

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF  
HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of  
SUZANNE D. CASE  
Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committees on  
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
and  
GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS**

**Wednesday, March 27, 2019  
1:45 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 224**

**In consideration of  
SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 55/SENATE RESOLUTION 39  
REQUESTING THE AUDITOR TO CONDUCT A MANAGEMENT AND FINANCIAL  
AUDIT, TO INCLUDE OPERATIONS AND PROCUREMENT, OF THE CITY AND  
COUNTY OF HONOLULU'S ANIMAL CONTROL CONTRACT WITH THE  
HAWAIIAN HUMANE SOCIETY**

Senate Concurrent Resolution 55/Senate Resolution 39 requests that the Auditor conduct a management and financial audit of the City and County of Honolulu's animal control contract with the Hawaiian Humane Society (HHS). **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) offers the following comments.**

The Department recognizes the important services provided by the HHS, including euthanasia of some animals, as a critical component of wildlife protection and disease mitigation in Hawaii. The Department has worked with HHS and other animal welfare groups in the past on the issue of feral cat proliferation in Hawaii. While the Department does not take a position on the issue of an audit, we do note multiple concerns and mischaracterizations within the language of these resolutions.

The stated concern of these resolutions is that HHS has been performing euthanasia of "healthy, adoptable animals" and implies that an alternative solution is to utilize spay and neuter services. The question should not be whether these animals are "adoptable" in terms of health and temperament, but whether they are being adopted. If there are more adoptable pet animals present in Hawaii than there is demand for those animals, this overpopulation should be mitigated through either increased adoption efforts, exporting animals to be adopted outside of

**SUZANNE D. CASE**  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

**ROBERT K. MASUDA**  
FIRST DEPUTY

**M. KALEO MANUEL**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

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

Hawaii, creating sanctuaries that separate animals from native wildlife, and, as a last resort, humane euthanasia.

This issue is of particular concern when considering cats in Hawaii, which, if unadopted, are sometimes taken from shelters by “owners” who release cats onto the landscape under practices called “Trap, Neuter, Return,” or more recently “Return to Field.” The releasing of healthy cats from shelters onto the landscape, rather than into homes, is entirely unsustainable and should be considered animal abandonment.

With regard to cats, the primary mischaracterization in these resolutions is the implication that increased neutering can replace euthanasia services and result in the reduction of the population size of feral cats in Hawaii. This statement is not supported by peer-reviewed science, which has produced many studies demonstrating that neutering of feral cats and re-releasing them onto the landscape does not result in population reduction. The Department is not aware of any scientific evidence showing that that the spay and neutering services referenced in this measure have resulted in “greatly reduced pet overpopulation challenges” as stated in these measures.

Further, utilizing spay and neutering services does not mitigate the impacts that cats have on native wildlife through predation or disease transmission. Some of these animals are neutered and others are not. Regardless, they pose a predation threat to Hawaii’s native birds and have been documented preying on shearwaters, petrels, moorhens, coots, and other native species. Cats are also the only reproductive host of the parasite *Toxoplasma gondii*, which has been cited as a cause of death in Hawaiian monk seals, alala, nene, and other native species. The State of Hawaii and federal partners spend considerable funding attempting to save these species, many of which are federally listed as threatened or endangered, from extinction. Seeking to reduce euthanasia services while supporting increased spay and neutering is contradictory to the State’s investment in native wildlife protection.

In January 2019 the Hawaii Invasive Species Council, comprised of six State agencies and administered by the Department, adopted a resolution entitled “Supporting the Keeping of Pet Cats Indoors and the Use of Peer-Reviewed Science in Pursuing the Humane Mitigation of the Impacts of Feral Cats on Wildlife and People,” attached here for reference. The position of the Council is that pet cats should be kept indoors or otherwise separated from native wildlife through the use of fencing, catios, or sanctuaries. Solutions to mitigating the impacts of feral cats must be supported by peer-reviewed science, and in particular should not include a reliance on neutering services provided under methods such as “Trap, Neuter, Return.”

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these measures.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII

JOSH GREEN  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



**HAWAII INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL**  
1151 PUNCHBOWL ST, #325  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

VOTING MEMBERS

SUZANNE CASE  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND & NATURAL  
RESOURCES

DENISE ALBANO  
HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

KEITH KAWAOKA D.Env.  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

NICHOLAS COMERFORD, Ph.D.  
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

LEO ASUNCION  
OFFICE OF PLANNING, DEPARTMENT OF  
BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT &  
TOURISM

DAVID RODRIGUEZ  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

**RESOLUTION 19-2**

**SUPPORTING THE KEEPING OF PET CATS INDOORS AND THE USE OF PEER-REVIEWED SCIENCE IN PURSUING HUMANE MITIGATION OF THE IMPACTS OF FERAL CATS ON WILDLIFE AND PEOPLE**

WHEREAS feral and free-roaming cats have been documented as predators of wildlife native to Hawaii, including endangered bird species; and

WHEREAS the toxoplasmosis parasite (*Toxoplasma gondii*) reproduces only in the feline digestive system; and

WHEREAS toxoplasmosis has been documented as the cause of death in both terrestrial and aquatic wildlife in Hawaii, including but not limited to the spinner dolphin, the endangered Hawaiian monk seal, the endangered alala, the endangered nene, and the red-footed booby; and

WHEREAS in humans toxoplasmosis can present health risks to pregnant women and/or immunocompromised persons if they handle cat feces or eat raw or undercooked meat; and

RECOGNIZING that previous public policy discussions in Hawaii have included consideration of funding or exempting from other laws practitioners of a system referred to as "Trap-Neuter-Return" that includes the re-release of neutered feral cats into the wild; and

RECOGNIZING that indoor cats have greater life expectancy than free roaming or feral cats; and

RECOGNIZING that numerous scientific studies, summarized in a meta-analysis titled "Critical Assessment of Claims Regarding Management of Feral Cats by Trap-Neuter-Return" by Longcore et al (2009) in the journal *Conservation Biology*, have shown that "Trap-Neuter-Return" is not an effective strategy to reduce the number of feral cats in a given area or the predation and disease impacts of feral cats; and

WHEREAS, Chapter 194, Hawaii Revised Statutes, authorizes the Hawaii Invasive Species Council to advise and coordinate invasive species-related efforts with and between state, federal, international, and private programs, and to coordinate the State's position with regard to invasive species; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Hawaii Invasive Species Council recognizes that feral and free roaming cats can have a variety of impacts in Hawaii, including predation of native species and the proliferation and transmission of disease to wildlife and humans; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hawaii Invasive Species Council supports the keeping

of pet cats indoors or otherwise contained to a pet owner's property through use of cat patios, fencing, or other tools to minimize impacts such cats may have on the surrounding environment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hawaii Invasive Species Council recommends that proposed methods for mitigating the impacts of feral cats on native wildlife and/or humans should be both humane and supported by peer-reviewed, scientific evidence demonstrating the efficacy of such methods; and

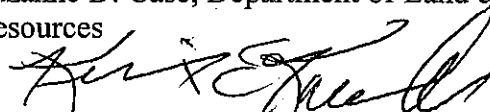
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Hawaii Invasive Species Council does not recommend the use of "Trap-Neuter-Return" or other efforts that support the feeding or re-release of feral cats into the wild or into public spaces; and

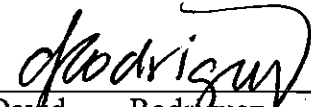
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Governor of Hawaii, the President of the State Senate, the Speaker of the State House of Representatives, and to the directors or chairpersons of each HISC agency.

Adopted by the Hawaii Invasive Species Council on the following date: January 29, 2019

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Suzanne D. Case, Department of Land & Natural Resources

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Denise Albano, Department of Agriculture

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Keith Kawaoka, D. Env., Department of Health

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David Rodriguez, Department of Transportation

\_\_\_\_\_  
Leo Asuncion, Office of Planning, Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nicholas Comerford, Ph.D., University of Hawaii



---

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair  
The Honorable Russell E. Ruderman, Vice Chair

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

The Honorable Laura H. Thielen, Chair  
The Honorable Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair

**S.C.R. NO. 55, REQUESTING THE AUDITOR TO CONDUCT A MANAGEMENT AND FINANCIAL AUDIT, TO INCLUDE OPERATIONS AND PROCUREMENT, OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU'S ANIMAL CONTROL CONTRACT WITH THE HAWAIIAN HUMANE SOCIETY**

**S.R. NO. 39, REQUESTING THE AUDITOR TO CONDUCT A MANAGEMENT AND FINANCIAL AUDIT, TO INCLUDE OPERATIONS AND PROCUREMENT, OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU'S ANIMAL CONTROL CONTRACT WITH THE HAWAIIAN HUMANE SOCIETY**

Hearing: Wednesday, March 27, 2019, 1:45 p.m.

---

The Office of the Auditor has **no position** regarding S.C.R. No. 55 and S.R. No. 39, which require the Auditor “to conduct a management and financial audit, to include operations and procurement, of the City and County of Honolulu's animal control contract with the Hawaiian Humane Society.” **However, we offer the following comments.**

First, we understand the requested audit to be of the City and County of Honolulu’s procurement and administration of its contract with the Hawaiian Humane Society. The City and County of Honolulu has a legislative auditor whose office performs management and financial audits of City agencies and programs. With our current staffing, we have limited capacity to do the work required by the measure, the other work that we are currently statutorily mandated to perform before the beginning of the next legislative session (e.g., analyze certain tax incentives pursuant to Section 23-72, HRS); review departments’ special funds, revolving funds, trust funds, and trust accounts (Section 23-12(b)(2)); and the other audits and studies that are contained in 33 pending bills and concurrent resolutions.

We also have concerns about our ability to perform work required by the measure without sufficient funds to do so. Specifically, S.C.R. No. 55 and S.R. No. 39 request that we “contract support from an entity with sufficient expertise and knowledge to audit the animal welfare policies and programs of the Hawaiian Humane Society and provide recommendations for reducing euthanasia.” However, we do not have the funds to contract for support with such an entity. If the Committee is inclined to move the resolution forward, we would recommend this requirement be deleted.

Thank you for considering our testimony related to S.C.R. No. 55 and S.R. No. 39.



## Testimony in Support of SCR 55 and SR39

March 24, 2019

Sen. Mike Gabbard, Sen. Laura Thielen and members of the Senate committees on Agriculture & the Environment and Government Operations:

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

The Pacific Pet Alliance has long been concerned about a lack of an audit of the Hawaiian Humane Society by either the State (1995) or the City & County of Honolulu (1997). Now the situation has escalated and the State must address these concerns. We are in full support of an audit.

Part of an audit must contain shelter data that reflects a meaningful analysis of the current situation and trends in shelter admissions. The online annual reports for the Hawaiian Humane Society does not provide data in a format that would easily allow it to be compared to other shelters. At this time, there is no uniform shelter/rescue data reporting in Hawaii.

The Pacific Pet Alliance notes from legislative testimony that the Hawaiian Humane Society admits about 10,000 dogs and puppies annually to their care. Their online annual reports reflect that figure. The National Animal Interest Alliance (NAIA) keeps statistics on animal shelters nationwide which show a gradual decline in shelter admissions. These data are submitted voluntarily or available through online public sources. In Hawai'i, the **NAIA has only been able to obtain data from the Kauai and Maui Humane Societies**. Kauai Humane Society goes a step further to explain their data: <http://kauaihumane.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/NFHS-Basic-Matrix-2016-2017.pdf>. The NAIA online data is readily available in a format that conforms to shelter data collected nationwide. **Both shelters also show gradually declining shelter admission trends.** [http://shelterproject.naiaonline.org/shelter\\_data/states/12](http://shelterproject.naiaonline.org/shelter_data/states/12) The Hawaiian Humane Society's annual reports contain data that is incomplete and not useable for the NAIA's data collection project. The Pacific Pet Alliance is in communication with the NAIA. If shelter statistics for any shelter/rescue in Hawaii is released to them, they will provide the data analysis at no cost to the State or Counties.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Should any of you like to discuss uniform shelter data, we would welcome the opportunity.

Lynn Muramaru  
Board member  
808-542-9581  
pacificpetalliance@gmail.com

**LATE**

**SR-39**

Submitted on: 3/26/2019 5:09:17 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/27/2019 1:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
De MONT R. D. CONNER	Testifying for Ho'omanapono Political Action Committee (HPAC)	Support	Yes

Comments:

**WE STRONGLY SUPPORT THIS RESOLUTION! ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF THE FBI INVESTIGATION OF PROSECUTOR KEITH KANESHIRO WHO RECEIVED HUGE DONATIONS OF \$\$\$ BY THE HAWAII HUMANE SOCIETY!**



**LATE**

**SR-39**

Submitted on: 3/27/2019 1:08:39 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/27/2019 1:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for O`ahu County Democrats Committee on Legislative Priorities	Support	No

Comments:

**SR-39**

Submitted on: 3/25/2019 8:32:28 PM

Testimony for AEN on 3/27/2019 1:45:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jack Gerwin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please Continue with SCR55, Audit of the Hawaiian Humane Society. I'm in favor of the audit.

Being a Volunteer there I have witnessed perfectly good animals be put to sleep. Every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday's are the days the Oahu Crematory picks up euthanized dogs at the Humane Society.

Hawaiian Humane Society Euthanizing practices are horrifying. I witnessed, Veterinarian Staff, Brenda, walk to the back kennels, leash a dog and walk them straight through the doors to the euthanizing room. Apparently, the dog time was up, after 48 hour hold when no owners came for him. One by one, she went to various kennels and pulled dogs and walked them to the dedicated Euthanizing room they have on site. These dogs were perfectly fine the day before when we cleaned and fed them. They did not bite us, they did not try to escape, and they were friendly, but scared because of their new surroundings. Yet, they were on the euth list after 48 hours. I was bawling. What did I get myself into? I was here to help animals, not watch them go one by one the euthanizing room.

On another day, there was a dog in the back in the stray holds. It had a F.W. stamped in red on its paperwork. Which means Finders Wants, which means when someone finds a dog they can try to claim the dog after a 48 hour hold if owners don't show. The following day, there was a post on facebook that the family was looking for the dog. Hawaiian Humane Society, never once listed the dog as a stray on their site. They didn't list the dog anywhere on their site for owners to verify and check. Another volunteer informed the owners through facebook that their dog was there and they needed to come and make a report in person and ask to see the strays in the back. Apparently, they did, and they got their dog back. If weren't for that volunteer, the dog would have never made it home back to its family.

Owner Surrenders are never listed on their site unless they are going to make it on the adoption floor. Once an owner surrender comes into the facility they are held for 48 hours in case the owner changes their mind and then after 48 hours HHS decides what their faith will be. Are they good enough to be adopted? Should we spend the money on getting them fixed? It's so subjective. There are past volunteers that would try to help

these animals by trying to get them out of HHS before they were euthanized, but they got caught and fired for helping a perfectly healthy adoptable dog find a home.

Dr Kasey even stated if an animal is going to cost hundreds of dollars he would rather euthanize the animal and spend the money on many dogs verses just one dog. I was shocked he was telling a group of volunteers ready, willing and able to be an advocate for HHS this information.

With all the money HHS gets from the state and donations, why can't we save them all? I know some extreme circumstances you can't, but at least have the compassion to try. Not calculate a 48hr hold and no owner showing up, a reason to euthanize an animal. Perfectly nice animals are being euthanized and it's subjectively.

Please be their voice and audit the Humane Society. Everyone needs a second chance and so do the animals of Hawaii.