will you be the voice to protecting innocence? They are being forced to endure hellish lives when it should never happen. Please let this pass and let those who fight for decency and justice prevail. Don't let all those abused, killed and harmed intentionally souls be forgotten. They need protection and we will fight it til it's done because that is what this crazy world needs, Accountability and consequences for criminal acts.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 11:42:27 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joseph Tavares IV	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Its our Culture an Tradition

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 11:49:57 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I no jot

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 12:07:45 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kanani Imai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard and members of the Committee,

My name is Kanani Imai, and I am submitting this testimony in **support** of HB698 HD1, which seeks to provide greater protections for animals in Hawaii. As lifelong pet owners, my family and I have the privilege of fostering animals through organizations like Hina's Legacy Foundation. This foundation, along with others, works tirelessly to rescue and rehabilitate abused, neglected, and abandoned animals.

Currently, we are caring for a young dog that was rescued from a home where she suffered neglect. Watching her struggle with the emotional scars of mistreatment has been heartbreaking. The road to recovery will take months, and it is clear that urgent action is needed to prevent more animals from enduring similar suffering.

Accountability for those who inflict harm on animals and stronger protections for Hawaii's animals are critical. I firmly believe that HB698 HD1 will help bring about the necessary change.

I respectfully ask the committee to pass this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to share my support.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 12:42:37 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gabrielle	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Chair and Committee Members,

I would like to express my opposition of HB 698.

I'd like to make it known that I am a supporter of animal welfare, however, this bill, as written with amendments, has me seeking further clarification and additional questions.

For example, section H discusses the restraint of a dog under 6 months unless engaged in activity supervised by its owner. The term restraint should be defined. Is this term to be taken in general, such as crating or kenneling a dog while the owner is at work, which may be a safe option so long as it is left with adequate food and water, or more specifically defined as short tethers or muzzles? I'd also like to bring to question the service members who desert their pets while they go on deployment or are moved to other locations. This bill indicates such action is a petty misdemeanor, however these individuals chronically go unnoticed and untouched. Additionally, the bill states it does not apply to activities for scientific research which I find to be ironic as many of our country's current laws regarding such activities are inhumane and barbaric.

Pet owners who allow their dogs off leash and attack innocent people and animals should also be included for punishment by this bill as it demonstrates the neglect on behalf of the owner. These incidents are equally as problematic and unregulated.

I mahalo you all for your time and thought into this matter.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 1:24:53 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nathaniel Hubbard	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB698, as cruelty to animals are not cultural. Animals are not meant to be raised, loved and taken cared of with the intention of "fighting, battling to the death". A pet is a member of the family! If animals are being bred and raised for fighting it is not right. Understandably raising animals are a responsibility, which teaches children core value, however fighting them with knives are not what a pet owner does. Fighting animals lead to dangerous events, innocent animals dying, and the promotion of gambling. I support HB698, and would like to see illegal actions have serious consequences.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 1:27:19 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara Armstrong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB 698 is very important.I really hope our law makers will see the importance of fighting against animal cruelty. Cruelty to animals leads to cruelty of humans and that sort of bullying leads to these horrible school or mass shootings.

Let's all stand up for a world that respects all beings and their right to a safe life.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 2:27:58 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Brown	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge you to please pass this bill. Animals do not deserve to be abused, and the abusers need to be held accountable.

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 2:29:09 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
kamakani de dely	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill!

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 2:29:32 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Serena Takahashi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of HB698. If animal cruelty offenders keep being left off the hook, they will not stop and will kill or abuse a human next.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 2:29:41 PM
Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nikie Kabori	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Animal cruelty must stop

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 2:29:50 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mallory De Dely	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill!

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 2:30:23 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Dedely	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill!

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 2:42:05 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Josiah ChongTim	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 2:44:09 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pua Voa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support bill HB698 because I feel that animals should and need to be protected. There have been more and more cases of animal abuse and it's a shame that these innocent animals are not getting justice. Animals are innocent and cannot defend themselves against an abuser. When an animal bites a human, they unfortunately get put down, but when a human intentionally and knowingly hurt, abuse, and kill an innocent animal, there are no repercussions.

Hawaii needs to do better! Animals cannot stand up and speak for themselves!

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 2:45:32 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

My name is Caroline, and I am writing in strong support of **HB 698**, which seeks to strengthen protections against animal abuse in Hawaii. As someone who has been **vegan** for the past 28 years, I firmly believe that how we treat animals reflects our values as a society. Respect, compassion, and accountability should be at the heart of our laws, ensuring that all living beings are protected from cruelty and harm.

Animal abuse, including **dog fighting and rooster fighting**, is not only inhumane but also linked to broader issues of violence and criminal activity. These blood sports are acts of extreme cruelty that inflict unnecessary suffering on animals for human entertainment and profit. Such practices must be condemned with **harsher penalties, including significant fines and prison sentences**, to serve as both punishment and deterrent. Weak enforcement and lenient consequences only enable these abuses to continue, perpetuating a cycle of cruelty that has no place in our communities.

Beyond the immediate harm to animals, allowing abuse to persist fosters a culture of indifference toward suffering—something that ultimately affects all aspects of our society, including the way we treat one another and our environment. Studies have shown a direct correlation between animal cruelty and violence toward humans. By enforcing stricter laws against animal abuse, we take an important step toward creating a more just, ethical, and compassionate society.

Additionally, protecting animals aligns with our responsibility to **preserve the natural beauty and integrity of Hawaii**. Our state is known for its deep connection to nature and its commitment to sustainability. Respecting animals is part of respecting the delicate balance of our ecosystem. When we foster compassion toward all living beings, we cultivate a greater sense of **stewardship for our environment and community**.

I urge you to **pass HB 698** and send a clear message that Hawaii will not tolerate cruelty in any form. Stronger penalties for animal abuse will not only protect vulnerable animals but also uphold the values of kindness, respect, and justice that define our state.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahalo

LATE

Testimony in Support of HB 698 Relating to Animal Cruelty
Senate Committee on Judiciary Hearing Date: Friday, March 28, 2025

Honorable Chair and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing as a private citizen to express my strong support for HB 698, a critical piece of legislation that represents an important step forward in protecting the most vulnerable members of our community.

I am deeply troubled by our state's current position as a national outlier in animal welfare legislation – and that is not for lack of effort from animal welfare organizations, advocates and concerned members of the public. The proposed bill addresses a fundamental moral responsibility we share to protect those who cannot protect themselves.

This bill is not about cockfighting. I recognize there are passionate and complex conversations happening around that specific issue, but today, we are focused on something more fundamental – protecting pet animals from the most severe forms of cruelty. It would be a disservice to the intent of this legislation to allow unrelated debates to distract us from its core purpose. There are appropriate forums and times to engage in deeper discussions about that, but this hearing is about addressing egregious acts of animal cruelty that shock the conscience of our community.

The strategic approach of HB 698 is particularly noteworthy. By focusing on increasing penalties for first- and second-degree animal cruelty for pet animals, the bill provides a targeted mechanism to hold perpetrators accountable for the most severe forms of abuse. This refined approach demonstrates a thoughtful compromise that increases our chances of creating meaningful change.

It is crucial to understand that this legislation extends far beyond animal protection. Extensive research has consistently shown a direct correlation between animal abuse and broader societal violence. When we strengthen our stance against cruelty, we do more than protect animals - we intervene in cycles of abuse, support potential victims of domestic violence and send a clear message that violence against the vulnerable will not be tolerated in our community.

Our community's true strength is measured by how we treat those most dependent on our protection. By passing HB 698, we have an opportunity to demonstrate Hawai'i's commitment to creating a more compassionate community. We can show that we value the lives of all beings and that we refuse to turn a blind eye to suffering. I urge the committee to pass this important legislation.

Respectfully submitted,
Brandy Shimabukuro

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 2:53:53 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bonnie Abe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a long time pet owner we make a choice to be the voice of the voiceless animals and we make a choice to give our best to our beloved pets who are part of the family. The abuse needs to stop immediately and those that partake in animal cruelty should be punished at the highest extent of the law. No excuses.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 2:58:16 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Corrina Mahuna	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha

As a individual who works in the veterinary field and a 3rd generational rancher I do see the intent of this bill. As it was presented before there are some ammendments. The intent of this bill is to prevent animal cruelty BUT the language in this bill does not distinguish certain issues as it was raised before.

1. As a rancher and part of the agricultural community this bill does not distinguish between pets (i.e cats, dogs, etc.) and farm animals (horses, cattle, goats, sheep, etc) Even though your intention of passing this bill is to prevent animal creulty you will be leaving a devastating effect on the agricultural community. A community where we have to stand on our own, as individuals to treat, raise and continue the long lasting traditions of ranching in these islands. Our ranching and agriculture community provides NOT ONLY to the state of hawaii- but to the US continent and overseas.

2. "over drives and over loads"- this does not distinguish between large animals and pets- In the ranching life there is a lot of loading whether it be on trailers, airplanes or ships

3. "tethers, fastens or ties"- this also does not distinguish between large animals and pets- this is not a crime. Some of the clients that we see in the veterinary business that do have their animals contained on a tether or in a kennel take better care than other clients that let them run around freely.

4. This bill as the perfect intention as said many times before. But it lacks being specific in the terms and vocabulary that is used.

Mahalo

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 3:01:40 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Why should animals not have rights when abuse occurs? I believe offenders who abuse animals are not mentally fit to own or have an animal. I think that is a privilege in this world. My dog that I recently adopted from humane society was an animal of prior abuse. She is such a loyal pet. She has given me so much emotional support these past two years with my infertility struggles that I want to fight for animals that are being mistreated. Please pass this bill. I'm sure many others feel the same way. Thank you

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 3:24:53 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lokelani Rosario	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill because it puts too much restrictions on our rights as animal owners. It is the classic case of government overreach. The opening paragraph of said bill is a very good example of how over exaggerated they are making this. I think we need to remember that we live in Hawaii and that our living circumstances change daily because of the cost of living and I don't think that we should be penalized or worried about being penalized if we hit a rough patch and aren't able to maintain the living standards of our pets whilst we are trying to get back on our feet. I also think that any type of these legislation should take into consideration that we as natives practice our gathering rights in our ability to hunt. This law penalizes us as hunters for trying to put food on our table. It's becoming an increasingly more expensive state to live in and a lot of us are hunting more. With this bill it makes it very difficult to provide for our children. These types bills and the politicians concern to try and please the lobbyists who support their political careers are the most damaging to our way of life and the very reason a lot of our children have to move away. It might not make sense but these things have a trickle effect. It will harm Hawaii in the long run. It's a sad time when we're giving animals more rights than humans. A lot of the language in this bill will affect what little local ranchers we have left to feed our islands independently from the mainland big chain stores. It deprives us as a people the ability to be self sustaining. Thanks for your time and I hope that this gives you a perspective of one Hawaiian (by blood, born n raised n still living here), who's struggling to make a home here.

LATE

Date: March 26, 2025

To: Chair Sen. Karl Rhoads
Vice Chair Sen. Mike Gabbard
and Members of the Committee on Judiciary

Submitted By: Vernon Ling, Lead Investigator
Hawaiian Humane Society, 808-356-2241
Honolulu Police Department, Special Police, Badge #2567

RE: Testimony in strong support of HB 698, HD1, Proposed SD1:
Relating to Animal Cruelty
Friday, March 28, 2025, 10:00 a.m., Room 016 & Videoconference

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard and Committee Members,

Thank you for considering my support for House Bill 698, HD1, Proposed SD1, which amends the criminal penalties for various animal cruelty offenses by increasing the category of offense.

I have been a field services officer at the Hawaiian Humane Society for more than (23) years and have been lead investigator for (15) years.

As the organization tasked with animal law enforcement on O'ahu, Hawaiian Humane struggles with the judicial system's failure to take animal cruelty seriously. The public is also frustrated with what it sees as an inadequate law enforcement response. This measure is a step in the right direction.

Just this year and last, six (6) animal cruelty cases were dismissed in court despite strong probable cause and evidence. In one case a female was seen beating her dog and it was caught on video. This owner got her dog back after pleading no contest.

In another case a male cat owner threw his cat against the wall causing significant injuries. After waiving his Miranda rights he admitted to what he done. This case was just recently dismissed in court.

This is a pattern that dates back years.

In July 2017, James Montgomery plead no-contest to cruelty 1st for abusing 33 animals and killing one. The dogs were housed in a concrete bunker with no ventilation or light. The floor was covered in urine and feces, and dog remains were found. Montgomery was

previously convicted of animal cruelty in a case involving more than 150 dogs in 2006. He was sentenced to nine months in jail in the 2017 case, has completed probation and can own animals again.

Heather Maynard's 2 dogs were found after a 100 foot fall off the Ka'ena point trail killed one and severely injured the other. She left the scene at 10 a.m. and made no attempt to rescue the animals or call 911. The dogs were found by hikers at about 1 p.m. Maynard plead no contest to two counts of cruelty 2nd, a misdemeanor, and two counts of animal desertion, a class C-felony. She was sentenced to 24 hours of community service at the Hawaiian Humane Society and a \$400 fine.

The largest animal rescue in Hawaiian Humane's history involved 330 dogs and 8 small mammals seized from atrocious conditions at a Waianae property owned by David "Lanny" Moore and his mother June Moore. Charged with Cruelty 2nd, a class C-felony, David Moore was found guilty via bench trial and sentenced to one year in prison and \$39,450 in restitution. June Moore received probation. David Moore remains free amid ongoing appeals and no restitution has been paid. The actual cost to Hawaiian Humane for caring for the animals was more than \$850,000.

Steven Boos was charged with misdemeanor Cruelty 2nd for abusing a small terrier over a period of 1-1/2 years causing multiple fractures and requiring a pelvis implant and rear leg amputation. The dog has ongoing medical issues. Boos admitted guilt in an interview and waived his Miranda rights. He was sentenced to 30 days in jail but fled the state. After being apprehended trying to cross into Canada, he was extradited and sentenced to 1 year in prison, which he served.

Animal cruelty cases must meet the same high burdens of proof required to prosecute any crime and they come with unique complications. The victims cannot speak for themselves, the acts often take place behind closed doors, and most would-be witnesses know – and many times fear – the perpetrators. When animal cruelty does yield sufficient evidence to warrant a trial, the state must ensure that justice is done for the voiceless victims.

I urge you to pass HB 698 HD1, Proposed SD1, with an immediate effective date and enable a proportionate response to the abuse of pet animals.

Mahalo for your consideration.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 3:32:34 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle Takara	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I've been a foster for the Fur-Angel Foundation since 2023. The trauma that some of these pets go through is unacceptable. I've worked with dogs that were emaciated and sick because they were probably dumped and those that flinch with every sudden movement because they were probably constantly hit by their former owner. Abusive and negligent owners aren't only wrong for inflicting pain and suffering to their pets, they also contribute to the stray population that we see growing everyday. These owners need to be held accountable for their actions and I hope you can find it within yourselves to help enforce harsher punishment to those deserving. Thank you for your time.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 3:49:48 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vanessa Karsin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Animal cruelty need to STOP!!!

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 3:55:39 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Malia Kuramoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Malia Kuramoto & I respectfully & kindly Support HB 698, These Animals have feelings & I will stand up for them because they cannot speak. Animals feel the pain that these Abusers put them through physically & emotionally just as us humans would. It is heartbreaking that people who support this bill have to see these Animals in Physical & Emotional Distress due to traumatic experiences that these Animals do not deserve because other people (the abusers) take their emotions out on them. People like myself love these animals as if they were our own. Animals won't feel the need to defend themselves if they were just loved the proper way.

Mahalo for your time in Reading/Hearing my Testimony.

Malia Kuramoto

Lialovesfood2@gmail.com

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 3:58:38 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Liya Safina	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Liya Safina, and I'm writing in passionate support of HB698.

Animal cruelty is not just heartbreaking—it's a red flag for deeper violence in our communities. Research links it to abuse against children, partners, and elders. In 2023, Hawaii saw a disturbing rise in cases—73 reported incidents, up from 58 in 2018. This is not just an animal welfare issue. It's a public safety one.

HB698 is a powerful step forward. It increases penalties for the worst cruelty cases, including death and mass abuse, dog fighting, and sexual assault of animals. It also bars convicted abusers from owning animals for at least five years.

These are not just laws—they are a reflection of the values we hold as a compassionate state. I urge you to pass HB698 and help protect the voiceless, and in doing so, protect us all.

Mahalo,

Liya Safina

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 5:00:31 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

I oppose bill hb698.i support culture n religion rights.our traditions been going on for so long n been passed down from generation to generations.it shouldnt be taken away due to other people of society who don't engage in our culture activities n rights.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 5:06:46 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle Leon-Guerrero	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB698, to strengthen the protection of animals and enforcing consequences to those individuals that abuse these innocent beings. It is also concerning that this type of cruelty in behavior is also often translated to violent crimes or abuse of people. For these reasons, I strongly urge the committee to take action and pass this important measure.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 5:29:43 PM
Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lei-Anne Jones	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in support of bill HB698 for an increase in penalties for animal cruelty. Please help to support and protect all animals with this bill.

With love,

Lei-Anne Jones

Manoa 96822

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 5:38:43 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charles maxwell	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 5:46:27 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joseph Tavares III	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please don't take our passion and culture away from us!!
it's been in Hawaii roots for 100"s of years." Defend Hawaii our culture"

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 6:13:21 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Matthew Furtado	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Just want to say I oppose this bill.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 7:10:55 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

There has to be tougher laws on animal cruelty! How are people getting away with this! Innocent animals do not deserve to be abused. People should be punished for animal abuse, maybe that's why there are so many cases of it because there aren't any consequences! Please Please Please help them! these animals don't have a voice.



Aloha and thank you for taking the time to receive my testimony from Kaua'i. I have also attached photos (above) of the kind of abuse that has been happening over the last few months. I am in **favor of the HB 698** and strongly urge its passage to keep all animals safe. Our microchipped, collared house cats have been the victims of someone in our neighborhood using a bb gun on them. We have found our cats targeted over and over again over the past year. Then we started finding birds, at first doves and little chickens but then we found a kolea dead with a bb stuck in its eye. All 3 birds we found in one day on our property. We called non-emergency 911, made reports online with the police and the Kauai Humane

Pictures and Written Testimony from Kathleen Kikuchi-Samonte
IN FAVOR OF HB 698

Society, and called DLNR on Oahu and Kauai -- all with no response to the reports or calls back to us. The message: we don't care.

No animal deserves to be targeted, hurt or killed, like this. It hurts my heart and makes me angry when I can't do anything to protect them or even hold the perpetrator accountable. What will happen is this: if the police don't care and the humane society can't be bothered, people will take it into their own hands to rectify the situation. What is happening in our country reflects this. There needs to be harsher punishments for abusers of all types, people and animals, because we know that hurting animals is just a step away from hurting people. Science has proven this. Hurt a cat one day, hurt your spouse the next.

Please support and pass this legislation of HB698.

Mahalo. Kathleen Kikuchi Samonte.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 7:52:49 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lawrence. Sarmiento	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to express my unwavering support for HB698, a bill that represents a significant step forward in the fight against animal cruelty. As a passionate advocate for animal welfare, I believe this legislation is critical to ensuring that animals in our state are treated with the care and respect they deserve.

Animal cruelty is a serious and growing issue that not only harms animals but also undermines the values of compassion and justice that our community holds dear. HB698 addresses the urgent need for stronger protections and enforcement measures against those who engage in harmful and abusive behaviors toward animals. The bill takes essential steps to ensure that perpetrators of cruelty are held accountable and that animals are provided with a safer, more humane environment.

I wholeheartedly support HB698 and urge the committee to pass this crucial bill. Strengthening protections against animal cruelty is a moral imperative and a necessary action to ensure that animals are safeguarded from harm. This legislation will have a lasting, positive impact on our community and reflect our shared values of compassion and justice for all living beings.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter. I stand with HB698 and the animals who deserve our protection.

Sincerely,
Lawrence Sarmiento

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 8:54:19 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ashley torres	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a citizen, and civilian of Hawaii i support HB698

The state of Hawaii promotes to accept each other, love each other thia includes animals why is thw state of Hawaii allowing cruelty against INNOCENT animals. Why is Hawaii turning their head ans ignoring a real problem in Hawaii. This is not bigger or smaller than any other problem in Hawaii, this is still a problem. People.who commit abuse to an animal are prone to commit crimes, abuse to humans. When we stand together against animal abuse we are standing together for a better future of Hawaii. I believe Hawaii can be better do better and commit to the safety of all living things. Criminals habe been getting away with horrendous acts against animals is time to stand against this. I support this Bill. Stop animal cruelty, and sever punishment to offenders.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 9:29:27 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JoAnn Takushi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Members of Committee relating to animal cruelty (HB698),

My name is JoAnn Takushi and a citizen of the State of Hawaii and the USA. I have been a resident of Hawaii since 1976. I was born on the island of Maui.

I am submitting testimony in support of HB698 and urge you to pass this bill to protect innocent animals from being killed, tortured, and needlessly harmed, as well as holding offenders accountable by this state.

It is critically important that this bill be passed not only to protect and defend poor innocent animals, but to also uphold laws to punish and prosecute abusers, holding them accountable. Offenders should be considered felons and not merely committing misdemeanors. If I, as a citizen, cannot have confidence in our officials to protect innocent animals, who can I have confidence in. Direct action must be taken.

Please, I urge you all to support HB698, not only for those who are submitting testimony, but for our precious SILENT ANIMALS who have no voice. I speak for them as well.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit and provide testimony on this urgent matter.

JoAnn Takushi

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 9:35:14 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel Ulu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Support of HB698
Submitted by Daniel Ulu

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

My name is Daniel Ulu. As a lifelong Hawai‘i resident, realtor, and proud dog dad, I am writing in strong support of HB698.

In recent years, I’ve witnessed a disturbing rise in animal cruelty across our islands—stories that shake our communities to the core. From pets found mutilated to cases of extreme neglect, these aren’t isolated incidents—they’re warning signs. According to recent data, Hawai‘i saw 73 animal cruelty cases in 2023, a sharp increase from 58 in 2018. This bill isn’t just timely—it’s necessary.

HB698 sends a clear message: We will no longer tolerate cruelty. By upgrading the most severe acts of abuse to a Class B felony and ensuring stronger consequences for neglect, we are protecting the voiceless and holding abusers accountable.

But this isn’t only about animals. As studies have consistently shown, there is a direct link between animal abuse and violence against people—especially children and vulnerable adults. Strengthening our animal cruelty laws is a proactive step toward creating a safer and more compassionate community for all.

I urge you to pass HB698. Let’s stand together for those who cannot speak, and ensure that Hawai‘i remains a place where aloha extends to every living being.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Daniel Ulu
Kapolei Resident
Dog Dad & Community Advocate

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 9:36:37 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dante T	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

i oppose this bill

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 9:55:35 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Steve Cromwell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The rise in animal cruelty cases is no surprise, given the lack of serious consequences for abusers. Life is as dear to an animal as it is to a human.

Animals don't have a voice, but I do and I'm using it to testify in strengthening penalties by giving written testimony on animal abuse. The State Legislature needs to step up and impose more severe penalties by passing HB698, these sick individuals who abuse animals deserve harsher sentences. It is proven that people who abuse animals move on to humans. So please protect animals and humans alike by passing HB698.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 9:57:06 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Josh Gonda	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698!

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 10:16:35 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Samson Kama Jr.	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I Oppose HB698

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 10:23:15 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alaka'i Ramos	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 10:25:30 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
richard silva jr	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose bill HB698

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 10:31:45 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maile Freitas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hi there! I wanted to submit a testimony in support of bill HB698.

I am very passionate about animals and I believe these furry friends should not be abused. These animals come into our lives knowing only loyalty and love. We should be giving back to our furry friends. They've helped a lot of people through tough times. They help serve our country in many ways as well! They are alive, they have feelings. They feel things! Just like us humans. Yes, they may make mistakes and frustrate owners but that does not excuse abuse! There are plenty ways to train animals with out abusing them.

We should not be finding decapitated dogs and not taking a second to think that maybe there's something wrong in this world, this community.

Please consider what i've said, what anyone has said relating to this bill! These poor babies do not deserve to be hurt.

Thank you,

Maile

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 10:49:55 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeremy Moikeha	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose hb698

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 10:54:35 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Helene Navaro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I stronlgy support HB698

We need to find ways to increase penalties for animal cruelty crimes. We live in challenging times but we simply can't forget the least among us, the animals. Time after time, sadly animal cruetly will lead to children cruelty. Increasing penalties for certain animal cruelty acts definitely is a great deterrent. As a community we just can' t accept these animal cruelty acts as the norm.

I am asking for your kindness, compassion and support for this Bill HB698.

Mahalo Nui Loa for your time and consideration.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 11:14:38 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shirley Lam	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my support for HB698 HD1. Animal abuse is a serious issue that needs to be addressed. Animals are not merely property; they are sentient beings capable of suffering and experiencing profound pain. The infliction of suffering on these vulnerable creatures is not only an ethical violation, but it also highlights deeper societal issues, often serving as a warning sign for future acts of violence. Allowing such cruelty to persist reflects a troubling deficiency in our collective empathy and moral responsibility, which can have devastating implications for our communities.

It is imperative that we take a resolute stand against animal abuse to cultivate a society that is compassionate and just for all beings. This bill is essential in fostering a culture that values kindness and respect. Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 11:49:31 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vincent Molina	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill HB698 pertaining to animal cruelty. Bill is very vague.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 11:51:47 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melveen Gamponia	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB698. This bill is vague.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 11:54:37 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Monique Makaula	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concern:

We need animal abusers to be held accountable with these stiffer penalties because it is heartbreaking and frustrating to report and see animals get abused repeatedly and the abusers facing no consequences.

Animals deserve more protection .

Thank you

Monique Makaula

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2025 11:57:11 PM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole akau	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Nicole Akau and I am in full support of bill HB698. The time is now to put an end to animal cruelty. There are no excuses for this type of disgusting and barbaric behavior in our society. People need to be held accountable for their actions, and realize that they cannot continue to treat animals this way with no repercussions. We need stiffer penalties for the offenders. This bill is the beginning to an end of animal cruelty, and we need all the support we can get from our local government and fellow citizens to gain momentum. If you see something, say something. We need to speak up and be a voice for the voiceless.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 12:43:36 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alexis E. Jamison	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Alexis Jamison and I am a lifelong pet owner, as well as the president of a small cat rescue on Oahu. I have seen first hand the unimaginable abuse that has been inflicted on animals by humans.

Time after time, we have seen confirmed animal abusers get off with absolutely no consequences, even when there has been incontrovertible evidence of their crimes. It is beyond frustrating how little Hawai'i has historically done to protect animals from abuse, ensure that perpetrators are punished to the fullest extent of the law, and prevent offenders from owning animals.

Animals are undervalued and Hawai'i's animal cruelty laws are far too lax. For those that are not active in rescue, it is indescribable to see the extent of the abuse that exists on this island. Worse, however, is knowing how little is done about it and how it is rarely taken as seriously as it should be, given the correlation between animal abuse and violence against humans.

I implore you to take a stand against animal cruelty and help protect the voiceless animals in the State of Hawai'i by passing HB698 HD1.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 5:17:01 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katherine Suguitan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I SUPPORT Bill HB698. Please help these animals. They don't deserve this cruel, inhumane treatment. Please do something so no more have to suffer such horrendous conditions. People need to be held accountable.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 6:25:02 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha!

I strongly support tougher penalties for animal abuse. Treat animals with respect: all animals. This bill increases these penalties so it's a start.

mahalo!

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 6:25:03 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
diane chen Koch-weser	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I wish to testify in support of this important bill to punish those who have been accused and convicted of animal cruelty. Recently a person or persons has been shooting feral cats at night in Hawaii Kai. The cats have been fed and cared for by a group of volunteers who catches the cats, has them spayed and then released. They are now finding cats shot dead or maimed having been used as target practice. This is but one of many examples of animal cruelty that must be addressed and punished. Please vote in support of this bill.

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 6:58:15 AM
Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

In support of HB698, Proposed SD
PLEASE support this important measure to help protect our pets from animal cruelty. Cruelty to animals is a key indicator of future violence, not only against animals but people. By instituting penalties, we can help to stop this behavior and make our pets and our community safer.

This is not about chicken fighting! This is about protecting animals from vicious cruelty. Please do the right thing!
Jennifer Wood
808-221-7229
jennifercwood27@gmail.com
Kalaheo, HI

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 7:18:28 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anna Meng	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Honorable Legislators,

All animals are unable to defend themselves, and they are dependent upon us for care and security. Anyone who would abuse an animal will not stop there, what is next child abuse, elderly abuse. The Hawai'i Humane Society is a leader in our community on protecting the rights of all animals who cannot vote or speak for themselves.

I do vote, and I am respectfully urging you to support this bill.

Anna C. Meng

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 7:23:41 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Castro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Animals are living beings. If a person would harm an animal they would harm a person. This is unacceptable and these abusers are a danger to society. They need to be punished and hopefully deter other abusers whether it is a human or a defenseless animal. This is our responsibility as a civilized society. Thank you

LATE

HB-698-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/28/2025 8:02:23 AM

Testimony for JDC on 3/28/2025 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tracey Viar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Animal Cruelty has become more rampant and it literally makes me sick to my stomach. Animals are innocent beings and deserve kindness not cruelty. They are not toys or target practice. I am speaking of cats, dogs, chickens, baby chicks, and roosters. But especially dogs and cats which are domesticated. Please give stricter punishments and fines to deter these non empathic people from continuing this abuse. This has gone on for too long don't you think? I implore you to do the RIGHT thing and pass this bill even though I feel like it should be higher punishments.