
SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU TO CONDUCT A
MANAGEMENT AND FINANCIAL AUDIT, TO INCLUDE OPERATIONS AND
PROCUREMENT, OF ITS ANIMAL CONTROL CONTRACT WITH THE
HAWAIIAN HUMANE SOCIETY.

1 WHEREAS, the Hawaiian Humane Society has received
2 complaints by many in the animal welfare community, particularly
3 regarding the high rate of euthanasia of healthy adoptable
4 animals by the organization; and
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6 WHEREAS, using euthanasia to manage dog and cat
7 overpopulation causes health issues and emotional stress in
8 employees involved, increases staff turnover, and has financial,
9 moral, and ethical ramifications for communities; and
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11 WHEREAS, employees and former employees recently organized
12 a group called "People for Animals First" to bring forward
13 concerns about the practices and management of the Hawaiian
14 Humane Society and spark the change necessary to save the
15 organization from further deterioration; and
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17 WHEREAS, the group has provided state lawmakers with
18 testimonies and evidence that under the current leadership, and
19 with the oversight of the Hawaiian Humane Society Board of
20 Directors, the Hawaiian Humane Society routinely encourages
21 euthanasia of healthy or treatable animals, violates standard
22 safety procedures and labor practices, and supports a hostile
23 work environment; and
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25 WHEREAS, under the current leadership, sixty-two workers
26 have been fired or have resigned in the period of roughly one
27 year, a pattern repeated from when the current leadership was at
28 the Hawaii Island Humane Society; and
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30 WHEREAS, animals that had treatable conditions or were
31 underweight were routinely euthanized instead of being placed
32 into foster care with volunteers and rescue groups – a best



1 practice embraced by shelters across the United States to save
2 lives; and

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4 WHEREAS, the Hawaiian Humane Society animal control
5 contract with the City and County of Honolulu rewards the
6 Hawaiian Humane Society for euthanizing dogs, cats, and other
7 animals; and

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9 WHEREAS, a review of the animal control contract annual
10 reports from 2012 to 2016 indicates that there was an increase
11 of roughly twenty-two percent of the funds provided to the
12 Hawaiian Humane Society; and

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14 WHEREAS, while the counties of Kauai and Hawaii have moved
15 forward with audits of the animal control contactors and Maui
16 Humane Society has successfully made changes to reduce its
17 euthanasia rate, the Hawaiian Humane Society has not been
18 audited by the State since 1995 or by the City and County of
19 Honolulu since 1997; and

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21 WHEREAS, although California shelters take in over four
22 hundred thousand cats and dogs per year, their forty percent
23 euthanasia rate is a result of their commitment to following
24 national best practices, which do not appear to be embraced by
25 the Hawaiian Humane Society on Oahu; and

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27 WHEREAS, the proliferation of affordable spay and neuter
28 options for the public in the past ten years, including The Big
29 Fix clinics and Animal Balance clinics, have greatly reduced pet
30 overpopulation challenges and euthanasia; and

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32 WHEREAS, social media has mobilized the community to aid in
33 returning lost and found pets to their owners, rescuing stray
34 animals, and avoiding surrender to the Hawaiian Humane Society,
35 which has contributed to the reduction in the intake and
36 euthanasia of animals; and

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38 WHEREAS, recent scrutiny involving alleged criminal
39 wrongdoing by various, high-level City and County of Honolulu
40 officials requires the State to take a leadership role in
41 protecting Oahu taxpayers, animals, and the people that care for
42 them; and



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WHEREAS, it is imperative that an audit is conducted prior to releasing any state grant in aid funds to support construction of the Hawaiian Humane Society's new West Oahu shelter; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirtieth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2019, that the City and County of Honolulu is requested to conduct a management and financial audit, to include operations and procurement, of its animal control contract with the Hawaiian Humane Society; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City and County of Honolulu is requested to consider best practices for the euthanasia of animals in its audit; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor is requested to suspend release of any state grant funds awarded to the Hawaiian Humane Society until an audit clears the organization of any wrongdoing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Mayor of the City and County of Honolulu, and President and Chief Executive Officer of the Hawaiian Humane Society.