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HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY
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IN REPLY PLEASE REFER TO:

26:OED

Statement of the
Hawaii Public Housing Authority

Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Wednesday, February 25, 2026
10:57 AM – Room 211, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of
SB 3011, SD1
Relating to Public Housing

Honorable Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means:

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) appreciates the intent of Senate Bill (SB) 3011, SD1 and offers comments. This measure requires the HPHA to allow any resident of a public housing project or State low-income housing project to keep one or more pet animals in the resident's unit, subject to applicable state laws, county ordinances, and any reasonable conditions. Provides that the HPHA may charge a refundable deposit for each pet animal but shall not impose a monthly pet fee or pet rent. Allows the HPHA to remove a vicious animal to protect persons or property.

HPHA currently manages over 5,400 federal low-income public housing units statewide. In these projects, HPHA already allows pets and has an established Pet Policy that tenants must follow. This policy was developed in consultation with the public housing Resident Advisory Board, reviewed through a public hearing process, and adopted by the HPHA's eleven Board of Directors after multiple opportunities for public input.

HPHA also manages 912 State low-income public housing units. Approximately 86% of this State low-income public housing inventory serves elderly and disabled residents. For these properties, HPHA has not implemented a general pet policy in order to preserve the quiet and peaceful enjoyment, safety and health of kupuna and residents with disabilities. This decision is informed by HPHA's operational experience in federal low-income public housing and includes concerns



such as smaller unit sizes, pets roaming common areas, injury to children and adult tenants, damage to units and common areas, increased maintenance and cleaning costs, liability risks related to pet-related injuries, and noise complaints that disproportionately affect elderly residents.

It is important to note that residents in both federal and state low-income public housing are already permitted to have pets needed for health or disability reasons through a Reasonable Accommodation Request, consistent with fair housing requirements.

HPHA also respectfully notes that many of its developments are large, high-density communities, with some properties exceeding 500 units and supports the bill's SD1 provisions for staffing resources and funding to support appropriate infrastructure and services, including but not limited to designated pet or animal parks, waste disposal stations, enforcement and education resources, and other measures necessary to protect animal welfare, tenant and staff well-being and safety, and State property. Without these additional resources, this measure would present operational, safety, and infrastructure challenges.

HPHA looks forward to working collaboratively with the Legislature to ensure that any statutory changes preserve the Authority's ability to establish reasonable conditions, address nuisance or dangerous behavior, protect residents and staff, and maintain safe, well-managed communities—while supporting the overall well-being of residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and for your continued support of public housing residents statewide.



Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

2700 Waiālae Avenue Honolulu, Hawaii 96826
808.356.2200 • HawaiianHumane.org

Date: Feb. 23, 2026

To: Chair Sen. Donovan Dela Cruz
Vice Chair Sen. Sharon Moriwaki
and Members of the Committee on Ways & Means

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

RE: Testimony in support of SB 3011, SD1: Relating to Public Housing
Wednesday, Feb. 25, 2026, 10:57 a.m., Capitol Room 211

On behalf of the Hawaiian Humane Society, thank you for considering our support for Senate Bill 3011, SD1, which requires the Hawai'i Public Housing Authority to allow any resident of a public housing project or state low-income housing project to keep one or more pet animals in the resident's unit, subject to applicable state laws, county ordinances, and any reasonable conditions; provides that the Hawai'i Public Housing Authority may charge a refundable deposit for each pet animal but shall not impose a monthly pet fee or pet rent; and allows the Hawai'i Public Housing Authority to remove a vicious animal to protect persons or property; establishes positions; and appropriates funds.

Lack of access to 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.

While public housing under the direct management of the Hawai'i Public Housing Authority allows pets, it does so under antiquated restrictions. This bill adopts the more progressive language of the California public housing statute, which prohibits restrictions based on breed or size; but allows those that account for the type of housing accommodation and the behavior of the animal. It also would require the HPHA inventory that is managed by private contractors to allow pets. This would open hundreds of additional units to pet owners as they become available.

We note the prior committee's allocation of generous funding and personnel to implement these changes. We hope that will not be a deterrent to its passage. Access to housing that welcomes pets is not a niche issue. Nearly 60 percent of O'ahu residents reported owning at least one pet in the 2024 Ward Research survey. The highest rates of pet ownership were in the more rural areas of the North Shore and West O'ahu, suggesting pet ownership rates on the neighbor islands are likely even higher. Housing paid for with tax dollars should welcome all of our local family members.

Please pass SB 3011, SD1, and open state and federally funded housing in Hawai'i to our most vulnerable families and their animal companions. Mahalo for your consideration.

SB-3011-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 2:24:47 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

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

Comments:

SB3011, SD1 - the aims of which we in Britain are also working to implement - requires the removal of arbitrary companion animal restrictions from public housing under the direct management of the Hawai'i Public Housing Authority. While those properties allow pets, they place restrictions on breed and size that threaten the human-animal bond.

This is so important. People would have to choose between refusing accommodation that imposes such restrictions, or having to find another guardian for their companion animals.

This bill adopts the more progressive language of the California public housing statute, which prohibits restrictions based on breed or size; but allows those that account for the type of housing accommodation and the behaviour of the animal.

It is also good that the HPHA inventory which is managed by private contractors also allows companion animals, which would open hundreds of additional units to companion owner guardians as they become available.

We beg to endorse this Bill.

SB-3011-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 11:42:33 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mike Moran	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

While this may be considered a small step, it can help set reasonable standard on this topic Please support

Mahalo

Mike Moran Kihei, Maui

SB-3011-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 4:29:03 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tanya Ramseth	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I write in strong support of **Senate Bill 3011 (2026)**, which would require the Hawai‘i Public Housing Authority to allow residents of public and state low-income housing to keep one or more pet animals in their homes, subject only to reasonable conditions and without monthly pet fees or pet rent. This thoughtful legislation preserves residents’ dignity and strengthens their connection to family and community by recognizing the positive role pets play in people’s lives.

For countless individuals and families—especially those facing economic challenges—pets are not “extras,” they are companions that reduce stress, enhance mental well-being, and support stability. Preventing arbitrary or excessive pet-related fees removes a barrier that many low-income residents face when trying to keep beloved animals in their homes. By allowing a refundable deposit in lieu of ongoing charges, SB 3011 balances reasonable oversight with compassionate policy.

Importantly, the bill also protects public safety by permitting removal of dangerous animals, and it sets clear, sensible standards for reasonable conditions such as leash requirements and nuisance behavior policies. These provisions ensure that the rights of all residents are respected while maintaining safe, peaceful living environments.

I urge the Legislature to pass SB 3011 without delay. By supporting this measure, lawmakers affirm Hawai‘i’s commitment to equitable, humane housing policy that values the well-being of its residents and their animal companions.

Thank you for your leadership and careful consideration.

**Testimony in Support of SB3011, SD1 Relating to Public Housing
Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

Date: Wednesday, February 25, 2026, 10:57 am

Honorable Chair and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means,

I am writing as a private citizen in strong support of SB3011, SD1.

No one should have to choose between their pet and a roof over their head. Sadly, that is the reality for too many people in our community. For many residents of public housing, their pet is family, and a source of comfort and companionship. We know that individuals and families will refuse supportive housing rather than give up the pet that may be their closest companion. They would rather remain on the streets. Research from the Michelson Found Animals Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative validates this. More than 80 percent of dog guardians surveyed reported difficulty securing housing, leading many to rehome their pets, misclassify them as emotional support animals, or hide them. Arbitrary barriers like breed and size restrictions force these impossible choices.

Policies that restrict pet ownership based on breed or size are not grounded in evidence. I am encouraged that this measure would require the Hawai'i Public Housing Authority (HPHA) to remove those restrictions from properties under its direct management, while still allowing for reasonable conditions that account for the type of housing and the behavior of the animal. California has already adopted similar language for its public housing, and Hawai'i should follow suit.

I am also pleased that this measure would extend pet-welcoming policies to HPHA inventory managed by private contractors, which could open hundreds of additional units to pet owners as they become available.

I respectfully urge the Committee to pass SB3011, SD1.

Respectfully submitted,
Brandy Shimabukuro

I am writing in support of SB3011 Relating to Public Housing.

SB3011 requires the Hawai'i Public Housing Authority to allow any resident of a public housing project or state low-income housing project to keep one or more pet animals in the resident's unit, subject to applicable state laws, county ordinances, and any reasonable conditions. The measure prohibits restrictions based on breed or size; but allows those that account for the type of housing accommodation and the behavior of the animal. It also requires that the HPHA inventory that is managed by private contractors allows pets, which would open hundreds of additional units to pet owners as they become available.

Judith Aikawa, MD

37 Apali Way

Kula, HI 96790

SB-3011-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 5:26:58 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

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

Comments:

Maui Humane Society is in strong support of SB3011.

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.

The pet-friendly housing crisis on Maui is particularly dire, exacerbated by the devastating wildfires of 2023.

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.

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

SB3011 is an important step in acknowledging – and addressing – the importance of the human-animal bond.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Carroll, Ph.D., 758 Queens Street, Lāna`i City, HI. 96763

Board Member, Maui Humane Society

SB-3011-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 5:29:13 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

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

Comments:

i support your bill

SB-3011-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 6:20:09 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

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

Comments:

strong support for more housing for low income pet owners

Hawaii Kai voter

SB-3011-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 6:47:04 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alana Hart	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am registering my support for SB3011. I believe there are common sense protocols that can allow residents of HPHA communities to own pets in their units, and that pet ownership and companionship is a beautiful bond and privilege. Where the housing unit can appropriately support the well-being of a pet, public housing residents should be able to have that choice to welcome a pet into their family.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SB-3011-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 7:15:09 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in SUPPORT of SB3011 allow any resident of a public housing project or state low income housing project to keep one or more pet animals in the residents unit subject to applicable laws, ordinances and reasonable conditions.

I am a resident, and former business owner in the North Shore community see the need in our community for a change to public housing rules.

Housing is not only a problem for people it is a problem for domestic animals in our State. Lack of pet friendly housing options is one the main reasons animals are surrendered to the Humane Society. There are many social and emotional benefits for individuals and families to be able to own a domestic animal. Many other states have updated housing policies in a balanced way and understand the merits to a community - SB3011 would open up hundreds of housing options for animals and people. It is the right change for our residents - pet ownership should not be limited to only property owners available to people who rent public housing.

SB-3011-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 8:08:29 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shelley Dunbar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a resident of Maui. I am also on the board of the Maui Humane Society. I am in strong support of SB3011.

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.

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

SB3011 is an important step in acknowledging – and addressing – the importance of the human-animal bond.

SB-3011-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 8:20:38 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support SB3011 SD1. My name is Natalie Graham-Wood and I reside at Sunset Beach, Oahu.

SB-3011-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 8:57:47 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

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

SB-3011-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 11:31:02 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

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

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support

3011 SB RELATING TO PUBLIC HOUSING.

DOG PARK NEARBY? DEFINITION OF PET? PET STORE/VET NEARBY? EVICTION FOR NON-COMPLIANCE TO RULES?

DOGS/CATS HELPS PEOPLE WITH ANXIETY.

SB-3011-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 5:36:01 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

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

Comments:

Why I support this bills:

- Requires the removal of arbitrary pet restrictions from public housing under the direct management of the Hawai‘i Public Housing Authority. While those properties allow pets, they place restrictions on breed and size that threaten the human-animal bond. This bill adopts the more progressive language of the California public housing statute, which prohibits restrictions based on breed or size; but allows those that account for the type of housing accommodation and the behavior of the animal.
- Requires that the HPHA inventory that is managed by private contractors also allows pets, which would open hundreds of additional units to pet owners as they become available

SB-3011-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 8:54:14 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

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 SB3011 SD1, 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.

Thank you for supporting SB3011.

Jane Arnold

1763 Iwi Way

Honolulu, HI. 96816

SB-3011-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 9:56:41 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

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

Comments:

I am in support of Bill SB3011.

SB-3011-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 10:21:05 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Senator Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Senator Moriwaki and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Please support SB 3011 SD 1 which, to my understanding, would be tremendously helpful to public housing residents and their pets by prohibiting arbitrary pet restrictions and by potentially opening up hundreds of units by requiring the HPHA inventory managed by private contractors to allow pets.

Mahalo.

Jennifer Chiwa

Makiki and life long resident of Oahu

SB-3011-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 3:13:10 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lee Cuccia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I think it is very important to allow residents of lower income housing to keep their pet in their unit. Pets are a very important part of our lives.

I do understand the concerns of pet related damages to units but feel the importance of keeping a pet with families to be greater.

mahalo.