

July 11, 2005, 10 a. m.
Department of Agriculture Conference Room
63 Mua Street, Kahului, Maui

Aloha Members of the Board,

In regard to the proposed amendments to chapter 4-29 of Hawaii Administrative Rules, entitled "Dogs, Cats and Other Carnivores," I thank you for recommending these commendable changes to the rules governing the entrance of pets to the State of Hawaii.

I care deeply about what you are accomplishing at this meeting today. Both of my dogs suffered 30 day incarceration at Halawa in September-October of 2001, an experience marked by frustration, humiliation and fear as I sat in cages with my dogs during every visitor's hour and suffered with them the heat, flies, filth, dust and antiquated facilities (in one of my dog's cages, drinking water sat in the sun, too hot to touch, and though we repeatedly reported the fountain broken, no one in thirty days even so much as pretended to look into fixing it.) We bought shading screens to tie to the sides of the cages, but that cut down on the breezes. Sometimes the dust was so thick in the air I couldn't breathe! Then there was the constant, overwhelming din of hundreds of dogs barking nonstop. Later my vet on Maui told me there is a name for it, "Quarantine Bark": the dogs are trying to let their owners know where they are. (One of my dogs continued to bark in that desperate way every time I left him at home for months to come after quarantine.) But the worst experience at Halawa was that my AKC golden retriever refused to soil his cage, and the veterinarian and the keepers refused to help him, repeatedly threatening us with 120 day confinement if we let him out to go to the bathroom. He had lasted nine days without relieving himself, had stopped eating and drinking. We stormed the vet's office and demanded something be done, refusing to leave until it was -- then and only then did the vet give an order for my beautiful, intelligent, faithful dog to be walked twice a day only, at 10am and at 4pm, by Halawa workers only. The best news is: He survived. But his survival was of no interest to the State of Hawaii nor to the state's employees at the Halawa facility. The dollar cost of this nightmare quarantine experience: \$1300, plus flights back and forth from Maui for myself and my seven year old granddaughter, car rentals, meals, adding up to more than \$4,000.00. Looking back, I regretted not giving the cash to the Halawa worker who for a similar price offered to "hand the dogs over the fence" to me when I first arrived. The corruption, abuse, outdated facilities, "junk" science justification, and downright illegality of Halawa should be more than enough reason to shut it down completely.

At today's hearing, of particular concern:

- 1.) Yes, please do make the requirements for all dogs equal, no matter what their status as service dogs or pets.
- 2.) Yes, please do, IMMEDIATELY offer direct release of pets at Kahului, and at Kauai and the Big Island airports, beginning with Maui, which has the most daily flights.
- 2.) Yes, abolish the unnecessary 30 day quarantine.
- 3.) Yes, drop the fees for arrival of pets. Isn't it up to the State to provide this service if it requires it?
- 4.) Yes, change the unnecessary and dangerous requirement from an every 18th - month rabies vaccination to comply with the standard CDC approved 36th - month vaccination.
- 5.) Yes, please do eliminate unnecessary serology in favor of rabies vaccinations, microchip ID and veterinary certification restricted to the NASPHV Rabies Vaccination Certificate Form 51, since it already requires all that information and must be sent directly from administering veterinarian to the state.

PLEASE do act on these matters quickly in the interest of safety and of good science, with integrity and caring, as we malama our state, our people and our pets.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

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