



525 East Cotati Avenue  
Cotati, California 94931

T 707.795.2533  
F 707.795.7280

info@aldf.org  
aldf.org

March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**RE: Memorandum of Support on SB3010**  
*Relating to animal endangerment*

Dear Chair Chun, Vice Chair Kusch, and Honorable Members of the House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems,

The Animal Legal Defense Fund, the nation's preeminent legal advocacy organization for animals, and its hundreds of members in Hawai'i, strongly support the enactment of SB3010. This bill aims to limit civil and criminal liability to Good Samaritans who rescue domestic animals in distress from motor vehicles after taking reasonable steps. We support this common-sense measure to protect animals and citizens in the state.

The Animal Legal Defense Fund strongly supports "Good Samaritan" laws across the country. Although public awareness has been on the rise about the dangers of leaving children or animals in hot cars as a result of media coverage and outreach campaigns by many groups, including the Animal Legal Defense Fund, too many people remain unaware of the potential risk. Parked cars quickly trap the sun's heat. Even on a day when it's 70 degrees outside, the temperature inside a car with all the windows closed can hit 89 degrees in just 10 minutes, according to the American Veterinary Medical Association. On a hot day, the temperature inside a closed car can shoot as high as 114 degrees in the same amount of time. Leaving the windows open a crack does nothing to eliminate the danger of heatstroke or death.

Dogs and other companion animals are particularly vulnerable to heatstroke because they cannot cool themselves like humans and have a harder time maintaining a comfortable body temperature. And Hawai'i is a state that experiences hotter temperatures than most year-round. Having laws in place to protect citizens from liability in these cases is an important step toward empowering people to act when they see an animal or child in distress. In addition, in order to avoid liability, the Good Samaritan will have had to act in accordance with the commonsense steps outlined in the bill to ensure they have tried all other measures before breaking the window.

Further, there has been no evidence that the passage of these kinds of bills would result in a rash of car window smashing across the state. This bill protects the average constituent who wants to do the right thing and probably would not stand idly by while a dog is in distress anyway despite the current absence of this law. This bill would simply protect them under the outlined limited circumstances. By passing this bill, Hawai'i would join 16 other states with "Good Samaritan" laws in helping save animals from unnecessary deaths.

For these reasons, the Animal Legal Defense Fund strongly supports the enactment of SB 3010 and respectfully requests that it be passed by your committee. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Vierheilg  
Legislative Affairs Manager  
Animal Legal Defense Fund  
[lvierheilg@aldf.org](mailto:lvierheilg@aldf.org)

**SB-3010-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:11:42 AM

Testimony for AGR on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee,

I am writing in **strong support of SB3010**, which authorizes law enforcement officers, animal control officers, firefighters, and under certain circumstances private citizens to enter an unattended vehicle to rescue a pet animal in danger. This bill provides clear legal protection for those who act to save an animal's life—and closes a gap in our current law that has left good Samaritans at risk of liability.

**Hawai'i's heat is deadly for animals left in vehicles.** Even on a mild day, the temperature inside a parked car can rise rapidly—reaching life-threatening levels within minutes. Dogs and other pets cannot cool themselves the way humans can. They suffer heatstroke, organ failure, and death, often while their owners are unaware or indifferent. SB3010 gives first responders and private citizens the tools to intervene before it is too late.

**The bill protects those who act in an emergency.** Under current law, a person who breaks into a vehicle to save an animal could face criminal charges or civil liability—even if they acted with the purest motives. SB3010 establishes clear conditions under which a private citizen may rescue a pet: they must have a good-faith belief the animal is in imminent danger, contact law enforcement first if possible, use no more force than necessary, and remain with the animal until authorities arrive. These guardrails ensure that the law is used responsibly while removing the threat of punishment for doing the right thing.

**It also empowers our first responders.** Law enforcement, animal control, and firefighters are on the front lines of these situations. This bill gives them explicit authority to enter vehicles when an animal's health or safety is at risk—cutting through ambiguity and allowing them to act decisively.

**SB3010 reflects our values as a community.** In Hawai'i, we care for one another—and for the creatures who depend on us. This bill affirms that protecting vulnerable animals from needless suffering is not just a moral obligation, but a priority our laws should support.

I urge you to pass this bill. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.