THE SENATE
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026
STATE OF HAWAII

JAN 23 2026

S.B. NO. 3010

# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ANIMAL ENDANGERMENT.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that every year, hundreds of pet animals tragically lose their lives when their owners leave them alone in parked vehicles in extreme temperatures. Many pet owners are unaware that even on a temperate day, the inside of a parked vehicle can reach extreme temperatures within minutes. According to the American Veterinary Medical Association, the temperature inside a vehicle with all the windows closed can hit eighty-nine degrees in just ten minutes. On a hot day, the temperature inside a closed vehicle can rise as high as one hundred fourteen degrees in the same amount of time. While humans can cool themselves through an extensive system of sweat glands and evaporation, pet animals have a harder time staying cool, leaving them extremely vulnerable to heat stroke. Therefore, leaving pet animals in vehicles can cause severe dehydration and even death.

Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to allow certain public officials and private citizens to rescue pet animals in unattended vehicles if certain conditions are met.

SECTION 2. Chapter 708, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"**§708- Unattended vehicle; permitted protection and rescue of an animal; removal or retrieval; immunity; criminal liability.** (1) An animal control officer, law enforcement officer, or firefighter who removes or otherwise retrieves a pet animal from an unattended vehicle pursuant to this section, and the agency or county that employs the officer or firefighter, shall be immune from criminal liability that might otherwise result from the removal or retrieval.

(2) A person who removes or otherwise retrieves a pet animal from an unattended vehicle pursuant to this section shall be immune from criminal liability that might otherwise result from the removal or retrieval.

(3) After making reasonable efforts to locate the unattended vehicle's owner or operator, an animal control officer, law enforcement officer, or firefighter may enter a

vehicle by any reasonable means to protect the health, safety, or well-being of a pet animal that is endangered by being left or confined in an unattended vehicle. A law enforcement officer, animal control officer, or firefighter may enter the unattended vehicle for the sole purpose of removing or otherwise retrieving the pet animal and shall not search the vehicle or seize items found in the vehicle, unless otherwise permitted by law.

(4) An animal control officer, law enforcement officer, or firefighter who removes or otherwise retrieves a pet animal under this section shall:

(a) Leave written notice in a secure and conspicuous location or in the vehicle bearing the officer's or firefighter's name and title and the address of the location at which the pet animal may be retrieved; and

(b) Deliver the pet animal to a veterinary hospital or animal clinic for a health screening and treatment.

(5) An animal control officer, law enforcement officer, or firefighter who removes or otherwise retrieves a pet animal from an unattended vehicle pursuant to subsections (3) and (4), and the agency or county that employs the officer or firefighter,

shall be immune from civil liability that might otherwise result from the removal or retrieval.

(6) After making reasonable efforts to locate an unattended vehicle's owner or operator, a person other than an animal control officer, law enforcement officer, or firefighter may enter an unattended vehicle to remove or otherwise retrieve a pet animal to protect the health, safety, or well-being of the pet animal; provided that the person:

(a) Determines that the unattended vehicle is locked and there are no reasonable means of egress for the pet animal from the vehicle;

(b) Has a good faith and reasonable belief, based upon known circumstances, that entry into the unattended vehicle is reasonably necessary to prevent imminent danger or harm to the pet animal;

(c) Calls 911 to coordinate the removal or retrieval of the pet animal with law enforcement, animal control, or fire, or, if unable to reach those authorities through a 911 call, otherwise makes reasonable attempts to contact those authorities;

(d) Shall not use more force than reasonably necessary to enter the unattended vehicle and remove or otherwise retrieve the pet animal; and

(e) Remains with the pet animal in a safe location in reasonable proximity to the unattended vehicle until law enforcement or another first responder arrives.

(7) A person who removes or otherwise retrieves an animal from an unattended vehicle pursuant to subsection (6) shall be immune from civil liability that might otherwise result from the removal or retrieval.

(8) The owner of the pet animal may retrieve the pet animal that was removed or otherwise retrieved from the unattended vehicle pursuant to this section only after payment of all charges that have accrued for the maintenance, care, medical treatment, and impoundment of the pet animal.

(9) For the purposes of this section:

"Cold" means a low temperature, inside or outside a vehicle, that could endanger a pet animal's health, safety, or well-being.

"Heat" means a high temperature, inside or outside a vehicle, that could endanger a pet animal's health, safety, or well-being.

"Pet animal" has the same meaning as defined in section 711-1100.

"Vehicle" means a car, truck, camper, or other form of transportation in which a pet animal can be transported."

SECTION 3. This Act does not affect rights and duties that matured, penalties that were incurred, and proceedings that were begun before its effective date.

SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

INTRODUCED BY: _____

# S.B. NO. 3010

**Report Title:**
Animal Endangerment; Pet Animals; Unattended Vehicles; Confinement; Rescue; Immunity

**Description:**
Allows law enforcement officers, animal control officers, and firefighters to enter an unattended vehicle to protect the health, safety, or well-being of a pet animal that is endangered by being left or confined in an unattended vehicle. Allows private citizens to rescue a pet animal that has been left in an unattended vehicle under certain circumstances.

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*