



January 29, 2020

**CITY COUNCIL VOTES TO BETTER PROTECT DOGS AND CATS BY
UPDATING ANIMAL CARE PROCEDURES**

The Honolulu City Council today voted unanimously to pass Bill 59, which mandates that all dogs and cats shall be microchipped by their owners or by a shelter if animals become lost or stray.

After hearing from concerned animal lovers, Councilmember Ann Kobayashi introduced Bill 59 to update existing county animal welfare laws and to educate and encourage the public to be more responsible for their pets, especially if they tend to stray or get lost.

“It was clear that we needed to improve and strengthen our existing laws to better protect our four-legged companions,” said Councilmember Kobayashi. “We want all pet owners to be more proactive so we can quickly identify lost animals and get them home sooner.”

In strong support, the Hawaiian Humane Society said Bill 59 will help save lives by increasing the number of pets with permanent identification, making abandoned animals adoptable more quickly, and decreasing the wait time for the treatment of ill and distressed animals in shelters.

The microchip mandate will take effect July 1, 2020 to allow time for the public to transition to the new law and will apply to both dogs and cats. This requirement will replace the current tag and license system that only applied to dogs. Once in effect, pet owners will no longer need to renew a license. However, a change in pet ownership or ownership information will need to be updated.

A microchip can be purchased for under \$25 and the Hawaiian Humane Society says it will implant the identifying device under the skin of a cat or dog for \$20. The nonprofit says nearly 90% of stray animals with an ID, brought to the Humane Society, go home within five days.

Under Bill 59, animals with no identification of any kind will still be subject to a 48-hour hold period by the animal control contractor, which is currently allowed, and it lowers the mandatory hold time for microchipped animals from nine days to five days. The new law raises the daily impoundment fee from \$2.50 to \$10, however, there is no charge for animals retrieved within 24 hours. In addition to those fees, an owner of a dog that has strayed at least three times within a year will have to pay a \$30 fee.

For more information on this bill or the Honolulu City Council, please go to the following web sites: <http://www.honolulucitycouncil.com> or <http://www.honolulu.gov/council>

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