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Testimony of the Hawaii Board of Veterinary Medicine

Before the
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Wednesday, January 28, 2026
3:00 p.m.
Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

On the following measure:
S.B. 874, RELATING TO VETERINARY MEDICINE

Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

My name is Marcella Chock, and I am the Chair of Hawaii Board of Veterinary Medicine (Board). The Board supports this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to promote consumer choice, affordability, and transparency by ensuring pet owners in the State have the right to obtain and fill prescriptions for their animals at a pharmacy of their choice by removing barriers to competitive pricing, ensure fair access to veterinary medications, and enhance trust between veterinarians and their clients.

The Board supports Senate Bill 874, as it codifies language from the American Veterinary Medical Association Principals of Veterinary Medical Ethics with which licensees are required to conform.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

Date: Jan 26, 2026

To: Chair Sen. Mike Gabbard
Vice Chair Sen. Tim Richards
and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment

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

RE: Testimony in support of SB 874: Relating to Veterinary Medicine
Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2025, 3 p.m., Room 224 & Videoconference

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment, mahalo for considering the Hawaiian Humane Society's support for Senate Bill 874, which requires veterinarians to provide a written prescription, upon the request of a client, for any animal patient of a client with whom the veterinarian has established an existing veterinarian-client-patient relationship; allows pharmacies licensed in the State to dispense medications prescribed by veterinarians; and authorizes the Hawai'i Board of Veterinary Medicine to establish penalties, which may include fines or suspension or revocation of a license.

In a 2024 Ward Research survey commissioned by the Hawaiian Humane Society, 45 percent of O'ahu pet owners said that cost was the top challenge related to having a pet in their lives. When given specific concerns to choose from, 33 percent said they had struggled to afford veterinary care. Despite these challenges, 75 percent of pet owners said that their animals saw a veterinarian at least once a year. This shows an incredible level of commitment among local pet owners. This measure supports that commitment by giving pet owners the freedom to shop for competitive pricing on pet medications.

The provisions of this measure are also consistent with the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) 2025 Model Practice Act (MVPA)* which recommends public policy best practices to lawmakers nationwide.

We urge the committee to pass SB874 to alleviate financial pressures on our pet-loving families while ensuring that animals get the care they need. Mahalo for your consideration.

* <https://www.avma.org/sites/default/files/2025-07/Model-Veterinary-Practice-Act-2025.pdf>



COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair

SB874
RELATING TO VETERINARY MEDICINE

Wednesday, January 28, 2026, 3:00 PM
Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

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

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB874** which requires veterinarians to provide a written prescription, upon the request of a client, for any animal patient of a client with whom the veterinarian has established an existing veterinarian-client-patient relationship. It also allows pharmacies licensed in the State to dispense medications prescribed by veterinarians and authorizes the Hawai'i Board of Veterinary Medicine to establish penalties, which may include fines or suspension or revocation of a license.

We support this measure to protect consumer rights while maintaining safety and efficacy in the dispensing of medications.

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. Ranchers produce a high-quality protein and are the stewards of almost 750 thousand acres of land in Hawaii, or nearly 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





HAWAII VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 61309, Honolulu, Hawaii 96839-1309

January 25, 2026

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Senator Mike Gabbard , Chair

Senator Herbert M. Tim Richards III, Vice Chair

RE: SB874 Relating to Veterinary Medicine

Dear Committee on Agriculture and Environment:

On behalf of the Hawaii Veterinary Medical Association (HVMA), we would like to offer comments on SB874 and its establishment of a state law requiring veterinarians to provide written prescriptions at a client's request.

We would like to acknowledge that according to current state law, Hawaii Revised Statutes 471-10 already requires licensed veterinarians in Hawaii to practice by "the recognized principles of medical ethics of the veterinary profession as adopted by the Hawaii Veterinary Medical Association and the American Veterinary Medical Association". The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) has published standards of Veterinary Medical Ethics that state: "A veterinarian shall honor a client's request for a prescription or veterinary feed directive in lieu of dispensing" (Section C.8.d.).

Recognizing that licensed veterinarians in Hawaii are already providing written prescriptions upon client request, we propose the following amendments to SB874 to ensure that the law does not create an undue burden upon veterinarians providing this service:

1. Add specification that posted physical signage or digital communication (i.e. website posting, email) is considered sufficient to inform clients.

Page 2

13 (b) A veterinarian shall inform a client of the client's
14 right to request a written prescription from the veterinarian
15 and the option to have it filled at a pharmacy of the client's
16 choice via direct communication, posted signage, or digital communication.

2. Delete requirement for written prescriptions to include cautionary statements, as this responsibility should lie with the dispensing pharmacist. Standard written prescriptions only include specific directions for use from the prescribing doctor.

Page 3

12 (4) Directions for use ~~with any cautionary statements, as~~
13 ~~needed;~~

3. Add statement to release the prescribing veterinarian from any liability for any issues arising from medication obtained from an external source.


Page 4

- 1 requirements for handling and dispensing veterinary
- 2 pharmaceuticals are met.

Veterinarians providing a written prescription are not responsible for the improper storage, potential counterfeiting, medication substitution, or dosage errors associated with dispensing from a third party pharmacy, and will not be held liable for any adverse effects or lack of efficacy in treatment due to externally sourced products.

With these amendments, the HVMA would be in support of SB874. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,



Jill Yoshicedo, DVM
Executive Vice-President
Hawaii Veterinary Medical Association

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/27/2026 11:04:30 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Austin "Shiloh" Martin	Testifying for Libertarian Party of Hawaii	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and committee members. I am Austin Martin, Chair of the Libertarian Party of Hawaii, testifying in opposition to SB 874 (Veterinary Penalties/Regulations).

SB 874 authorizes the Board of Veterinary Medicine to impose new administrative penalties and expand enforcement authority, raising barriers to professional practice and subjecting veterinarians to fines for violations of potentially subjective regulatory standards.

These additions increase service costs for pet owners and deter entry into the profession. I recommend deferring or amending to reduce existing licensing requirements rather than expanding punitive powers.

Mahalo for opposing this measure.

Austin Martin

Libertarian Party

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/28/2026 8:38:27 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Smith	Testifying for Hawaii Humane Society	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a Waialua resident and former business owner in the North Shore community. I am submitting written testimony in FAVOR and SUPPORT of bill SB874.

I feel this bill is a positive change to impact competitive pricing for vet prescriptions. Improve choices and convenience for domestic animal owners to be able to fulfill prescriptions at all licensed pharmacies. Also it will help the business of our local retail pharmacies as well. WE need to support our local pharmacies as well.

Expenses of pet care in Hawaii is a primary barrier for our local families.

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/26/2026 11:11:20 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Winston Welch	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Dear Chair Gabbard and Committee Members,

Thank you for your support of SB874, which requires veterinarians to provide written prescriptions upon request. In our testimony below, there is one friendly amendment written out that should be made to the bill requiring posting notice of the law in a conspicuous place for consumer awareness.

This bill addresses a critical issue for Hawaii pet owners, who often face frustration and increased costs when they cannot easily obtain a pet prescription to take to a pharmacy of their choice. By requiring written prescriptions on request, the bill helps align veterinary practices with industry best practices, removes ethical concerns, and enhances trust between veterinarians and pet owners. It ensures veterinarians can focus on patient care rather than medication sales, while pet owners are empowered to make cost-effective choices for their pets' medications.

For many families facing financial challenges, being unable to transfer prescriptions to a pharmacy can result in significantly higher costs. This bill ensures that pet owners can access the medications they need at a lower cost, in the same way they can for their own prescriptions.

Key Reasons Why This Law Makes Sense:

1. **Promotes Consumer Choice:** Pet owners will have the freedom to shop for competitive pricing on pet medications. They can still choose their veterinarian or pharmacist for filling prescriptions.
2. **Encourages Fair Market Practices:** This bill prevents monopolistic practices where veterinarians control medication sales, addressing concerns about cost and medication choice raised in similar legislation across the nation.
3. **Improves Affordability and Accessibility:** Consumers can access potentially lower-cost medications through retail or online pharmacies, which is especially helpful for those in rural areas or with limited transportation.
4. **Aligns with Industry Best Practices:** The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) has long recommended veterinarians honor requests for prescriptions to be filled elsewhere. This bill makes that practice a requirement.
5. **Supports Financial Equity:** This bill supports lower-income pet owners by allowing them to access more affordable medications, just as they can for human prescriptions.

6. **Strengthens the Veterinary-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR):** By requiring a VCPR, this bill ensures that prescriptions are based on sound medical judgment. It fosters transparency and trust when pet owners are empowered to choose where they purchase medications.
 7. **Prevents Unnecessary Fees:** The bill ensures that veterinarians cannot charge extra fees for providing a written prescription.
 8. **Ensures Safety and Accountability:** The bill regulates pharmacies to adhere to rigorous safety standards for veterinary prescriptions, similar to those for human prescriptions.
 9. **Aligns with Other States with Similar Laws:** States like California, Minnesota, Florida, and Oregon have enacted similar measures, demonstrating the practicality and effectiveness of this approach.
 10. **Promotes Cost Transparency:** The bill supports Federal Trade Commission recommendations for greater pricing transparency, benefiting both consumers and market competition.
-

Suggested Addition: Consumer Posting Requirement

To ensure the transparency of this new consumer right, we recommend an amendment to require veterinarians to post a clear notice in their place of business. This notice should inform pet owners of their right to request a written prescription for any medication prescribed for their pet, and to have that prescription filled at a pharmacy of their choice, without additional cost.

This posting requirement ensures that pet owners are fully aware of their rights before making any decisions about filling prescriptions, promoting informed choices and transparency.

Specifically, we propose the following language be added to SB874:

“A veterinarian licensed under this chapter shall conspicuously post, in a location readily visible to clients and prospective clients in the veterinarian’s place of practice, a notice informing clients of their right to request a written prescription for any medication prescribed for an animal patient and to have the prescription filled at a pharmacy of their choice, at no additional cost.”

Failure to post the required notice should be considered noncompliance with this section and may be grounds for disciplinary action by the Board of Veterinary Medicine.

Possible Questions or Concerns and Responses:

Concern 1: *“Veterinarians’ revenue will be negatively impacted.”*

Response: Veterinarians provide medical care, not medications. Revenue can be supplemented by focusing on services rather than markups on medications.

Concern 2: *“Veterinary-client relationships might be undermined.”*

Response: Trust is built when clients feel empowered to make choices. Veterinarians can focus on diagnosis and care, while transparency fosters stronger relationships.

Concern 3: *“This isn’t a requirement in the profession.”*

Response: Informing clients of their rights is already an ethical recommendation by the American Veterinary Medical Association in its “Principles of Veterinary Medical Ethics.”

Concern 4: *“Veterinarians may lose control over patient care.”*

Response: A valid Veterinary-Client-Patient Relationship (VCPR) ensures veterinarians remain central to decision-making for animal care, regardless of where prescriptions are filled.

Concern 5: *“Additional administrative burden on veterinarians.”*

Response: Providing a prescription is a minimal addition to the visit. Veterinarians already document medications prescribed, so providing a written prescription is a natural extension of this process.

Concern 6: *“Veterinarians already comply with voluntary prescription guidelines.”*

Response: While some veterinarians comply voluntarily, this law ensures **consistent** access for consumers and removes any ambiguity in veterinarians’ responsibilities.

Concern 7: *“Pharmacies lack expertise in veterinary medications.”*

Response: Pharmacies already dispense medications for humans and animals. Veterinarians remain available for guidance on prescriptions as necessary.

Concern 8: *“Federal law already protects consumers.”*

Response: Federal protections are not sufficient in this area, and state action is necessary to address gaps in consumer protections.

Concern 9: *“Clients may misuse medications.”*

Response: Veterinarians will continue to provide guidance on how medications should be used, regardless of where they are purchased.

Concern 10: *“Pharmacies might not have all necessary veterinary medications.”*

Response: Pharmacies can be called in advance to check stock. Online pharmacies often have a wide selection, and veterinarians retain the option to dispense medications directly.

Thank you for your support of this important bill, which empowers Hawaii’s pet owners, while also supporting ethical veterinary care.

Winston Welch

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/24/2026 12:22:47 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy Monden	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is a great bill to allow consumers obtain reasonable medications prescribed by Veterinarians.

Personally I was told that if I got medication from Costco how are they assured it is the correct medication. Veterinarian care is very costly and rising quickly and any way to help curb cost is appreciated

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/26/2026 12:42:24 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacqueline Wah	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in **FULL SUPPORT of SB874**, which requires veterinarians to provide written prescriptions upon request.

It has been problematic trying to get prescriptions for my pets and have been required to fill them with the veterinarians even though I could obtain them at a cheaper cost elsewhere.

Please pass SB874. Thank you!

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/26/2026 3:28:30 PM

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

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

Comments:

I have asked my vet to provide me with a written prescription, and they were kind enough to give me one so that I could shop around and have it filled cheaper (1/2 price!). I guess some vets refuse, but that is very unkind since many people cannot afford drugs for their pets so end up either relinquishing their pets or not buying the meds. This is a win for pet lovers, and it's the right thing to do.

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/26/2026 3:32:19 PM

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

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

Comments:

I support bill SB874

SB874 has my strong support. This consumer protection measure will ensure that pet owners have the flexibility to find affordable options for taking care of their pets. It means that veterinary clinics will have to provide written prescriptions, just like human doctors do, and allow their clients can look for the best price they can find to provide needed care for their pet. It also allows all licensed pharmacies in the state to fulfill prescriptions for pets.

Expense was the top challenge cited by pet owners in a 2024 survey commissioned by the Hawaiian Humane Society and performed by Ward Research. When given detailed options to choose from, the top challenge was specifically finding affordable veterinary care which includes medications. This measure will help make veterinary care more affordable to the public.
Signed, Judith Aikawa, MD

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/26/2026 3:50:00 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathy Carroll	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SB874 has my strong support. This consumer protection measure will ensure that pet owners have the flexibility to find affordable options for taking care of their pets. Affordable pet care was the top challenge cited by pet owners in a 2024 survey commissioned by the Hawaiian Humane Society and performed by Ward Research. When given detailed options to choose from, the top challenge was specifically finding affordable veterinary care.

This measure is a positive step toward enabling competitive pricing for veterinary prescriptions.

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/26/2026 4:04:59 PM

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

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

Comments:

This is testimony in strong support of SB874. Having been the owner of many pets over the years, I would have welcomed the option to choose a pharmacy of my own choice instead of having medications filled by the vet's office. Just as we have the option of comparing prices for our own prescriptions we should have the same option for filling prescriptions for our pets. They are members our family and should have the ssame options the human members have.

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/26/2026 6:21:16 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nandita Sharma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB874 Relating to Veterinary Medicine.

This is an important consumer protection measure. It will ensure that pet owners have the flexibility to find affordable options for taking care of their pets. It means that veterinary clinics will have to provide written prescriptions, just like human doctors do, and allow their clients to look for the best price they can find to provide needed care for their pet. It also allows all licensed pharmacies in the state to fulfill prescriptions for pets.

This Bill will address a top challenge cited by pet owners in a 2024 survey commissioned by the Hawaiian Humane Society and performed by Ward Research, which is expense.

Pet owners should not have to choose between taking good care of their pets and meeting their other financial needs. This Bill will help.

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/26/2026 6:31:39 PM

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

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

Comments:

I support this bill. Furry patients who also have the opportunity to have access to affordable medication which may often have price mark ups when purchased from the veterinarians. I also support the opportunity of all accredited and certified pharmacies in Hawaii be allowed to fill these prescriptions

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/26/2026 4:14:37 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Samantha Yu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The bill will save lives. Every day animals are surrendered or euthanized because veterinary care is beyond the fiscal means of their loving owners. SB874 will provide hope and options to families who want the best medicine and care for their pets, while also functioning within their budget. I used to work at the Hawaiian Humane Society and it was tragic to see elderly owners on a fixed income having to surrender their companion animals because they couldn't afford the high cost of medicine. Many of these animals then had to go through the stress and fear of sitting in a loud shelter while staff evaluated them to weighed the cost of their veterinary care to their likelihood of adoption and a good quality of life. Hawaii needs to take bigger strides in the responsibility of our animals on the island, which means taking the steps to make their care more affordable.

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/26/2026 6:50:02 PM

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

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

Comments:

Financial burden of pet ownership is one of the leading causes of pet abandonment. As an owner of 3 rescued cats and 1 rescued dog, I know how costly pets can be. I ask that you vote for SB874 to allow pet owners to search for the best price for their pets's prescriptions. Being a pharmacist, I recognize that prescription prices can vary greatly. Please consider giving owners the option to seek out the most economical prescriptions. Hawaii already has a large number of abandoned animals. Let's not contribute to the issue and reverse the trend., Thank you.

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/26/2026 7:38:53 PM

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

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

Comments:

Aloha Senator Gabbard and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment.

I strongly support SB 874 which I understand would greatly help pet owners with veterinary costs. This would then help them to keep their pets instead of surrendering them due to unaffordable veterinary costs.

Please vote for SB 874 to help pet owners.

Mahalo.

Jennifer Chiwa

Makiki and life long resident of Oahu

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/26/2026 9:40:38 PM

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

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 and their owners.

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/27/2026 12:18:20 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marian Hussenbux	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Animal Interfaith Alliance in Britain strongly supports SB874.

This consumer protection measure will ensure that guardians of companion animals have the flexibility to find affordable options for taking care of their animals. It means that veterinary clinics will have to provide written prescriptions and allow their clients to look for the best price to provide needed care for them. It also allows all licensed pharmacies in the state to fill prescriptions for animals.

We understand that expense was the main problem cited by guardians in a 2024 survey commissioned by the Hawaiian Humane Society and performed by Ward Research.

This is hardly surprising as prices worldwide are on the rise - we in Britain are very concerned about veterinary fees too.

Affordable veterinary care helps everyone and will hopefully mean that companion animals not properly treated or even abandoned because of lack of funds will not become the responsibility of over-burdened animal rescues.

We beg to endorse SB874 and would like to express our thanks to the Senators who proposed it and to send our best wishes to Senator Gabbard, whom we know is a long time advocate for animals.

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/26/2026 10:33:36 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alberta J Freidus-Flagg	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support SB74 permitting pet owners to purchase pet medications from licensed pharmacies authorized to sell them, much as individuals may purchase their own medications from a choice of licensed pharmacies.

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/27/2026 9:00:11 AM

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

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

Comments:

Please support SB 874. Many people have difficulty affording veterinary bills, and this bill would make vet care more affordable.

Thank you.

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/27/2026 12:47:07 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dandré Richards	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair

Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Bill SB874

Wednesday, January 28, 2026

3 pm Conference Room 224, State Capitol, 415 South Beretania Street

IN SUPPORT OF SB874

I am Dandre Richards, a Chinatown resident and I am testifying in favor of SB874 Relating to Veterinary Medicine. This bill will make resources for pet care more readily accessible. In the event of a health emergency, the less barriers to gaining/receiving aid, the better for all parties involved.

Thank You,

Dandre Richards

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/27/2026 12:43:13 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
carole richelieu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strong support. Affordability is a major issue.

Hawaii Kai voter

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/27/2026 2:31:47 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicholas Zehr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I respectfully support SB874 because it advances consumer choice, voluntary exchange, and fair market competition while preserving appropriate standards of veterinary care.

Pet owners bear the responsibility and cost of caring for their animals and should retain the right to choose where prescribed medications are filled. SB874 affirms this principle by ensuring that veterinary medical judgment is not functionally tied to a captive retail transaction. Separating diagnosis from dispensing mirrors long-standing practices in human healthcare and reduces conflicts of interest without compromising patient safety.

The bill also promotes price transparency and competition by lowering artificial barriers that can limit access to affordable medications, particularly for families and rural residents. Importantly, SB874 preserves the veterinarian-client-patient relationship, requires appropriate examinations, and maintains professional accountability, ensuring that animal health and safety remain paramount.

In this way, SB874 corrects a market distortion created by licensing and dispensing rules rather than imposing new price controls or mandates. It strengthens trust between veterinarians and clients and allows market forces, not regulatory bottlenecks, to discipline pricing and access.

To further improve the bill while preserving its core intent, I respectfully offer the following recommendations:

First, the Legislature may wish to allow veterinarians to charge a modest, clearly disclosed administrative fee for preparing written prescriptions. This would respect freedom of contract while still preventing anti-competitive bundling of medical services and retail sales.

Second, enforcement could be calibrated to avoid unnecessary expansion of licensing board power. Rather than treating all noncompliance as automatic professional misconduct, the bill could adopt graduated penalties or prioritize consumer-driven remedies before license discipline is imposed.

Third, clarifying that pharmacies may dispense only medications approved and appropriate for veterinary use would prevent regulatory ambiguity and ensure the bill remains narrowly tailored.

Finally, a sunset or legislative review clause would allow lawmakers to evaluate the bill's real-world impact on costs, access, and animal health outcomes, ensuring accountability and guarding against regulatory drift.

With these refinements, SB874 would further align Hawai'i law with consumer rights, competition, and limited government principles, while maintaining high standards of veterinary care.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in support of SB874.

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/27/2026 3:19:09 PM

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

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

Comments:

To the Honorable Committee,

I am writing in strong support of SB874.

Expense was the top challenge cited by pet owners in a 2024 survey commissioned by the Hawaiian Humane Society and performed by Ward Research. When given detailed options to choose from, the top challenge was specifically finding affordable veterinary care.

This bill will help ensure veterinary care that is affordable for all.

Please pass SB874.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Taurie Kinoshita

Lifelong resident and voter, Oahu, Makiki

taurie@hawaii.edu

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/27/2026 6:59:33 PM

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

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

Comments:

I support this bill, so owners may seek out the best pricing.

SB-874

Submitted on: 1/27/2026 9:09:00 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sherri Foster	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SB874 has my strong support. This consumer protection measure will ensure that pet owners have the flexibility to find affordable options for taking care of their pets. It means that veterinary clinics will have to provide written prescriptions, just like human doctors do, and allow their clients to look for the best price they can find to provide needed care for their pet. It also allows all licensed pharmacies in the state to fulfill prescriptions for pets.