

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 20 , 2026

RE: H.B. No. 1736
H.D. 2

Honorable Nadine K. Nakamura
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-Third State Legislature
Regular Session of 2026
State of Hawaii

Madame:

Your Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs, to which was referred H.B. No. 1736, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO ANIMAL CONTROL,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish the Spay and Neuter Special Fund to reduce pet overpopulation, including the free-roaming cat population, and authorize an income tax designation to provide revenues for the Special Fund;
- (2) Require cats over the age of five months to be surgically sterilized and prohibit cats that are not surgically sterilized from being brought into the State, with certain exceptions; and
- (3) Appropriate funds into and out of the Spay and Neuter Special Fund to reduce pet overpopulation.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Land and Natural Resources; Animal Rights Hawai'i; Friends of Kaua'i Wildlife Refuges; Nēnē Research and Conservation; Kaua'i Albatross Network; Hanalei Watershed Hui; American Bird Conservancy; Hawai'i Audubon Society; and numerous



individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Animal Interfaith Alliance of Britain; Hawaiian Humane Society; Cat Fanciers of Hawaii; Action for Animals Hawaii; Pacific Pet Alliance; and numerous individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Taxation; Kauai Community Cat Project; and one individual.

Your Committee finds that uncontrolled breeding of cats contributes to persistent animal control, public health, and public nuisance concerns. Your Committee further finds that preventative measures, including mandatory sterilization supported by accessible funding mechanisms, provide a more effective and legally sustainable approach than reactive enforcement alone.

Your Committee has amended this measure by:

- (1) Clarifying that placement of spayed or neutered cats into fully enclosed cat sanctuaries does not constitute re-release into the environment for purposes of the Spay and Neuter Special Fund;
- (2) Amending the cat sterilization provisions to require cats over five months of age to be surgically sterilized unless covered by a valid intact cat declaration, and to allow the importation of intact cats only upon the filing of a declaration with the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity and timely follow-up with the applicable county animal control authority;
- (3) Replacing the breeder registry exemption with an intact cat declaration process administered by county animal control authorities, including authorization to charge and retain a declaration fee;
- (4) Establishing minimum information requirements for state and county declarations and requiring the Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity and county animal control authorities to provide a declaration record for enforcement purposes;
- (5) Deleting the exemption for cats brought into the State for shows or exhibitions;



- (6) Defining "county animal control authority" to mean the county agency that enforces animal control or the county's contracted society or organization for animal control; and
- (7) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 1736, H.D. 1, as amended herein, and recommends that it be referred to your Committee on Finance in the form attached hereto as H.B. No. 1736, H.D. 2.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Judiciary &
Hawaiian Affairs,



DAVID A. TARNAS, Chair



Record of Votes of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Bill/Resolution No.: HB1736 HD1	Committee Referral: AGR, JHA, FIN	Date: 2/13/2026		
<input type="checkbox"/> The committee is reconsidering its previous decision on the measure.				
The recommendation is to: <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended (as is) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments (HD) <input type="checkbox"/> Hold <input type="checkbox"/> Pass short form bill with HD to recommit for future public hearing (recommit)				
JHA Members	Ayes	Ayes (WR)	Nays	Excused
1. TARNAS, David A. (C)	✓			
2. POEPOE, Mahina (VC)	✓			
3. BELATTI, Della Au	✓			
4. COCHRAN, Elle				✓
5. HASHEM, Mark J.	✓			
6. KAHALOA, Kirstin	✓			
7. SAYAMA, Jackson D.	✓			
8. TAKAYAMA, Gregg				✓
9. GARCIA, Diamond	✓			
10. SHIMIZU, Garner M.		✓		
TOTAL (10)	7	1	0	2
The recommendation is: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted If joint referral, _____ did not support recommendation. committee acronym(s)				
Vice Chair's or designee's signature:				
Distribution: Original (White) – Committee Duplicate (Yellow) – Chief Clerk's Office Duplicate (Pink) – HMSO				