

BILL033(26)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 371

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

Meeting Date: Sep 9, 2026 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 1

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 1

Name: Johnnie-Mae Perry	Email: waianaenb569@gmail.com	Zip: 96792
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 2, 2026 @ 09:34 PM
Testimony: I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, SUPPORT BILL033(26) RELATING TO FUNDS.		
Name: Stephanie Hilton	Email: stephhilton99@gmail.com	Zip: 96819
Representing: Self	Position: I wish to comment	Submitted: Sep 4, 2026 @ 11:30 AM
Testimony: Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee. My name is Stephanie Hilton. I am testifying today to request funding for a bill 8 project. I ask the city to appropriate funding for security cameras in high-risk areas and for a pilot program employing licensed social workers with specialized training in canine behavior, public safety, and community outreach, positions I refer to as “dog social workers.” On August 23, 2026, three or four unleashed, medium-to-large dogs charged toward my service dog and me at a City campground. I lifted my service dog above my head, but one dog grabbed his leg. I maneuvered until it released him before it caused puncture wounds. The dog continued jumping and trying to bite him. I protected my service dog from serious physical injury, but I suffered puncture wounds to both legs and required emergency treatment, antibiotics, and a tetanus vaccination. The dogs apparently belonged to an unsheltered person nearby. After the attack, he accepted responsibility and told me he did not have the equipment needed to control them. That statement demonstrates why funding is necessary. Penalties imposed after an attack cannot replace preventive services. This bill addresses only a fraction of the problem because laws alone cannot provide equipment, education, outreach, de-escalation, documentation, or follow-up. Security cameras should be installed in high-risk parking areas at City parks, campgrounds, and beaches, as well as near restrooms and other vulnerable locations. Cameras could identify recurring patterns and provide evidence to assist police officers investigating theft and other reported crimes. Their visible presence would also give residents and visitors greater peace of mind and a stronger sense of safety while enjoying City grounds. A dog-social-worker pilot program could place visible, trained City professionals at selected beaches, parks, and		

campgrounds. These social workers could:

1. Identify people and dogs at risk before an attack occurs.
2. Provide education, leashes, and basic control equipment when appropriate.
3. Teach responsible dog handling and boundaries around service animals, children, and vulnerable adults.
4. Document dangerous conditions and recurring patterns.
5. De-escalate conflicts involving owners, animals, and members of the public.
6. Coordinate with animal control, law enforcement, veterinarians, housing programs, and other social services.
7. Follow the person's and dog's case after an incident to reduce the risk of another attack.

This program should assist unsheltered and housed dog owners alike. Its purpose would not be to criminalize poverty or punish residents who have not received adequate education or resources for responsible dog ownership. Its purpose would be to provide practical support and intervene before a preventable situation ends in injury, death, prosecution, or euthanasia.

The financial case for prevention is clear. Emergency veterinary care may exceed \$5,000, while an attack on a person may produce medical costs and damages approaching \$70,000. Honolulu EMS also responded to approximately 300 possible dog-bite calls during one twelve-month period. Funding prevention may reduce demands on emergency services, hospitals, law enforcement, animal control, courts, and shelters while protecting families from expenses they cannot absorb.

Government cannot eliminate every danger. But it can fund reasonable measures to address recurring risks on government-operated property. A citation issued after serious bodily injury or death is not prevention. I support this bill and giving victims the opportunity to press charges or seek civil damages after an attack. However, those remedies apply only after harm has occurred. This is a complex social problem involving both human and animal welfare, and it cannot be fully resolved through legislation alone. Funding this bill, security cameras, and the proposed dog-social-worker pilot program would supplement citations, criminal prosecution, and civil remedies by addressing underlying conditions and helping prevent attacks before someone is injured or killed.

Please fund security cameras and dog-social-worker positions before another person, child, service animal, family pet, or attacking dog loses their future or their life.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Stephanie Hilton

City campground permit holder and service-dog handler

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