



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES**

TO: Honorable Chair Belatti, Vice-Chair Morikawa and Committee Members

House Committee on Health, 3-27-13, 1000am, Rm 329

RE: HCR222/HR176; University of Hawaii Feral Cat Taskforce, Support with Amendments

Submitted by: Inga Gibson, Hawaii State Director, The Humane Society of the United States, P.O. Box 89131, Honolulu, HI 96830, igibson@hsus.org, 808-922-9910

On behalf of our members and supporters in Hawaii we thank the Committee for its consideration of the below amendments to HCR222, to establish a taskforce to investigate the feral cat *population* at the University of Hawaii Manoa, to include;

- Adding points recognizing that cats are most often consider pets, that cat owners can better protect cats and their communities by keeping their cats indoors, sterilizing their cats, having them wear identification and by never abandoning a pet cat;
- Strike negative and inflammatory terms such as “infestation”;
- Strike subjective statements and assumptions regarding cats posing serious disease issues and that the UH cat population is growing;
- Specify that the taskforce is to census the current cat population, gather relevant information and develop strategies to humanely and effectively reduce and prevent the further growth of the population;
- Add additional stakeholders such as ourselves, the Hawaii Cat Foundation, a representative from the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife and a veterinarian.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

WHEREAS, cats are the second most popular pet in the state, next to dogs; and

WHEREAS, cat owners are encouraged to sterilize their pets to prevent pet overpopulation, keep their cats indoors to protect cats and wildlife, and to have identification on their cats at all times; and

WHEREAS, abandoned cats and cats allowed to roam freely contribute to pet overpopulation and may be perceived as a nuisance; and

~~WHEREAS, the University of Hawaii bears the responsibility of providing a safe, clean, and welcoming environment to the university community; and~~

~~WHEREAS, students and faculty should not be subjected to the health risks posed by the feral cats that populate the University of Hawaii at Manoa campus; and~~

~~WHEREAS, it is evident that the feral cat population at the Manoa campus continues to expand; and~~

~~WHEREAS, the removal of feral cats would produce a safer learning environment at the Manoa campus and significantly reduce associated health risks; and~~

WHEREAS, a plan of action is necessary to ~~remove~~ address the effective, humane management of the feral cat infestation population at the Manoa campus, ~~prevent the transmission of serious diseases to humans, and avoid potential liability for the University of Hawaii;~~ now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-seventh Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2013, the Senate concurring, that the University of Hawaii, in conjunction with the Department of Health, Department of Land and Natural Resources and animal welfare organizations, is requested to establish a task force to:

- (1) Census the status and population of the feral cat population, including the number of cats sterilized and with identification, at the University of Hawaii at Manoa;
- (2) Investigate the causes of any increase in the feral cat infestation population at the University of Hawaii at Manoa; and
- (2) Develop a plan of action strategy to humanely reduce and prevent the growth of abate the feral cat population infestation at the Manoa campus; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University of Hawaii is requested to invite the following parties to serve on the task force:

- (1) Two representatives from the University of Hawaii, to be selected by the Chancellor of the University of Hawaii at Manoa;
- (2) Two representatives from the Department of Health;
- (3) One representative from the Associated Students of the University of Hawaii; and
- (4) One representative each from the Hawaiian Humane Society in Honolulu, The Humane Society of the United States Hawaii office, Hawaii Cat Foundation; and
- (5) One veterinarian licensed in Hawaii; and
- (6) One representative from the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force is requested to submit a written report of its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than July 31, 2014, for the Legislature's consideration during the 2015 Regular Session; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii, the President of the University of Hawaii System, the Chancellor of the University of Hawaii at Manoa, the Director of Health, the President of the Associated Students of the University of Hawaii, and ~~the Chairperson of the Board of Directors~~ the President of the Hawaiian Humane Society, The Humane Society of the United States Hawaii Office, the Hawaii Cat Foundation and the Director of the Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife

Re: HRC222 Please support resolution with changes proposed by Humane Society of the United States

HAWAII CAT FOUNDATION (HCF) (a 501(c)(3) non-profit cat rescue organization established in 1993), supports this resolution WITH CHANGES set forth by the HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES.

HCF desires to participate as a member in any task force established as a result of this resolution. Thank you for your consideration.



improving the quality of lives of pets and their people.

Testimony from
Alicia Maluafiti, President, Poi Dogs & Popoki

HCR 222 – Requesting the establishment of a task force to investigate the feral cat infestation at the University of Hawaii at Manoa

The House Committee on Health
Wednesday, March 27, 10 a.m., room 329

Position: Strong Opposition

Aloha Chair Au Belatti, Vice Chair Morikawa and members of the Committee.

My name is Alicia Maluafiti and I am the President of Poi Dogs & Popoki (PDP), a local nonprofit helping people care for animals in their communities. I am also the former Director of Community Relations for the Hawaiian Humane Society and the founder and former president of the Oahu SPCA. I have personally cared for a cat colony in Ewa Beach for 6 years and manage an unadoptable cat sanctuary with 400+ cats called Popoki Place. **PDP is in strong opposition to HCR 222.**

Feral cats live all over our island, our state, and our country - in every landscape – not just the University of Hawaii. They are members of the domestic cat species, but are not socialized to people. They live among their own in "colonies," and unless neutered, those colonies grow. Poi Dogs & Popoki works with caregivers across Oahu to effectively address stray and feral cats in their communities with a program called Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR).

Trap-Neuter-Return improves the lives of feral cats. TNR is the most cost effective, long-term and humane approach for stray and feral cats. Cats are humanely trapped, spayed or neutered, and microchipped. Cats not socialized to humans are returned to their colony site, and their population gradually reduces over time. The behaviors associated with mating, such as yowling, fighting and spraying will stop, and the cats become good neighbors.

Traditional approaches for feral cats - such as catch and kill or attempts to relocate - do not work. They are costly, inhumane, and endless. Having cats removed from an area creates a vacuum, which more cats move into and breed to fill. Decades of these failed practices proves their futility.

Our community wants compassionate solutions. An overwhelming majority of Americans - 81% - believe it is more humane to leave a stray cat outside to live out her life than have her caught and killed, according to a national survey. Every feral cat – and many more friendly cats – are euthanized every year by Oahu’s animal control contractor. Sadly - feral cats are not adoptable and there are simply not enough homes for the cats that are friendly.

There are simple things we can do together to ensure a peaceful coexistence. Sometimes outdoor felines behave in ways that their human neighbors don’t like or understand. Not everyone likes having cats and other animals in their community, but the fact is, the animals are there and it is their home, too. Society created this situation and we are trying to manage it in a humane and compassionate way.

The current TNR program at UH is working and is successful! The UH collaboration is a model embraced by caregivers across the state and it follows much of the success found at Stanford University and other campuses where irresponsible students dump their cats when they leave for summer. There are a handful of people at the UH that oppose the TNR program despite its success and push for policies to “eradicate” the animals and the people caring for them.

Let us – the animal welfare community and cat colony caregivers – continue our successful TNRM programs. It is the humane response. **Please hold HCR 222.** Mahalo.

To: Chair Au Bellati, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee on Health

From: Mary James

Date: March 25, 2013

Re: Testimony in opposition to House Concurrent Resolution 222

I oppose this concurrent resolution because it will waste state resources and not accomplish any meaningful goal. The cats on the campus are cared for by many people on and off the campus who take their own time and spend their own money to ensure the cats are fixed and healthy. I have never heard of any illness attributable to the campus cats. In addition, the concurrent resolution seems very one-sided and appears to have made the decision that the cats must go without any discussion of the facts. It's unclear what the task force is supposed to discuss other than the method of eradicating the cats. I also wonder if there is a number of cats on campus that would be acceptable to the drafter and not considered an "infestation."

Finally, I personally find the presence of cats very welcoming and would find a campus without cats to be sterile and uncaring.

Please hold this concurrent resolution.

morikawa2 - Shaun

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2013 4:47 AM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: feralfarm.wolf51@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HCR222 on Mar 27, 2013 10:00AM

HCR222

Submitted on: 3/26/2013

Testimony for HLT on Mar 27, 2013 10:00AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nancy Wolf	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: With all the important issues to be resolved in our society, why create work to dismantle a successful program that teaches compassion and ingenuity to your college students? Those cats are not transmitting disease and never have. Allowing them to live under managed conditions is demonstrating to the next generation that compassion and thoughtful management are the keys to successful cohabitation with the animal kingdom.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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morikawa2 - Shaun

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2013 2:34 PM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: Nekokichigai@aol.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HCR222 on Mar 27, 2013 10:00AM

HCR222

Submitted on: 3/26/2013

Testimony for HLT on Mar 27, 2013 10:00AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Suzanne Watanabe	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: I am testifying in opposition to HCR 222 - Establishment of a task force to investigate the feral cat infestation at U.H. Manoa. I do not fully support this bill for the following reasons: 1. It will likely lead to a mass roundup of the feral cat population by Hawaiian Humane Society and the ultimate destruction of these cats; 2. Research data over a 20-year period by Alley Cat Allies, a nationwide cat welfare organization, have shown that clearing out a large population from a cat colony leads to what has been termed a "vacuum effect," i.e., when a large part of a colony is taken away, it provides more food for the remaining cats, thus leading to a repopulation of the colony at a faster rate. The "vacuum effect" will also attract feral cats from other colonies who are looking for available food sources. 3. Feral cats provide a natural population control method to contain rat and field mice populations. (This was observed at a healthcare facility in Honolulu when its feral cat population was almost totally removed. The facility soon became infested with rats, thus creating a worse health risk. The facility was forced to allow the return of feral cats, which had been neutered/spayed, in order to contain the rat population.) 4. There is no data to prove that feral cats are inherently unhealthy, sick or diseased. A 2006 study done over an 11-year period (1993- 2004) on 103,643 stray and feral cats in six states on the mainland found that "less than 1% of those cats was euthanized due to debilitating conditions, trauma, or infectious diseases." (Jennifer L. Wallace and Julie K. Levy, Population Characteristics of Feral Cats Admitted to Seven Trap-Neuter-Return Programs in the United States, 8(4) Journal of Feline Med. Surg. 279, 282 (2006)) I would suggest that if a task force is established to discuss this issue, that current cat colony managers be invited to participate and provide their input, and also be invited to manage the cat colonies on the U.H. campus. The U.H. should do what some no-kill shelters do: enter into a contract with the colony managers who would agree to practice TNR (trap, neuter, return), and manage - feed, neuter/spay, care for, etc. - the feral cat colonies. Data has also proven that when TNR is used extensively, cat colonies can be managed to a point where the population will stabilize at a manageable level, and in due time, will decrease as the cats die. Your consideration of this matter as well as of my concerns will be greatly appreciated.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing , improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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