

# FACT SHEET

# HB 698 ANIMAL CRUELTY PENALTIES

Recognizing animal cruelty as a predictor of broader violent behavior, this bill increases penalties for various animal abuse offenses.

## WHAT IT DOES

- Elevates first-degree animal cruelty to a Class B felony
- Introduces escalating penalties for repeat offenses across multiple categories, including:
  - Service animal injury
  - Sexual assault of animals
- Establishes stricter consequences for repeat offenses
- Recognizes animal cruelty as a predictor of human violence
- Imposes a mandatory prohibition on animal ownership for convicted offenders

## WHAT IT DOES NOT

- Create new animal cruelty violations
- Remove exceptions for veterinary, scientific or farming practices
- Remove exceptions for accepted pest control practices



## KEY INSIGHTS

- Honolulu Police Department reported 73 animal cruelty crimes in 2023, compared to 58 in 2018
- 70% of violent criminals began by abusing animals
- Children witnessing animal abuse are more likely to become abusers

## POTENTIAL IMPACT IF NOT ENACTED

- Continued lack of justice for the voiceless and lenient treatment of animal abuse
- Potential escalation of violent behavior
- Low deterrence for animal cruelty
- Increased risk to vulnerable populations
- Missed opportunity to address correlations between animal and human violence

Learn more about our advocacy efforts at:  
[HawaiianHumane.org/advocacy](https://HawaiianHumane.org/advocacy)



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People for animals. Animals for people.