

Aloha Council Members,

My name is Dr. Judy Aikawa. I'm a retired emergency physician and the Vice Chair of the Maui Humane Society Board of Directors. It has been my privilege to serve on the MHS Board for over 15 years. I am speaking today on behalf of the Board of Directors to express our gratitude for the County of Maui's longstanding support.

We are proud of our partnership with the County and feel our shared commitment has saved animal lives and has helped to preserve the human-animal bond which is essential to the emotional health and resilience of animal lovers in our community.

Over the last 15 years, I have had the pleasure of witnessing the transformative changes Maui Humane Society has undergone as the organization has grown from fewer than 20 employees to over 100 dedicated animal welfare professionals who care for between 250 to 600 animals each month.

MHS' scope of work has also expanded so that in addition to rescuing, rehabilitating and rehoming Maui's homeless animals, MHS now provides crucial support and outreach for underprivileged pets and their owners.

County grant funding makes all of that work possible as well as enabling the organization to work to achieve the following strategic goals:

1. To provide accessible and affordable veterinary care, including spay/neuter services to all who need it. This despite a deficit of spay/neuter funding from traditional animal welfare grant sources.
2. To expand services to ensure that underserved communities like Moloka'i and Hana have accessible veterinary care and other animal welfare resources.
3. To enforce animal-related laws and investigate cases of animal cruelty, while educating and delivering services that support the community and keep animals in their homes.
4. To upgrade and modernize MHS' animal sheltering facilities to maximize lifesaving impact and operational efficiency, ensuring MHS is prepared for the future.

MHS remains committed to improving the lives of pets and people in our community, but we cannot do it alone. We deeply appreciate your past and continued support and urge you to consider increasing funding for MHS to ensure we can meet the community's growing animal welfare needs.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.