



**ANIMAL LEGAL
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February 13th, 2026

RE: Memorandum of Support on SB3010
Relating to animal endangerment

Dear Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Lee, and Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs,

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
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All our clients are innocent

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TESTIMONY OF EVAN OUE ON BEHALF OF THE HAWAII ASSOCIATION FOR JUSTICE (HAJ) IN OPPOSITION TO SB 3010

Date: Thursday, February 13, 2026

Time: 3:01 p.m.

My name is Evan Oue and I am presenting this testimony on behalf of the Hawaii Association for Justice (HAJ) in OPPOSITION to **SB 3010**, Relating to Animal Endangerment.

While HAJ appreciates the intent of the measure to ensure animal safety, however, we have **serious concerns with SB 3010** in its current form as it grants broad blanket immunity from any civil damages arising from saving an unattended animal in a hot vehicle.

Specifically, HAJ is primarily concerned with the immunity from civil liability in section (5) (Page 3-4)). The section provides blanket immunity for animal control officers, law enforcement officers and firefighters, and the agency or county that employs them when entering into a vehicle pursuant to subsections (3) and (4). Additionally, HAJ is concerned with the immunity provided for in subsection (7) which allows private citizens to enter a vehicle to rescue an animal if they comply with subsection (6).

Hawaii law requires that all first responders, such as ambulance EMTs, police, firefighters, emergency room doctors and nurses, and others, **perform their jobs with reasonable care under the circumstances**. While we understand the intent of the measure, there is no justification for condoning negligence for animal control officers, police officers and firefighters in the performance of their duties.

HAJ understands the need for ensuring the safety of an unattended animal, however, animal control officers, police officers and firefighters should not be granted complete immunity from civil liability. The standard of care including performance of their jobs with reasonable care under circumstances should be upheld.

Accordingly, HAJ respectfully recommends adding the following amendment to the end of section (5) on page 4 and section (7) on page 5 to read: “provided that nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to protect any such person from suit or liability for any damage, loss or injury caused by negligent, intentional, willful or wanton conduct of that person.”

Thank you for allowing us to testify regarding this measure. Please feel free to contact us should you have any questions or desire additional information.



AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB

February 12, 2026

Re: AKC Requests Amendments to Senate Bill 3010 – RELATING TO ANIMAL ENDANGERMENT.

Dear Chair Fukunaga Members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs:

The American Kennel Club (AKC) writes today on behalf of our 41 Hawaii based kennel clubs and thousands of responsible dog owners in Hawaii to respectfully express our concerns with Senate Bill 3010.

The AKC agrees that no person or animal should ever be left in a situation where their health or safety is in danger or pose a significant risk to the animal's health and safety. Those who would leave them in such a situation – including a vehicle – should be held accountable. We agree with the provision in Senate Bill 3010 that would prevent dogs from being kept in cars under these conditions.

However, we are concerned about the lack of a provision that would protect the owner of the animal left in a vehicle from civil damages in the event that someone attempting to retrieve an animal is injured during the process (either from breaking a window, being bitten by a frightened dog, etc.); this concern is especially acute in circumstances where the good Samaritan is incorrect in assuming that the animal is in danger. In such a scenario a dog may respond aggressively to the person breaking into the vehicle.

While we understand the good intent of this bill, there are a number of circumstances in which a person may safely and humanely leave a dog in a running vehicle. In some cases, leaving an animal in a running vehicle may be the most humane temporary location for a pet. It is common for responsible dog owners to place pets in climate controlled RVs or similar vehicles while traveling or during a dog show, field trial, or other similar event. Often, a motor may be left running specifically to protect the dogs and ensure proper climate control.

The AKC would appreciate an amendment to Senate Bill 3010 that would guarantee pet owners protection from civil liability and waiving of any retrieval costs in the event that they were being responsible with their pets.

We appreciate the Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs' attention to this issue and for their passion for the welfare of animals. Thank you for reviewing and considering our comments.

Regards,

Bob Rilling-Smith
Legislative Analyst/Community Outreach Coordinator
American Kennel Club
(919) 816-3960 | bxr@akc.org

SB-3010

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 10:16:13 AM

Testimony for PSM on 2/13/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT

SB-3010

Submitted on: 2/11/2026 11:14:41 AM

Testimony for PSM on 2/13/2026 3:01:00 PM

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

Comments:

This is a very important bill. All too often we learn about pet animals who died because they were locked in a vehicle with no means of escape. Please move this bill forward.

Lynne Matusow

SB-3010

Submitted on: 2/12/2026 8:07:12 AM

Testimony for PSM on 2/13/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Olderr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. The life of a living creature is more important than the value of a car. And the type of person who would let an animal suffer like that is probably someone who shouldn't be in charge of a living thing's well-being.