

BILL016(26)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 376

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

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

Support: 16

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 @ 09:40 PM
Testimony: I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, SUPPORT BILL016(26) RELATING TO THE REGULATION OF DOGS.		
Name: lynne matusow	Email: lynnehi@aol.com	Zip: 96817
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 3, 2026 @ 10:11 AM
Testimony: Why it matters: Courts have interpreted our stray-dog ordinance (ROH 12-4.2) so narrowly that owners are only liable if they're present when their dog strays. That means people and pets can be mauled, chased, etc. by stray dogs and the courts won't do anything. I am tired of seeing news reports showing injuries suffered by humans, pets, and other animals who have been viciously attacked by strays/escapees. and An owner whose dog habitually escapes while they're away faces no consequences. This bill closes that loophole.It also adds a civil penalty option alongside the existing criminal one, giving enforcement a real tool to use instead of relying on an overburdened court system that dismisses most stray cases outright. Please vote yes to protect all of us.		
Name: Stephanie Hilton	Email: stephhilton99@gmail.com	Zip: 96819
Representing: Self	Position: I wish to comment	Submitted: Sep 4, 2026 @ 11:12 AM
Testimony: Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee, My name is Stephanie Hilton. I am testifying today to comment on Bill 8 regarding unleashed, unconfined, or otherwise uncontrolled dogs after an attack. On August 23, 2026, at approximately 8:00 a.m., I was camping with my service dog when three or four unleashed, medium-to-large dogs charged toward us from several yards away. I lifted my service dog above my head, but one dog grabbed his leg. I maneuvered until it released him before causing puncture wounds. The dog continued jumping and trying to bite him. Although I protected my service dog from serious physical injury, I suffered puncture wounds to both legs and required emergency treatment at Tripler.		

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 reveals the larger problem: punishing someone after an attack does not prevent the attack or solve the underlying issue. This bill addresses only a fraction of what is needed. Laws alone cannot protect the public when people lack secure equipment, education, resources, and intervention before someone is injured or killed.

After the attack, my service dog experienced an acute stress response. I isolated him from other dogs for three days and kept a substantial distance until his obedience returned to baseline. His job is to focus on me, not defend himself. He trusts me to direct and protect him. This attack was unprovoked. We were walking near a campground restroom, and nothing I did could have stopped those dogs from charging us.

Since then, I have repeatedly encountered inadequately controlled dogs barking excessively or lunging toward him while he remains quiet and lying down. Owners have failed to demonstrate situational awareness by creating distance, moving away, verbally acknowledging me to let me know whether their dog is friendly or not, or giving effective commands to control their dogs.

This danger is documented across O'ahu. An eight-year-old boy with disabilities died after a dog attack in Wahiawā. A six-year-old girl was attacked on the North Shore. A Wai'anae man required hospitalization after being attacked by multiple dogs. Honolulu EMS also responded to approximately 300 possible dog-bite calls in one twelve-month period, nearly 20 percent more than the previous year.

The financial consequences are also serious. Emergency veterinary care may exceed \$5,000, while an attack on a person may result in medical costs and damages approaching \$70,000. Most Hawai'i families cannot absorb an unexpected expense of that magnitude.

I ask the City to fund a pilot program employing "dog social workers" on city campgrounds, parks, and beaches. Visible City professionals who are licensed in social work and trained in canine behavior and can provide a preventive public safety presence and community outreach. They could employ education and basic control equipment, document dangerous conditions and recurring patterns, de-escalate conflicts, coordinate with animal-control and law-enforcement agencies, and provide follow-up involving both the person and the dog after an attack.

Government cannot eliminate every danger from public life. But when recurring risks exist at government-operated beaches, parks, and campgrounds, we should do everything reasonably possible to prevent foreseeable harm before one person's choices cost them their own life, a child's life, their dog's life, or even the attacking dog's life.

A citation issued after serious bodily injury or death is not prevention. Please act by securing funding for public safety city

personnel trained specifically in community outreach and dog regulation before another life is permanently changed or lost.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Stephanie Hilton

City campground permit holder and service-dog handler

(808) 829-9399

Name: Stephanie Kendrick	Email: skendrick@hawaiianhumane.org	Zip: 96826
Representing: Hawaiian Humane Society	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 4, 2026 @ 01:12 PM
Name: Alice Saul	Email: alicesaul@hawaii.rr.com	Zip: 96825
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 4, 2026 @ 02:47 PM

Testimony:

Testimony in support of Bill 16, CD2, Relating to the Regulation of Dogs.

This bill aims to clarify the language of negligence that under existing regulations don't appear to address accountability of owners who continually allow their dogs to stray. The option to impose civil penalties should garner more direct attention from owners as to their responsibilities toward the public, and to their own dogs as well.

Thank you. Aloha,

Alice Saul

Hawai Kai

Name: joanna milo	Email: milojoanna1@gmail.com	Zip: 96792
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 4, 2026 @ 02:54 PM

Testimony:

i support bill 16

Name: Susan Collins	Email: yogahead1@hotmail.com	Zip: 96727
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Representing: Bird and Bee Hawaii Animal Sanctuary	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 4, 2026 @ 03:31 PM
Testimony: In support of Bill 16, CD2" is a complete, valid piece of testimony. Why it matters: Courts have interpreted our stray-dog ordinance (ROH 12-4.2) so narrowly that owners are only liable if they're present when their dog strays. A negligent owner, whose dog habitually escapes due to lack of reasonable care, faces no consequences. Adding a civil penalty option alongside the existing criminal one gives enforcement a real tool to use instead of relying on an overburdened criminal court system that dismisses most stray cases outright. Stray dogs can be a safety risk to people and are a very real safety risk to themselves. This bill helps keep both safe.		
Name: Kathy Carroll	Email: kathycarroll96763@gmail.com	Zip: 96763
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 5, 2026 @ 09:57 AM
Testimony: I am in strong support of Bill 16 (26). Courts have interpreted the stray-dog ordinance (ROH 12-4.2) so narrowly that owners are only liable if they're present when their dog strays. A negligent owner, whose dog habitually escapes due to lack of reasonable care, faces no consequences. Adding a civil penalty option alongside the existing criminal one gives enforcement a real tool to use instead of relying on an overburdened criminal court system that dismisses most stray cases outright. Stray dogs can be a safety risk to people and are a very real safety risk to themselves. This bill helps keep both safe. Respectfully submitted, Kathy Carroll		
Name: Judith Aikawa	Email: spikecat1@aol.com	Zip: 96790
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 5, 2026 @ 10:06 AM
Testimony: I am writing to voice my strong support for Bill16 (26) What it does: The bill updates the strays-prohibited offense to apply to owners who allow — or fail to reasonably prevent — their dog from becoming a stray. It also adds a civil penalty option where only criminal penalties exist today. Why it matters: Courts have interpreted the stray-dog ordinance (ROH 12-4.2) so narrowly that owners are only liable if they're present when their dog strays. A negligent owner, whose dog habitually escapes due to lack of reasonable care, faces no consequences. Adding a civil penalty option alongside the existing criminal one gives enforcement a real tool to use instead of relying on an overburdened criminal court system that dismisses most stray cases outright. Stray dogs can		

be a safety risk to people and are a very real safety risk to themselves. This bill helps keep both safe.

Name:

Nandita Sharma

Email:

nanditaranisharma@gmail.com

Zip:

96744

Representing:

Self

Position:

Support

Submitted:

Sep 5, 2026 @ 10:40 AM

Testimony:

Stray dogs are often a sign of poor or even abusive care by the person that "owns" it. That means that stray dogs can be the most dangerous. In any case, it is disconcerting to encounter a stray dog since one never knows if it is dangerous or not. It is important to add a civil penalty option alongside the existing criminal one, as this allows for actual consequences for allowing a dog to go astray. Stray dogs can be a safety risk to people and are a very real safety risk to themselves. This bill helps keep both safe.

Name:

Taurie Kinoshita

Email:

taurie@hawaii.edu

Zip:

96822

Representing:

Self

Position:

Support

Submitted:

Sep 5, 2026 @ 11:56 AM

Testimony:

To the Honorable Committee,

I am writing in strong support of Bil 16 (CD2) to the Regulation of Dogs.

This crucial bill updates the strays-prohibited offense to apply to owners who allow their dog from becoming a stray.

Courts have interpreted our stray-dog ordinance (ROH 12-4.2) so narrowly that owners are only liable if they're present when their dog strays. Negligent owners, whose dogs continue to escape due to lack of care, faces no consequences. This leads to stray dogs, suffering, harm in our communities. All of this would be more preventable if careless owners faced stiffer penalties.

The addition of a civil penalty with the existing criminal one gives enforcement a necessary tool.

Relying on a severely overburdened criminal court system that dismisses most stray cases outright is not working, and owners continue their negligence and destructive harm. Stray dogs can be a safety risk to people and are a very real safety risk to themselves. This bill would keep both safe!

Thank you for your consideration!

Sincerely,

Taurie Kinoshita

Name:

Email:

Zip:

Melanie Kim	Feisty9267@Yahoo.com	96815
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 5, 2026 @ 03:56 PM
Testimony: I support Bill 16 CD2 related to the regulation of dogs		
Name: carole richelieu	Email: crraloha@gmail.com	Zip: 96825
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 6, 2026 @ 11:06 AM
Testimony: in support of Bill16, CD 2		
Name: Kim Tomey	Email: kimtomey@aol.com	Zip: 96744
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 6, 2026 @ 07:51 PM
Testimony: I support this bill to hold dog owners responsible for allowing their dogs to become strays. I support any bill that protects dogs and cats.		
Name: Natalie Graham-Wood	Email: ngramhamwood@hotmail.com	Zip: 96712
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 7, 2026 @ 01:53 PM
Testimony: I support Bill 16 (26). My name is Natalie Graham-Wood and I reside at Sunset Beach, Oahu.		
Name: Dylan Armstrong	Email: dylan.p.armstrong@gmail.com	Zip: 96822
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 8, 2026 @ 12:07 PM
Testimony: TESTIMONY FOR THE HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL THE HONORABLE TOMMY WATERS, CHAIR, AND ANDRIA TUPOLA, VICE CHAIR 8 September 2026 Bill 16		

Aloha Chair Waters, Vice Chair Tupola, and Council Members,

Thank you for considering my SUPPORT for Bill 16.

This measure establishes civil penalty for the owners of dogs turned stray. Existing ordinance lacked enforceability, despite decades of known, prolific, and visible animal neglect, animal abuse, and dog attacks on humans, other dogs, and other animals.

In short, dog ownership has become a de fact entitlement, when it is instead a serious responsibility. It bears a duty of care not only to the pet but to all whom a dog can very plausibly harm. This harm can be physical or as it relates to property, monetary.

I have successfully co-trained and cared for large and 'aggressive' dog breeds, such as Shepards, Rottweilers, and Terriers. I have also worked as a freelance dog walker and dog caretaker.

After an uptick in dog adoptions and purchases during the pandemic, which seemingly contributed to a rise in stray and abandoned dogs, the policy framework around dogs is shifting.

Policy is shifting because the culture around dogs in Hawai'i needs to shift towards stewardship and responsibility, and a growing number of people know it. Because wrongful exposure or undue liability merits prevention, I would hope those with legal expertise would highlight and hone any issues this bill may present, including with implementation. Nonetheless, this bill represents a necessary correction against a crueler and unjust way of treating animals, which is no longer aligned with the world we live in.

Mahalo nui loa,
DYLAN P. ARMSTRONG
Individual Capacity

Name: Ginny Tiu	Email: ginnytiu808@gmail.com	Zip: 96821
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Sep 9, 2026 @ 06:09 AM
Testimony: I support Bill 16 CD2 because it protects both people and animals. Mahalo , Ginny Tiu		



Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

Date: Sept. 4, 2026

To: Chair Tommy Waters
Vice Chair Andria Tupola
and Members of the Honolulu City Council

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

RE: Support for Bill 16, CD2, Relating to the Regulation of Dogs
Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2026, 10 a.m., City Council Chamber

On behalf of the Hawaiian Humane Society, mahalo for considering our strong support of Bill 16, CD2, Relating to the Regulation of Dogs.

This measure is intended to address barriers to holding the owners of dogs who go stray accountable. The courts have interpreted the existing language in ROH 12-4.2 — “It is unlawful for the owner of any dog to permit the dog to become a stray.” — as enforceable only if the owner is present and permits the dog to stray. Owners of dogs who habitually escape confinement when their owners are not present are not held accountable under the existing language. This bill amends that flawed language.

The bill's civil penalty framework provides a much-needed tool for animal law enforcement officers. Our overburdened criminal court system struggles to prioritize strays-prohibited cases, most of which are dismissed without repercussions for those charged. The lack of consequences for these offenses is a source of frustration for the public. Stray dogs not only cause community concern and pose potential safety threats, they are also at risk of injury and death themselves. Having the opportunity to pursue civil penalties gives law enforcement a powerful new tool to urge better behavior on the part of pet owners.

We urge the Council's support for Bill 16, CD2. More effective consequences for these offenses would protect people and animals from harm.

Mahalo for your consideration.