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County of Maui  
200 S. High St.  
Kalana O Maui Bldg  
Wailuku, HI 96793

April 7, 2025

Aloha Council Members. I'm Dr. Laurie Gaines, the medical director and a veterinarian at Maui Humane Society.

I want to express my sincere gratitude for the County's past support of Maui Humane Society and to provide you with an update on our spay/neuter program. Your partnership has played a crucial role in improving animal welfare in our community, and we deeply appreciate your continued commitment.

The disruption in spay neuter services secondary to the 2023 wildfires led to a backlog in spay/neuter surgeries, and we are still seeing the consequences as the population continues to grow. We continue to provide medical and surgical care for animals of families affected by the fires. The need for our services has never been greater.

The demand continues to far exceed our capacity. Each month, our surgery appointment schedule fills up within minutes of opening.

Currently, the County contributes just \$66 per surgery—a rate that has remained unchanged for almost ten years. In reality, the true cost of an average spay neuter surgery at Maui Humane is over \$85. The average cost at private vet clinics is over \$600. Without an increase in funding, we are severely limited in our ability to provide these critical services, which help manage the island's animal population and reduce shelter intake.

Last year our team performed 7551 spay and neuter surgeries, using the outdated pricing, this means the county provided funding for approximately 2500 of those surgeries.

If the council keeps our funding the same, this will result in 23% fewer surgeries, a reduction of 560 total surgeries.

If the county would like to continue funding the same number of surgeries as you have done previously, we respectfully ask for an increase of \$48,000 for a total of \$213,000 in order to provide 2500 county supported spay neuter surgeries to our community.

Given the rising costs and the great need for these services, we respectfully request the funding to cover the true cost of providing affordable spay/neuter services. Without increased support, fewer animals will receive these essential surgeries, leading to higher intake rates and further strain on our already overburdened shelter.

Thank you for your time and consideration. With the County's continued support and partnership we can continue to help families keep their pets and ensure a healthier future for our island's animal population.

Sincerely,

Dr. Laurie Gaines  
Medical Director  
Maui Humane Society