

HB-1593-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 10:00:39 PM

Testimony for CPC on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marian Hussenbux	Animal Interfaith Alliance in Britain	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB1593 Relating to Affordable Housing, requires, for any affordable rental housing development project that receives financing or any financial assistance from the Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation, that the Corporation require the housing development lease or occupancy agreement to allow residents to own or otherwise maintain one or more common household pets.

It allows for reasonable restrictions around behaviour and the size of the unit, but not arbitrary limits based on breed or size of the animal.

We know that our friends at the Hawaiian Humane Society, animal shelters across the state and foster-based rescue groups toil every day to find homes for animals in need.

Passing this bill will bring joy to families and save lives so we beg to support the Bill.

HB-1593-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/3/2026 3:04:01 AM

Testimony for CPC on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Collins	Bird and Bee Hawaii Animal Sanctuary	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Nearly all affordable housing in the state is built with government assistance. This bill is modeled after legislation passed in California in 2021. It ensures that projects supported by taxpayers welcome all of our family members. It allows for reasonable restrictions around behavior and the size of the unit, but not arbitrary limits based on breed or size of the animal.

The Hawaiian Humane Society, animal shelters across the state and foster-based rescue groups toil every day to find homes for animals in need. To be successful, we need more homes that allow pets. Passing this bill will bring joy to families and save lives.

To: House Consumer Protection and Commerce
From: Animal Policy Group on behalf of American Pet Products Association
RE: HI HB1593 Relating to Affordable Housing

Chair Matayoshi, Vice Chair Grandinetti, and members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce,

On behalf American Pet Products Association (APPA) and Independence Pet Holdings (IPH), **we express our strong support for HB1593.** Our groups are committed to removing unnecessary barriers to ownership that are detrimental to pets in need, animal shelters and rescues that are seeking loving homes for those pets, and the people that benefit from their companionship and form rich bonds with pets in their homes.

Unregulated Fees Harm Equity and Affordability

Restrictive policies—such as breed, weight, and size bans, alongside nonrefundable pet fees and high up-front move-in costs—disproportionately impact low-income and BIPOC renters. Among a growing body of research, two notable studies have found that pet restrictions are more prevalent in predominantly Black neighborhoods and that nonrefundable up-front pet fees and monthly pet rents disparately impact BIPOC renters and low-income renters.¹¹ Research assessing the experiences of tenants with pets (or who would like to get a pet) in subsidized housing reported that having to choose between their beloved pet and a roof over their heads was like “*choosing between life or death*” and noted that the cost of pet fees was a particularly challenging barrier to keeping a pet:

Participant S stated that, “A person could get a dog, but with the way that pet fees are now today and the deposits, that's just too high, it's just way too high. I would love to have a dog. I would love to have a dog, but only if the pet fees were not so high.”

Balancing compassion with practicality, the Act to Maintain Stable Housing for Families with Pets provides a nuanced approach to improving housing stability for pet-owning families, supports public health, and addresses inequities—all while respecting landlords' needs through reasonable safeguards. We strongly urge you to support this vital measure to make the Hawaii housing market more humane and inclusive for every person and every pet.

Non-refundable fees make pet-keeping unaffordable for low-income tenants

Housing Access Reduces Pet Relinquishments

Housing access is among the top-cited reasons for pet relinquishments to animal shelters.¹ According to a 2021 tenant survey, 72% of residents said that pet-friendly housing is hard to find and 59% say it's too expensive.² This is typically due to restrictive pet policies on breed, weight and/or size, and costly fees. **These types of policies effectively eliminate a large percentage of family dogs from living in most rental units and disproportionately impact low-income and marginalized communities.**

The challenge comes into stark relief when comparing the 72% of residents who say pet-friendly housing is hard to find to the 76% of rental property owners/operators who say their properties are pet-friendly.³ This fundamental disconnect is evidence that being ‘pet-friendly’ while only

permitting certain pets is not enough. **This legislation moves beyond pet-friendly to what pet owners are looking for in rental housing – pet inclusiveness.**⁴

In addition to breed, weight, and size restrictions on pets in rental housing, non-refundable pet fees and rents are also impacting pet relinquishment. Recent research by the Humane World for Animals indicates that monthly non-refundable pet fees contribute significantly to pet relinquishment.⁵

Pets Provide Economic and Public Health Benefits

The Human Animal Bond Research Institute (HABRI) has assembled scientific evidence that demonstrates how pets improve heart health, alleviate depression, increase well-being, support child health and development, and contribute to healthy aging.⁶ All pet owners should have access to these benefits regardless of their living situation. Research by Michelson Found Animals' Pet Inclusive Housing Initiative found that pets provide health benefits, including promoting social engagement between neighbors, reducing stress and anxiety, and supporting physical wellness through exercise.⁷

Pet-inclusive units benefit landlords

Pet-inclusive housing increases tenant satisfaction, with studies showing residents in pet-friendly units stay 21% longer, reducing turnover costs to housing providers.⁸ Landlords also report that pet-related damages and upkeep are minor, such that the designated equitable limits on monthly pet rent and pet security deposits will cover such costs.⁹

Breed Restrictions Are Scientifically Unsupported

Evidence shows little to no correlation between a dog's breed and behavior.¹⁰ Policies based on breed or appearance contribute to housing inequities without improving public safety and often reflect racial and socioeconomic biases.

Thank you for your time,

Loren Breen

Director of Government Relations

(520) 975-9880

animalpolicygroup.com

1 Kisley, M.I., et al. Investigating the Reasons behind Companion Animal Relinquishment: A Systematic Content Analysis of Shelter Records for Cats and Dogs, 2018–2023. *Animals* (2024) 14:2606. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ani14172606>.

2 Michelson Found Animals. Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative. Pet-Inclusive Housing Report. (2021). Available at: www.petsandhousing.org/2021-pet-inclusive-housing-report/.

3 *Ibid.*, fn 2

4 Michelson Found Animals. Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative. Where are you on your pet-inclusive journey? (n.d.). Available at: <https://www.petsandhousing.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Pet-Friendly-vs-Pet-Inclusive-8.5x11in.pdf>.

5 Humane World has worked closely with several animal shelters across the country who have relinquished pets due to housing. Of the pet owners surveyed, nearly 50% of people seeking to surrender a pet due to housing-related issues cited monthly pet rent as the most problematic pet-related fee.

6 Human Animal Bond Research Institute (HABRI) The Pet Effect (n.d.). Available at: <https://www.petsandhousing.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Pet-Friendly-vs-Pet-Inclusive-8.5x11in.pdf>.

7 *Ibid.*, fn 4

8 *Ibid.*, fn 4

9 FIREPAW, Inc. Companion Animal Renters Study: The Market for Rental Housing for People with Pets. (2003). Available at <https://firepaw.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/cars-website-version-exec-summary.pdf>. *Ibid.*, fn 4.

10 Morrill, K. et al. Ancestry-inclusive dog genomics challenges popular breed stereotypes. *Science* (2022). 376(6592). Doi: 10.1126/science.abk0639.

10 Rose, D., McMillian, C., & Carter, O. Pet-Friendly rental housing: racial and spatial inequalities. *Space and Culture* (2020), 26 (1), 116–129. doi: 10.1177/1206331220956539.

11 Applebaum, J., et al. "Pet-friendly for whom? an analysis of pet fees in Texas rental housing." *Front. in Vet. Sci.* (2021), 8. doi: 10.3389/fvets.2021.767149.

HB-1593-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/3/2026 10:44:03 AM

Testimony for CPC on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathy Carroll	Maui Humane Society	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a member of the Board of Birectors of Maui Humane Society, I am authorized on behalf of the organizations to urge your support of HB1593, HD1.

For many residents of Hawai`i, the dream of having a pet is often met with insurmountable housing barriers.

According to a recent national survey, Hawai`i has the lowest percentage of pet- friendly rentals of all the states in the country: 39% compared to 75% nationwide.

Every Humane Society in the state is overwhelmed with relinquished, stray and abandoned animals. The lack of pet-friendly housing in the islands plays a major role. The situation on Maui has been, and continues to be, especially dire after the devastating wildfires.

Pets are considered “family” to many. According to scientific evidence, pets contribute to the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of their owners.

Maui Humane Society, other animal shelters across the state and foster-based rescue groups toil every day to find homes for animals in need. To be successful, we need more homes that allow pets. Passing this bill will bring joy to families and save lives

HB1593 is an important step in acknowledging – and addressing – the importance of the human-animal bond.

Kathy Carroll, Ph.D., Maui Humane Society Board of Directors

758 Queens Street, PO Box 631522, Lāna`i City, HI. 96763



Hawaiian Humane Society
People for animals. Animals for people.

LATE

Date: March 2, 2026

To: Chair Rep. Scot Matayoshi
Vice Chair Rep. Tina Grandinetti
and Members of the Committee on
Consumer Protection and Commerce

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

RE: Testimony in enthusiastic support of HB 1593, HD1:
Relating to Affordable Housing
Wednesday, March 4, 2026, 2:00 p.m., Capitol Room 329

On behalf of the Hawaiian Humane Society, thank you for considering our strong support for House Bill 1593, House Draft 1, Relating to Affordable Housing, which requires, for any affordable rental housing development project that receives financing or any financial assistance from the Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation, that the Corporation require the housing development lease or occupancy agreement to allow residents to own or otherwise maintain one or more common household pets.

This measure is modeled after a California law passed in 2021. It was motivated by an awareness that low-income renters are disproportionately affected by pet restrictions and a lack of pet-friendly housing options. This is at least as true in our state.

According to data analyzed by the Pet Inclusive Housing Initiative (PIHI), 76.3 percent of rental units nationwide allow pets. In Hawai'i, they calculate that 39.8 percent of rental units allow pets. It is the lowest rate in the country. Adding to the barriers, only 15.5 percent of local rental units in properties that allow pets do not impose breed or size restrictions. These rules are not based on any evidence of which pets make good neighbors, but they do prevent wonderful animals from finding homes.

Evidence from around the country suggests that allowing pets in affordable housing should have minimal impact on the cost of providing that housing. According to PIHI's



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LATE

research, only 9 percent of pets cause any damage at all to housing units and the average cost of such damage is \$210. The bill allows for reasonable pet deposits.

The inability to find pet-friendly housing is among the most common reasons that pet owners surrender their beloved family members to the care of animal shelters. In a 2024 survey of O'ahu households conducted by Ward Research, housing access topped the list of reasons residents had to surrender a pet to a shelter. Thirty percent of families who had surrendered a pet in the past five years said it was due to an inability to be housed with their pet.

For some this is unthinkable and they will stay in abusive relationships or chose to become or remain houseless rather than give up their pets. In collaboration with Partners in Care, the umbrella group of social service providers on O'ahu, we added a question regarding pet ownership to the annual Point in Time count in 2019. The results confirmed what our Outreach and Field Services teams see every day. Pet ownership is extremely important to houseless individuals and families. In the 2024 count, 29 percent of the unsheltered on O'ahu reported owning at least one pet.

Hawai'i residents should not have to choose between keeping their family intact or having a roof over their heads.

Please pass HB 1593, HD1, and ensure that taxpayer funds support housing that welcomes all the members of local families. Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-1593-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 1:20:58 PM

Testimony for CPC on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I have lived with pets for most of my looooong, looooooong life. For me, as for many others, they are members of my family. They provide you with unconditional love, support, are always there. They do not judge you.

For those and many other reasons, this bill must be passed. There are people who would rather go homeless than give up their pets. Years ago, when Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans, people died saving their pets and refused to go to shelters because shelters would not accept pets. That even changed laws and rules here.

I have attended neighborhood board meetings where participants ask developers what arrangements they are making for pets. This is a big issue.

This bill ensures no one has to choose between housing and a beloved pet(s). Please be humane and pass this bill now.

lynne matusow

HB-1593-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 5:18:24 PM

Testimony for CPC on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support w/comment HB1593 may encourage unshelter people to move into permanent shelter w/their pet.

1593 HB RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

HB-1593-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 5:40:37 PM

Testimony for CPC on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Natalie Graham-Wood	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB1593 HD1. My name is Natalie Graham-Wood and I live Sunset Beach, Oahu.

Testimony in support of HB1593 **Relating to Affordable Housing**

This bill requires, for any affordable rental housing development project that receives financing or any financial assistance from the Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation, that the Corporation require the housing development lease or occupancy agreement to allow residents to own or otherwise maintain one or more common household pets. Nearly all affordable housing in the state is built with government assistance. This bill is modeled after legislation passed in California in 2021. It ensures that projects supported by taxpayers welcome all of our family members. It allows for reasonable restrictions around behavior and the size of the unit, but not arbitrary limits based on breed or size of the animal. The Hawaiian and Maui Humane Societies and animal shelters across the state and foster-based rescue groups toil every day to find homes for animals in need. To be successful, we need more homes that allow pets. Passing this bill will bring joy to families and save animal lives.

HB-1593-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 6:32:14 PM

Testimony for CPC on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alice Saul	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

Rep. Scot Z. Matayoshi, Chair

Rep. Tina Nakada Grandinetti, Vice Chair

I am testifying in support of HB1593, HD1 RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

This is a very personal appeal as having lived in several places, under different times and circumstances, I can't imagine being without the comfort and satisfaction that the presence of pet animals have provided me for nearly all of my life.

That is why I would regard such a state of affairs for residents of projects built through financial assistance of the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation as the imposition of an undeserved, avoidable, and unnecessary hardship, further limiting the pool of suitable housing that contributes to the wellbeing of a community.

Please extend to HFDC residents the opportunity to experience the same positive benefits I've had.

Thank you.

Alice Saul

Hawai'i Kai, Honolulu

HB-1593-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 7:53:56 PM

Testimony for CPC on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

we need more homes that allow pet for all families.

Hawaii Kai voter

HB-1593-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 8:02:09 PM

Testimony for CPC on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julia C	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB1593 HD1. All affordable housing projects should allow pets so people don't surrender their pets to the shelters or rehome their pets when they move to affordable housing projects.

HB-1593-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 9:20:42 PM

Testimony for CPC on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Peggy Regentine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I fully support HB 1593 HD1. In the past I have prevented a renter from having a pet. They usually find a way to sneak that pet in and are so cautious to let the pet not harm the unit. I realize the term "companion animal" is just that-- animals are our companions. It is heart breaking to have to surrender a family pet when you must move. Please pass this bill. Peggy Regentine

HB-1593-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/3/2026 5:17:38 AM

Testimony for CPC on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I support this bill. Finding housing in Hawaii is difficult especially for renters of fur babies. This will create reasonable restrictions based on behavior and size of unit and not biased towards size or breed of animal .

HB-1593-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/3/2026 5:20:05 AM

Testimony for CPC on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

i support HB1593

HB-1593-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/3/2026 6:50:24 AM

Testimony for CPC on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I'm writing to ask you to support HB1593, which will allow eligible families with pets access to affordable housing. This bill will help keep families and their pets together, keeping the animals safe and cared for. It's a tremendous tragedy and absolutely heartbreaking for a family to have to give up a loved pet only due to housing concerns that don't allow common pets. It's hard on the family to lose a member they love, and it's also hard on the community that must step in to find a new home for the animal. When you multiply this many times over, it can pose a real challenge for the community, sometimes with cats set free to roam uncared for.

You can help. Please support this bill!

Thank you,
Jennifer Wood

808-221-7229
Kalaheo, HI 96741

HB-1593-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/3/2026 7:59:32 AM

Testimony for CPC on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Representative Matayoshi, Vice Chair Representative Grandinetti and Members of the Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce.

Please support HB 1593 HD 1 which would help affordable rental housing occupants and their pets. Projects supported by taxpayers should welcome all family members, including pets. Furthermore, this bill would provide for reasonable restrictions based on behavior of the animal and size of unit, not arbitrary restrictions based on size and breed of animal.

Again, please support HB 1593 HD 1 which I think would be so beneficial to affordable rental housing occupants and their pets.

Mahalo.

Jennifer Chiwa

Makiki and life long resident of Oahu

HB-1593-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/3/2026 9:32:24 AM

Testimony for CPC on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Serena Stefanic-Phillip	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of Bill HB1593.

HB-1593-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/3/2026 10:21:40 AM

Testimony for CPC on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lei-Anne Jones	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please allow all families to be able to adopt a new family member who is looking for a home.

HB-1593-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/3/2026 11:56:16 AM

Testimony for CPC on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hannah Mizuno	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the House Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce,

I am writing in support of HB1593, a bill that is critical to keeping families together and strengthening our local community. Individuals and families who qualify for affordable housing should not be denied the opportunity because they have pets. Animals are an important part of our community, family structure, and culture in Hawai‘i.

I believe this measure would encourage more local residents, like myself, to apply for these programs and have a fair opportunity to live and remain in Hawai‘i—an ongoing challenge our state continues to face. If we continue to drive local families away due to rising costs, limited housing access, and arbitrary restrictions, we risk losing the Hawai‘i we know and cherish. Keeping families together helps preserve our culture and sustain our local community.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

HB-1593-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/3/2026 1:15:16 PM

Testimony for CPC on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

My name is Jane Arnold and I live in Kaimuki. I am testifying in favor of HB1593, which would require that Public Housing and state low-income housing allow pets.

Only 37% of rentals in Hawai'i allow pets. This is the lowest percentage in the US. I am a renter and have 2 cats, so I know from personal experience how difficult it is to find a place to live that allows pets.

29% of homeless people have pets, and many of them choose to live on the street rather than surrender their pets. This bill would help many of them to find permanent housing.

Jane Arnold

1763 Iwi Way, Apt D

LATE

HB-1593-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/3/2026 8:11:17 PM

Testimony for CPC on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JOANNE PARKER	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this bill.

Everyone should have the option of having a pet. Owning a pet brings comfort, joy and peace.

There are too many left-behind pets in our shelters as people can't find housing in a move and have to give up a pet. That's not fair to the person or the pet.

Mahalo

LATE

HB-1593-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/4/2026 8:24:19 AM

Testimony for CPC on 3/4/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Linda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pardon being late . This request went to junk mail. I live in Kalaheo. I'm one of the extremely few renters who has been blessed with the option to house pets. What a rare privilege it is here on this island. I don't offer statistics or articles. I offer concern. As residence of Kauai we must mature in our treatment of animals. We are severely lacking. My goodness... I've seen horses tied to trees! Dogs chained in cages! Starving cats! The first step is to allow those who love their pets to legally keep them with them in their places of living. By refusing to do so is sending the message that Kauai doesn't care about nor respect the lives the ,island blesses us with and in my opinion whom God has blessed us with to take care of- while the country advances to criminal charges of animal abuse our island STILL doesn't acknowledge the basics of animal care and concern. This is neglect, another form of abuse. I understand that not all pet owners are responsible and this has caused refusal of pets. The solution is the pet deposit. And certain detailed restrictions as to where the dogs can be walked on the properties etc. I hope and pray this bill passes. Then we as a community can move on to the next steps regarding the nurturing and care of our fur island Kama Aina . Mahalo.