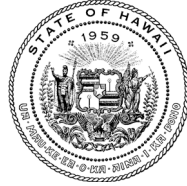


JOSH GREEN M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LT. GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION**

Ka 'Oihana 'Auhau

P.O. BOX 259

HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

PHONE NO: (808) 587-1540

FAX NO: (808) 587-1560

GARY S. SUGANUMA  
DIRECTOR

KRISTEN M.R. SAKAMOTO  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**TESTIMONY OF  
GARY S. SUGANUMA, DIRECTOR OF TAXATION**

**TESTIMONY ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

S.B. No. 1023, S.D.1, H.D.1, Relating to the Spaying and Neutering of Animals

**BEFORE THE:**

House Committee on Culture & Arts

**DATE:** Wednesday, March 25, 2026

**TIME:** 10:00 a.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Conference Room 309

Chair Kapela, Vice-Chair Kong, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Taxation (DOTAX) offers the following comments regarding S.B.1023, S.D.1, H.D.1, for your consideration.

Section 2 of the bill amends chapter 143, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), by adding a new section that establishes the "Spay and Neuter Special Fund" to reduce pet overpopulation and the reproduction of free-roaming cats. The fund will receive deposits from state income tax refund designations, fundraising fees from special number plates pursuant to section 249-\_\_\_, legislative appropriations, and other sources. Appropriations out of the fund will be distributed as a grant-in-aid to the counties to use for spaying and neutering surgery and associated veterinary care.

Section 4 of the bill amends section 235-102.5, HRS, by adding a new subsection (e), which authorizes a new income "check-off" option. Individual taxpayers with a refund of \$5 or more may designate \$5 to the fund, and married couples filing jointly with a refund of \$10 or more may designate \$5 per person to the fund.

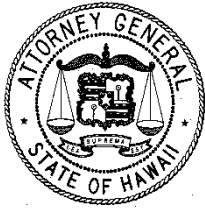
As with other existing check-off boxes, if no initial designation was chosen, taxpayers will be allowed to amend a return to choose a designation within 20 months

and 10 days after the due date for the original return for that taxable year. A designation is nonrevocable once made.

The bill has a defective effective date of July 1, 3000, provided that section 4 applies to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2024.

DOTAX requests that the effective date of the bill be amended so that section 4 applies to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2025, to provide sufficient time to make the necessary form and system changes.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.



**TESTIMONY OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA  
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026**

---

**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

S.B. NO. 1023, S.D. 1, H.D. 1, RELATING TO THE SPAYING AND NEUTERING OF ANIMALS.

**BEFORE THE:**

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CULTURE & ARTS

**DATE:** Wednesday, March 25, 2026      **TIME:** 10:00 a.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 309

**TESTIFIER(S):** Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or  
Kelcie K. Nagata or Christopher J.I. Leong, Deputy Attorneys  
General

---

Chair Kapela and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

The purpose of this bill is to establish and appropriate funds into a Spay and Neuter Special Fund to reduce pet overpopulation and the reproduction of free-roaming cats. The special fund is to be administered by the Department of Budget and Finance. In addition, the bill allows the counties to print special numbered plates and individuals to designate five dollars of their income tax refund to be deposited into the special fund.

The bill establishes the special fund within the Department of Budget and Finance but codifies it within chapter 143, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), the chapter related to the Department of Agriculture. See page 1, line 16, to page 2, line 2. This may cause confusion for both the Department of Budget and Finance and the Department of Agriculture with regard to the administration of the special fund. To ensure clarity and consistency, if the intent is to establish the special fund within the Department of Budget and Finance, it should be codified in the statutes relating to the Department of Budget and Finance (e.g., chapter 36, HRS). Conversely, if the intent is for the Department of Agriculture to administer the special fund, the bill should be amended to designate the Department of Agriculture as the responsible agency.

Additionally, the proposed section 143- (c) establishes an advisory committee "to assist the department of budget and finance in establishing the eligibility criteria and

procedures for disbursements from the special fund." Page 2, line 20, to page 3, line 2. However, article V, section 6, of the Hawaii State Constitution requires "instrumentalities of the state government and their respective powers and duties [to] be allocated by law among and within not more than twenty principal departments[.]" To ensure compliance with the constitutional requirement, if the intent is to place the special fund in the Department of Budget and Finance, we recommend amending the first sentence of section 143- (c) on page 2, line 20, to page 3, line 2, to explicitly place the advisory committee within the Department of Budget and Finance, as follows:

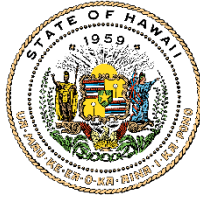
(c) There is established within the department of budget and finance an advisory committee to assist the department of budget and finance in establishing the eligibility criteria and procedures for disbursements from the special fund.

Conversely, if the intent is to place the special fund in the Department of Agriculture, the reference should be changed accordingly to designate the "department of agriculture" instead of the "department of budget and finance" in the above suggested amendments to section 143- (c).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

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

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**DAWN N.S. CHANG**  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT

**RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE**  
FIRST DEPUTY

**CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES  
ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of  
RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE  
Acting Chairperson**

**Before the House Committee on  
CULTURE & ARTS**

**Wednesday, March 25, 2026  
10:00 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 309**

**In consideration of  
SENATE BILL 1023, SENATE DRAFT 1, HOUSE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO HE SPAYING AND NEUTERING OF ANIMALS**

Senate Bill 1023, Senate Draft 1, House Draft 1, establishes the Spay and Neuter Special Fund to reduce pet overpopulation and the reproduction of free-roaming cats. It creates various revenue and fundraising sources for the fund and allocates funds to the counties. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) submits comments.**

Feral cats pose a serious threat to Hawai'i's endangered forest birds, seabirds, and other native species. The Department is required to protect and manage Hawai'i's natural resources, including its native bird populations, and trap-neuter-return (TNR) is not an effective way to lower feral cat numbers.

The Department manages invasive predators in sensitive habitats. Reducing pet overpopulation and free-roaming cats would benefit both cats and wildlife. If a spay and neuter program could lower the number of unwanted animals, it would help wildlife populations. However, the Department does not know if this program would effectively decrease the number of free-roaming animals.

The Department observes that no conservation interests are represented on this measure's advisory committee. Considering the substantial impacts that cats have on wildlife—both through direct predation and indirect disease transmission—it's essential to include a conservation representative on this committee. The Department recommends amending the measure to ensure that at least one representative from a wildlife conservation agency or organization is included to advocate for wildlife interests.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

**Testimony of American Bird Conservancy  
In Opposition to SB 1023\_SD1\_HD1 Relating to Spaying and Neutering of Animals  
Senate Committee on Culture & Arts | March 25, 2026 | 10:00 AM**

Chair Kapela, Vice Chair Kong, and Members of the Committees:

On behalf of American Bird Conservancy and our members throughout Hawai'i, we are writing to express our **opposition to SB 1023\_SD1\_HD1**.

Although American Bird Conservancy supports the sterilization of domestic cats, **this bill is clearly intended to support programs that trap, sterilize, and then release cats to the landscape**. The use of public funds for such programs is highly problematic, as it would facilitate ongoing harms to Hawai'i's native wildlife and exacerbate conflicts in the community. **Cats, whether sterilized or not, will continue to attack and kill Threatened and Endangered birds, spread infectious parasites and diseases to people and wildlife, and contribute to public nuisances wherever they are released.**

**SB 1023\_SD1\_HD1 also directly conflicts with HB 1736\_HD2**, which is currently under consideration in the Senate, and threatens to undermine the highly collaborative work achieved by animal welfare and wildlife conservation stakeholders to advance cat management.

SB 1023\_SD1\_HD1 specifically **excludes wildlife conservation stakeholders** and would likely **generate significant legal liabilities for the State of Hawai'i** as a result of public health risks and violations of state and federal protections for vulnerable wildlife.

When roaming outdoors, cats function as an invasive species in Hawai'i that have already contributed to the extinction of two endemic Hawaiian species, the Lāna'i Hookbill and Moho (Hawaiian Rail), and the decline of countless others. Research has repeatedly shown that cats are a [major threat to Hawai'i's unique birds](#), such as 'A'o (Newell's Shearwater) and 'U'au (Hawaiian Petrel), two species which have experienced [94% and 78% population declines](#), respectively.

Cats can also carry a large number of infectious parasites and diseases that put people and wildlife at risk. For example, *Toxoplasma gondii*, the parasite that causes toxoplasmosis in birds and mammals, is excreted in cat feces. A single cat can excrete up to hundreds of millions of *T. gondii* eggs (called "oocysts") into the environment via its feces, and these oocysts remain infectious for months to years. **This parasite is a serious risk for Hawai'i's wildlife**, [including Hawaiian Monk Seals](#), and has long been recognized as a

---

**Contact**

[abcbirds.org](http://abcbirds.org)  
[info@abcbirds.org](mailto:info@abcbirds.org)  
tel. 540.253.5780  
fax 540.253.5782

**Address**

regular, registered, or certified mail:  
**P.O. Box 249, The Plains, VA 20198**  
physical address for deliveries:  
**8255 E. Main Street, Suites D & E,  
Marshall, VA 20115**



**public health risk** in the state. Infections in people can cause miscarriages, fetal deformities, blindness, organ failure, and death, to name a few of the many harms.

Programs that intentionally release cats to the landscape, regardless of the cat's sterilization status, contribute to environmental *T. gondii* contamination and put people and wildlife at risk. Such programs are also highly unpopular in Hawaii and counterproductive for managing cat populations.

American Bird Conservancy supports responsible cat ownership and effective management of unowned cats, but **SB 1023\_SD1\_HD1 would only facilitate ongoing harms to Hawai'i's people and wildlife and undermine the promising future and collaborative nature of HB 1736\_HD2**. We respectfully ask that you oppose SB 1023\_SD1\_HD1.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Grant Sizemore, M.S., CWB®  
Director of Invasive Species Programs

Chris Farmer, Ph.D.  
Hawai'i Program Director



## Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

Date: March 24, 2026

To: Chair Rep. Jeanne Kapela  
Vice Chair Rep. Sam Satoru Kong  
and Members of the Committee on Culture & Arts

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

RE: Testimony in support of SB 1023, SD1, HD1:  
Relating to the Spaying and Neutering of Animals  
Wednesday, March 25, 2026, 10:00 a.m., Room 309 & Videoconference

---

Chair Kapela, Vice Chair Kong and members of the Committee on Culture & Arts, mahalo for considering the Hawaiian Humane Society's testimony in support of Senate Bill 1023, Senate Draft 1, House Draft 1, which establishes the Spay and Neuter Special Fund to reduce pet overpopulation and the reproduction of free-roaming cats, establishes various revenue and fundraising sources for the special fund, and appropriates funds to the counties.

There is a clear public interest in reducing the harms caused by pet overpopulation and the number of Free-Roaming cats and this measure seeks to address that public interest. Demand for spay/neuter services exceeds access to such services throughout the state. Having a statewide funding source would allow providers to ramp up their operations to meet this demand.

Hawaiian Humane has been advocating for this investment for four sessions and SB1023 made strong progress last year. In the interim, we have collaborated with conservation partners to arrive at language that strengthens provisions addressing pet overpopulation and reduces the burden on government agencies. It also recognizes that the state has delegated specialty license plate decisions to the counties.

We request that the committee amend this measure to reflect this updated approach.

This proposed measure has benefits for animal welfare, native wildlife and the environment and we urge the committee to lend its strong support. Mahalo for your consideration.

Proposed HD2:



# Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that animal overpopulation contributes to animal suffering in Hawaii. Spaying and neutering pets are proven ways to reduce pet overpopulation and euthanasia rates. The legislature further finds that the humane reduction of the free-roaming cat population is in the best interest of cats, wildlife, the environment, and humans. However, the State does not contribute funds to address these issues.

Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to establish and appropriate funds into and out of a spay and neuter special fund to reduce pet overpopulation and the reproduction of free-roaming cats and establish various revenue and fundraising sources for the special fund.

SECTION 2. Chapter 143, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

**"§143- \_\_\_\_\_ Spay and neuter special fund.** (a) There is established in the state treasury the spay and neuter special fund, to be administered by the department of budget and finance. Moneys received by the department of budget and finance from:

(1) State income tax refund designations to the special fund pursuant to section 235-102.5(e);

~~(2) Revenue generated by the fundraising fees from special number plates pursuant to section 249- \_\_\_\_\_; and~~

~~(3) Legislative appropriations, private gifts or donations, and other sources, shall be deposited into the special fund. All interest earned or accrued on moneys deposited into the special fund shall become part of the special fund.~~



## Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

(2) Legislative appropriations, private gifts or donations, and other sources, shall be deposited into the special fund. All interest earned or accrued on moneys deposited into the special fund shall become part of the special fund.

(b) The director of finance shall disburse moneys from the special fund quarterly to the counties. The amount disbursed shall be prorated based on each county's share of the state population. The counties shall expend the disbursed funds to reduce pet overpopulation, including the free-roaming cat population, by providing spaying and neutering surgery and associated veterinary care;

(c) Animals spayed or neutered using these funds must be adopted into homes or placed into a fully enclosed cat sanctuary. The residential or sanctuary address where an animal will reside must be recorded at the time of spay/neuter or adoption. Pet owners seeking spay/neuter services may not access these funds more than three times in a 12-month period."

~~(b) Moneys in the special fund shall be expended to reduce pet overpopulation and the reproduction of free-roaming cats by providing spaying and neutering surgery and associated veterinary care; provided that the uses and expenditures of moneys in the special fund shall follow the eligibility criteria established by the advisory committee established under subsection (c).~~

~~(c) There is established an advisory committee to assist the department of budget and finance in establishing the eligibility criteria and procedures for disbursements from the special fund.~~

~~The advisory committee shall consist of five members to be selected by the director of finance and shall include the following:~~

~~(1) One representative of the department of budget and finance;~~



# Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

~~(2) One representative of the Hawaii Animal Welfare Association or its successor organization, who shall be invited to participate;~~

~~(3) At least one representative of the Hawaii Veterinary Medical Association, who shall be invited to participate; and~~

~~(4) At least one member from a Hawaii-based, private, non-profit animal welfare organization, who shall be invited to participate.~~

~~The advisory committee shall select a chairperson from among its members. All members of the advisory committee shall be residents of the State and shall serve three-year terms. All members shall have an active interest in humanely reducing pet overpopulation and reducing the number of free-roaming cats in the State.~~

~~(d) The advisory committee shall submit an annual report to the director of finance, in a form prescribed by the director, that identifies the total amount of funds that were disbursed from the special fund during the previous fiscal year and the amount of funds to be carried over to the next fiscal year. The advisory committee shall submit the report to the director of finance within ninety days after the close of each fiscal year.~~

~~(e) The members of the advisory committee shall serve without pay but shall be reimbursed for their actual and necessary expenses, including travel expenses, incurred in carrying out their duties."~~

~~SECTION 3. Chapter 249, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:~~

~~"§249—Special number plates; spay and neuter special fund; authorized. (a) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the director of finance shall issue to any registered owner of a motor vehicle, who is a resident of the State, upon completed application and payment of the required fees, a special number plate for the~~



# Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

~~registered owner's motor vehicle supporting the spay and neuter special fund.~~

~~(b) The director of finance of the city and county of Honolulu, in consultation with the directors of finance of the counties of Hawaii, Kauai, and Maui; chiefs of police of the city and county of Honolulu and the counties of Hawaii, Kauai, and Maui; and advisory committee of the spay and neuter special fund, shall establish a special number plate design that:~~

~~(1) Contains words, images, or both, that indicate the special number plate is issued to recognize the spaying and neutering of animals;~~

~~(2) Is similar in shape and size to the uniform state number plate prescribed by law; and~~

~~(3) Does not obstruct the visibility of the numbers or letters or any other information that is required by law to be on a number plate and is readily identifiable and distinguishable under actual traffic conditions.~~

~~(c) The special number plate design shall not:~~

~~(1) Infringe upon or otherwise violate any trademark, trade name, service mark, copyright, or other proprietary or property right;~~

~~(2) Represent any obscene or degrading image, idea, word, or phrase;~~

~~(3) Advertise or endorse a product, brand, or service that is provided for sale;~~

~~(4) Promote any religious belief; or~~



## Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

~~(5) Promote any philosophy based on prejudice or that is contrary to state civil rights laws.~~

~~(d) Each special number plate shall be securely fastened to the motor vehicle in lieu of the uniform state number plate.~~

~~(e) The director of finance shall charge a special number plate fee at least equal to the county's cost of providing the special number plate and administrative costs, if any, plus a fundraising fee to be determined by the director of finance in consultation with the advisory committee of the spay and neuter special fund. The fundraising fee shall be in addition to any other state or county fees collected for a motor vehicle registration or license plate.~~

~~(f) The director of finance may charge an additional fundraising fee of the same or a different amount as the fundraising fee established pursuant to subsection (e), for the renewal of a special number plate. If an additional fundraising fee is implemented pursuant to this subsection, the director of finance shall revoke the special number plate of any registered owner of a motor vehicle who fails to pay the additional fundraising fee imposed by this subsection.~~

~~(g) The revenue generated by the fundraising fees, or a portion of the revenue generated by the fundraising fees as determined by the director of finance, shall be deposited into the spay and neuter special fund established by section 143.~~

~~(h) The director of finance may revoke all special number plates issued pursuant to this section if the total number of registered owners of motor vehicles that obtain the special number plates is less than one hundred fifty within three years of issuance of the first special number plate.~~

~~(i) Nothing in this section shall be construed to apply to any plates issued pursuant to section 249-9.2 or 249-9.5.~~



## Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

~~(j) As used in this section, unless a different meaning appears from the context, "special number plate" means a license plate that recognizes the spaying and neutering of animals."~~

~~SECTION 3. Chapter 143, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:~~

~~"§143- Cat sterilization. (a) It shall be unlawful for any person to:~~

~~(1) Own a cat over the age of five months, unless the cat is surgically sterilized or covered by a valid intact cat declaration filed with the applicable county animal control authority or its contractor pursuant to subsection (b) (3); or~~

~~(2) Bring a cat or dog that is not surgically sterilized into the State unless the importer files a declaration with the department of agriculture and biosecurity upon arrival, in a form determined by the department, and the department forwards the declaration to the applicable county animal control authority in the county where the cat or dog will be housed. A declaration filed with the department of agriculture and biosecurity pursuant to this paragraph shall not authorize a cat or dog to be at large and shall not substitute for any declaration required by the applicable county animal control authority. Any imported intact cat or dog shall be declared with the applicable county animal control authority or its contractor within fourteen days after importation.~~

~~(b) A cat may be exempt from the sterilization requirement under subsection (a) if:~~

~~(1) A duly licensed veterinarian certifies in writing that the cat is not suitable for sterilization due to health or age considerations;~~



## Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

(2) Arrangements have been made to sterilize the cat within sixty days after the date the person assumes ownership of the cat and the cat is sterilized within that sixty-day period; or

(3) The owner of the cat submits an intact cat declaration to the applicable county animal control authority or its contractor. The applicable county animal control authority may administer an intact cat declaration process for cats already in the State and shall charge a fee of \$100 per declaration. Fees collected pursuant to this paragraph shall be retained by the applicable county animal control authority and may be used without restriction.

(c) Any declaration required under this section, including a declaration filed with the department of agriculture and biosecurity and an intact cat declaration filed with the applicable county animal control authority or its contractor, shall include, at minimum:

(1) The name and address or contact information of the owner;

(2) The county in which the cat will be housed; and

(3) The cat's microchip number or other unique identifier, and any additional information required by the department of agriculture and biosecurity or the applicable county animal control authority. The department of agriculture and biosecurity and applicable county animal control authority shall provide a record of the declaration that may be used for enforcement purposes.

(d) Any person violating this section shall be fined no less than \$50 and no more than \$100 per violation.

(e) For the purposes of this section, "county animal control authority" means the county agency that enforces animal control or the county's contracted society or organization for animal control."



## Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

SECTION 4. Section 235-102.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

**"§235-102.5 Income check-off authorized.** (a) Any individual whose state income tax liability for any taxable year is \$3 or more may designate \$3 of the liability to be paid over to the Hawaii election campaign fund, any other law to the contrary notwithstanding, when submitting a state income tax return to the department. In the case of a joint return of a [~~husband and wife~~] married couple having a state income tax liability of \$6 or more, each spouse may designate that \$3 be paid to the fund. The director of taxation shall revise the individual state income tax form to allow the designation of contributions to the fund on the face of the tax return and immediately above the signature lines. An explanation shall be included [~~which~~] that clearly states that the check-off does not constitute an additional tax liability. If no designation was made on the original tax return when filed, a designation may be made by the individual on an amended return filed within twenty months and ten days after the due date for the original return for [~~such~~] that taxable year. A designation once made whether by an original or amended return may not be revoked.

(b) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, any individual whose state income tax refund for any taxable year is \$2 or more may designate \$2 of the refund to be deposited into the school-level minor repairs and maintenance special fund established by section 302A-1504.5, when submitting a state income tax return to the department. In the case of a joint return of a [~~husband and wife~~] married couple having a state income tax refund of \$4 or more, each spouse may designate that \$2 be deposited into the special fund. The director of taxation shall revise the individual state income tax return form to allow the designation of contributions to the special fund on the face of the tax return and immediately above the signature lines. If no designation was made on the original tax return when filed, a designation may be made by the individual on an



## Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

amended return filed within twenty months and ten days after the due date for the original return for [~~such~~] that taxable year. A designation once made, whether by an original or amended return, may not be revoked.

(c) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, any individual whose state income tax refund for any taxable year is \$5 or more may designate \$5 of the refund to be paid over to the libraries special fund established by section 312-3.6, when submitting a state income tax return to the department. In the case of a joint return of a married couple having a state income tax refund of \$10 or more, each spouse may designate that \$5 be deposited into the special fund. The director of taxation shall revise the individual state income tax form to allow the designation of contributions to the fund on the face of the tax return and immediately above the signature lines. If no designation was made on the original tax return when filed, a designation may be made by the individual on an amended return filed within twenty months and ten days after the due date for the original return for that taxable year. A designation once made, whether by an original or amended return, may not be revoked.

(d) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, any individual whose state income tax refund for any taxable year is \$5 or more may designate \$5 of the refund to be paid over as follows:

(1) One-third to the Hawaii children's trust fund under section 350B-2; and

(2) Two-thirds to be divided equally among:

- (A) The domestic violence and sexual assault special fund under the department of health in section 321-1.3;
- (B) The spouse and child abuse special fund under the department of human services in section 346-7.5; and
- (C) The spouse and child abuse special account under the judiciary in section 601-3.6.



## Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

When designated by a taxpayer submitting a state income tax return to the department, the department of budget and finance shall allocate the moneys among the several funds as provided in this subsection. In the case of a joint return of a ~~[husband and wife]~~ married couple having a state income tax refund of \$10 or more, each spouse may designate that \$5 be paid over as provided in this subsection. The director of taxation shall revise the individual state income tax form to allow the designation of contributions pursuant to this subsection on the face of the tax return and immediately above the signature lines. If no designation was made on the original tax return when filed, a designation may be made by the individual on an amended return filed within twenty months and ten days after the due date for the original return for ~~[such]~~ that taxable year. A designation once made, whether by an original or amended return, may not be revoked.

(e) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, any individual whose state income tax refund for any taxable year is \$5 or more may designate \$5 of the refund to be paid over to the spay and neuter special fund established by section 143- , when submitting a state income tax return to the department. In the case of a joint return of a married couple having a state income tax refund of \$10 or more, each spouse may designate that \$5 be deposited into the special fund. The director of taxation shall revise the individual state income tax form to allow the designation of contributions to the fund on the face of the tax return and immediately above the signature lines. If no designation was made on the original tax return when filed, a designation may be made by the individual on an amended return filed within twenty months and ten days after the due date for the original return for that taxable year. A designation once made, whether by an original or amended return, shall not be revoked."

SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year ~~2025-2026~~ 2026-2027 ~~and the same sum or~~



# Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

~~so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027~~ to be deposited into the spay and neuter special fund established by section 143- , Hawaii Revised Statutes.

SECTION 6. There is appropriated out of the spay and neuter special fund established by section 143- , Hawaii Revised Statutes, the sum of \$ or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2025-2026 2026-2027 ~~and the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 as a grant-in-aid to the counties~~ to reduce pet overpopulation and the reproduction of free-roaming cats by providing spaying and neutering surgery and associated veterinary care-; provided that the sum shall be expended as follows:

(1) \$ for the city and county of Honolulu;

(2) \$ for the county of Maui;

(3) \$ for the county of Kauai; and

(4) \$ for the county of Hawaii.

The sums appropriated shall be expended by the counties for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 7. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 8. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000; provided that: ~~section 4 of this Act shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2024.~~

(1) Section 4 of this Act shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2026; and

(2) Sections 5 and 6 of this Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

**SB-1023-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/23/2026 2:00:55 PM

Testimony for CAA on 3/25/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Duane Inoue	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To: House Committee on Culture and Arts

Measure: SB1023 SB1 HD1

Relating to: Spay and Neuter Special Fund

—

I. Introduction

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the House Committee on Culture and Arts:

I respectfully submit testimony in strong opposition to SB1023 SB1 HD1.

While the intent to reduce animal overpopulation is understandable, this measure raises significant concerns regarding accountability, stewardship of public resources, and its potential impact on Hawai‘i’s natural and cultural heritage.

—

II. Stewardship of Hawai‘i’s Natural and Cultural Resources

Hawai‘i’s native ecosystems are not only environmental assets—they are foundational to the State’s cultural identity, traditions, and sense of place. Policies that affect wildlife and the broader environment must reflect the principles of mālama ‘āina (care for the land) and kuleana (responsibility to steward natural resources for future generations).

However, SB1023 SB1 HD1:

- Provides funding for programs affecting free-roaming cat populations
- Does not include safeguards to protect sensitive ecological or culturally significant areas
- Does not require coordination with conservation or cultural resource agencies

---

### III. Cultural Impact Statement

SB1023 SB1 HD1 raises important concerns regarding its alignment with Hawai‘i’s cultural values of mālama ‘āina and kuleana.

Hawai‘i’s native ecosystems—home to species found nowhere else in the world—are deeply interconnected with Native Hawaiian cultural practices, traditions, and identity. Policies that affect wildlife and the broader environment must be carefully designed to avoid unintended harm to these fragile systems.

This measure does not include safeguards to ensure that funded activities will:

- Protect sensitive ecological and culturally significant areas
- Align with existing conservation efforts
- Avoid perpetuating conditions that may negatively impact native species

Without these considerations, the bill risks undermining long-standing commitments to environmental stewardship that are foundational to Hawai‘i’s cultural values.

In Hawai‘i, stewardship is not optional—it is a cultural obligation. Public programs must reflect this responsibility through careful design, accountability, and respect for the interconnectedness of land, wildlife, and community.

---

### IV. Lack of Accountability in the Use of Public Funds

The bill establishes a special fund and authorizes expenditures but does not require:

- Measurable outcomes
- Public reporting on effectiveness
- Independent evaluation of results

Concern:

Public funds should be used in ways that demonstrate clear benefit to the community. This measure does not ensure that outcomes will be tracked or achieved.

---

## V. Delegation of Decision-Making Authority

SB1023 SB1 HD1 assigns responsibility for determining how funds are distributed to an advisory committee.

However:

- The committee is unelected
- Membership is not subject to legislative confirmation
- Only State representative in committee is Department of Budget and Finance; it does not include Department of Land and Natural Resources
- Duplicative representation by “Hawaii Animal Welfare Associations” and “Hawaii-based, private, non-profit animal welfare organization.
- No clear standards guide its decisions

Concern:

Decisions affecting statewide programs and cultural and natural resources should remain under transparent and accountable public oversight.

—

## VI. Fiscal Responsibility and Public Trust

The measure relies on uncertain funding sources, including:

- Tax check-offs
- Specialty license plates
- Unspecified appropriations

Concern:

Programs funded with public resources should be grounded in clear financial planning and accountability. This measure does not provide that assurance.

—

## VII. Structural Deficiencies

The bill lacks key elements necessary for responsible program design:

- No defined benchmarks for success
- No sunset or review provision
- No requirement for program evaluation
- No integration with existing State or county efforts

---

## VIII. Conclusion

SB1023 SD1 HD1 raises serious concerns regarding stewardship, accountability, and alignment with Hawai'i's cultural and environmental values.

While the intent may be well-meaning, the structure of the measure does not ensure that it will produce meaningful or responsible outcomes.

This bill funds activity, not outcomes.\

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to **DEFER** this measure or substantially amend it to include clear accountability, oversight, and protections for Hawai'i's natural and cultural resources.

Respectively,

Duane Inoue

**SB-1023-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/24/2026 2:32:59 PM

Testimony for CAA on 3/25/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Caroline Azelski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of. Thank you.

**SB-1023-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/24/2026 8:37:06 PM

Testimony for CAA on 3/25/2026 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Gabrielle Sanborn	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

I support this bill. I believe our state and Hawai'i Island specifically require additional and specifically designated funds for spay and neutering of animals within our communities. This bill provides special funding for spaying and neutering cats, as they are overpopulated and there is animal suffering in our communities from cats left to fend for themselves, and for indigenous species impacted by the excess of cats on our islands. I would like to request that a portion of this additional funding go to education within the community as well. Our island is very rural, and there is a lack of education within the community on the impact this issue is having.