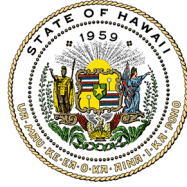


**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



**STEPHEN F. LOGAN**  
MAJOR GENERAL  
ADJUTANT GENERAL  
KA 'AKUKANA KENELALA

**JAMES DS. BARROS**  
ADMINISTRATOR OF  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
KAHU HO'OMALU PŪULIA

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**  
**KA 'OIHANA PILI KAUA**  
HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY  
4204 DIAMOND HEAD ROAD  
HONOLULU, HAWAI'I 96816-4420

STATE OF HAWAI'I  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL,  
RELATING TO EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMUNICATIONS

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

BY

JAMES DS. BARROS  
ADMINISTRATOR  
HAWAI'I EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

January 28, 2026

Aloha Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a testimony in **SUPPORT** of Senate Bill 2109.

Though the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency already deploys public messaging on the importance of being 14-days ready for any natural disaster or emergency, we welcome the opportunity to further develop and implement a statewide public education and communications program aimed at promoting household emergency preparedness. The appropriation of funds to support this initiative is a necessary investment in the health and safety of our state.

It is crucial for all residents and visitors to be equipped with the knowledge and resources necessary to respond effectively to emergencies. By mandating HIEMA to lead a comprehensive public education program, we can significantly enhance the preparedness of our households statewide.

Public education is a vital component of disaster preparedness. When residents are informed about the importance of maintaining essential supplies for at least 14-days ready, they are more likely to take the necessary steps to protect themselves and their families. We can empower individuals and families to make informed decisions and reduce panic during actual emergencies.

This initiative will continue to foster a culture of preparedness throughout our communities. More households will take responsibility for their safety and the safety of those around them. This not only benefits individual families but also strengthens the overall resilience of our communities. When more households are prepared – it reduces the strain on emergency services and ensures a more effective response during disasters.

HIEMA supports this bill as long as it does not negatively impact the Governor's Executive budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support** of Senate Bill 2109.

James Barros: [james.barros@hawaii.gov](mailto:james.barros@hawaii.gov); 808-733-4300



# Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

Date: Jan. 27, 2026

To: Chair Sen. Carol Fukunaga  
Vice Chair Sen. Chris Lee  
and Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

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

RE: Testimony in support of SB 2109 Relating to Emergency Preparedness  
Communications  
Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2026, 3 p.m., Room 016 & Videoconference

---

On behalf of the Hawaiian Humane Society, thank you for considering our support for Senate Bill 2109 Relating to Emergency Preparedness Communications, which requires the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency to develop and implement a statewide public education and communications program to promote household emergency preparedness consistent with the Agency's fourteen-day essential supplies recommendation; requires annual reports to the Legislature; and appropriates funds.

As the City and County of Honolulu's animal services contractor, Hawaiian Humane is deeply involved in disaster preparation and response. We are in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in the lead up and during disasters. We understand the crucial role that community preparation plays in saving lives.

Our President and CEO, Anna Neubauer, was recently named to the Citizens Advisory Commission on Emergency Management for the City and County of Honolulu in recognition of the importance of including animals in our disaster planning.

**We support SB 2109 and we ask that it be amended to include pet food, supplies and medications in all sections mentioning the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency's (HiEMA) supplies recommendations.**

In a 2024 Ward Research survey commissioned by the Hawaiian Humane Society, 59 percent of O'ahu households reported owning at least one pet. While we did not survey the other counties, the highest rates of pet ownership on O'ahu are in our rural



## Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

communities, suggesting that the popularity of pet ownership on the neighbor islands is at least as high. More than 90 percent of pet owners consider their pets to be part of their families. In recognition of that fact, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requires that provisions are made for pet owners in disaster planning and response and all of Hawai'i's government operated emergency shelters welcome pets.

Hawai'i shelters, however, do not have the resources to provide supplies for those animals. Whether their plan is to go to a government shelter, stay with family or friends, or make some other accommodation, our families need to include their pets in their disaster plans.

Hawaiian Humane does regular media outreach and community education around the importance of disaster preparation and we would welcome the opportunity to work with HiEMA in support of the types of communication outlined in this bill.

Please pass SB2109 with amendments including our animal family members. Mahalo for your consideration.

**SB-2109**

Submitted on: 1/27/2026 2:48:21 PM

Testimony for PSM on 1/28/2026 3:00:00 PM

| <b>Submitted By</b>    | <b>Organization</b>                        | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>    |
|------------------------|--|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Austin "Shiloh" Martin | Testifying for Libertarian Party of Hawaii | Oppose                    | Remotely Via Zoom |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Elefante, and committee members. I am Austin Martin, Chair of the Libertarian Party of Hawaii, testifying in opposition to SB 2109.

This bill creates a permanent HIEMA-run public education program mandating development of multi-media campaigns, toolkits, and assets to push households toward 14-day stockpiles of food/water/medications, with targeted outreach to vulnerable groups, multilingual requirements, annual legislative reports through 2029 (including compliance estimates), and an open-ended general fund appropriation for planning, production, translation, and evaluation.

While voluntary preparedness is prudent, taxpayer-funded propaganda campaigns—complete with PSAs, social media toolkits, and measurable "household compliance" tracking—represent unnecessary state intrusion into personal responsibility, duplicating private/nonprofit efforts while building infrastructure for future mandatory messaging. Reject SB 2109 and the blank-check spending; individuals, not government agencies, should drive preparedness through free choice, or at least amend to ensure efforts remain voluntary.

Mahalo for your attention to this matter.

Austin Martin

Libertarian Party