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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on
AGRICULTURE

Wednesday, February 14, 2018
8:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 312

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 2593
RELATING TO FERAL CATS

House Bill 2593 proposes to require the Department of Health to contract with a nonprofit animal rescue group to oversee caretakers of feral cats and would exempt those caretakers from state laws and county ordinances related to the feeding and confinement of cats. This measure would also establish a formal trap-sterilize-return process. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) strongly opposes this measure.**

Feral cats are a major threat to wildlife and humans in Hawaii. Hawaii's native species evolved over millions of years in an environment devoid of human-introduced predators, such as cats. This has resulted in an extremely high rate of endemism (i.e., native species found nowhere else in the world) and the evolution of species with characteristics that make them easy prey for cats, such as seabirds that nest on the ground or in burrows. Cats are a major predator of native wildlife in Hawaii, including federally listed species designated as "threatened" or "endangered." Cats have been documented preying on chicks and adults of Hawaiian coots, shearwaters, petrels, and other native birds. Today, 28% of all threatened and endangered species in the U.S. are located in Hawaii, and 78% of all U.S. species extinctions have occurred in Hawaii. Across the U.S., cats kill an estimated 2.4 billion birds per year. Reducing predation is a critical component of avoiding further declines in the populations of Hawaii's endemic species, for which state agencies and partners spend millions of dollars annually.

In addition to preying on native wildlife, cats pose a substantial health risk to humans and wildlife due to being the only known reproductive host of the toxoplasmosis parasite (*Toxoplasmosis gondii*). Toxoplasmosis reproduces in the feline digestive system, and a single cat can excrete 145 billion eggs per year in its feces. Once released into the environment, these

eggs can infect other animals, including humans, both on land and in the ocean. Toxoplasmosis parasites create cysts in muscle and organ tissues and can cause inflammation of the heart, liver, and brain. In Hawaii, the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration has recorded at least eight endangered Hawaiian monk seal deaths that are attributable to toxoplasmosis infection. Toxoplasmosis can also infect Hawaii's native birds, including the nene and the newly released alala. In humans, toxoplasmosis can impact the immune system and has been known to primarily impact pregnant women and unborn children. During pregnancy, this infection can result in severe damage to the unborn child, miscarriage, stillbirth, or substantial birth defects including enlargement or smallness of the head.

A study by University of Hawaii researchers Cheryl Lohr and Christopher Lepczyk found that 87% of Hawaii residents want to see a reduction in the number of feral cats in Hawaii, and that 78% want feral cats permanently removed where threatened and endangered species exist. Trap-neuter-return (referred to in this measure as trap-sterilize-return, but more commonly referred to as TNR), however, is not the solution.

The Department notes several statements in this measure that are contradicted by scientific evidence. Namely, the statement on page 2, line 10 is incorrect: TNR does not reduce colony populations over time. This has been shown many times across different studies that look at the outcomes of TNR practices, and is summarized in a 2009 review paper by Longcore et al. While some advocates for TNR claim that TNR is successful, the metric for "success" used by these advocates is the perceived wellness of the cats themselves, not the reduction of population size. In fact, studies have shown that TNR may lead to increasing population sizes as the presence of an established colony provides owners of unwanted pets with a location where they can abandon their pet with an assumption that someone else will care for their animal.

The only reductions in colony population size noted in the 2009 article by Longcore et al. came from colonies where removed cats were adopted into homes at very high rates. This contradicts another statement made in this measure, on page 1, line 3, that feral cats are impractical to place into adoptive homes. This has been achieved in other regions using aggressive adoption campaigns, for at least a subset of feral cats that are adoptable.

The Department also questions the statement on page 1, line 14, that when cats from a colony are euthanized, they leave a vacuum that is filled by other unsterilized cats entering a colony. This is followed by a statement on page 2, line 8, that when sterilized cats are returned to a colony, unsterilized cats are less likely to take their place. The Department is not aware of any research supporting this claim. Further, whether unsterilized cats from the surrounding environment enter into a colony or remain outside of the colony does not change the total number of feral cats on the landscape.

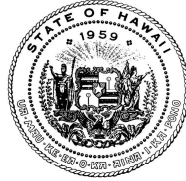
The Department also notes that the statement on page 2, line 1 may not be accurate, regarding the TNR as being "more humane than euthanization" and "less costly." People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) opposes TNR as an inhumane method of feral cat management, as it prolongs the life of cats living on the landscape that are more likely to suffer from disease, injury, and malnourishment. With regard to cost, a 2013 study by University of Hawaii

researchers Cheryl Lohr and Christopher Lepczyk found that TNR was less cost-effective than implementing a program of trapping and euthanasia.

The Department notes that the State of New York is currently being sued by the American Bird Conservancy for allowing feral cat colonies to be maintained in a state park containing a federally listed, threatened species of plover, as a violation of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Should the State of Hawaii establish a formal TNR program at the Department of Health, or any other department, the State would similarly be exposed to liability under the ESA and Hawaii's own endangered species laws under Chapter 195D, Hawaii Revised Statutes, for contributing to the further decline of Hawaii's threatened and endangered wildlife.

The Department supports cat management options that combine humane treatment when possible with the ecological reality of mammalian predators existing on islands with threatened and endangered wildlife. Sociable cats should be adopted into homes wherever possible, and the Department is aware and supportive of options, such as cat sanctuaries or outdoor enclosures (called "catios") that allow cats to live outside of homes but remain separated from Hawaii's native wildlife. However, any realistic approach to the feral cat problem in Hawaii must include euthanasia for animals that cannot be placed into homes or sanctuaries. Implementing a TNR program would only increase the problems Hawaii faces from feral cats, while exposing the State to potential lawsuits under the ESA.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
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Testimony in OPPOSITION to HB 2593
RELATING TO FERAL CATS

REPRESENTATIVE RICHARD P. CREAGAN, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Hearing Date: February 14, 2018

Room Number: 312

Time: 8:30 AM

1 **Fiscal Implications:** This bill has fiscal implications not included in the Governor's
2 Supplemental Budget Request for appropriations priorities.

3 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health appreciates the intent of HB 2593 to seek a
4 resolution to the growing feral cat population. It requires the Department to contract with a
5 nonprofit animal rescue group to oversee caretakers of feral cats; however, the Department
6 respectfully opposes this measure as we believe it is unnecessary.

7 It has been determined that each county already has ordinances that to varying degrees
8 address the management of feral cats. They each have the ability to contract with a third party to
9 implement the control and management of feral animals. The Department respectfully requests
10 that this measure be deferred and allow the counties to enforce their respective established
11 ordinances instead of creating new state regulations. We also have concerns about the caregivers
12 being exempted from state law and county ordinances and the lack of funding to implement this
13 measure.

14 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



HB2593
RELATING TO FERAL CATS
House Committee on Agriculture

February 14, 2018

8:30 a.m.

Room 312

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **OPPOSES** HB2593, which would tie the state's and counties' hands in addressing the serious ecological and public health impacts of feral cats and cat colonies, that have proliferated throughout our islands.

Uncontrolled cat populations have devastating effects on island ecosystems and native species. Through food competition, disease transmission, predation, and displacement, cats have directly and indirectly contributed to the endangerment and extinction of dozens of native species; a 2011 study concluded that, on island ecosystems throughout the world, “feral cats preyed on at least 175 endangered vertebrates (25 reptiles, 123 birds and 27 mammals) and are at least in part responsible for 14% of global bird, mammal and reptile extinctions, currently affecting 8% of critically endangered birds, mammals and reptiles.”¹ Native birds appear particularly sensitive to cat introductions: for example, in the Phoenix Islands, the threatened bristle-thighed curlew can no longer be found on islands with feral cat populations; in Tuamotu, feral cats compete with the endemic and critically endangered Tuamotu kingfisher; on Kerguelen Island, the reproductive success of the native skua has greatly decreased as a result of competition with feral cats; on Ascension Island, feral cats limit settlements and often kill sooty terns, masked boobies, and frigates; and in Port Cros island in the Mediterranean, cats are responsible for the high mortality rates of young Yelkouan shearwaters.²

The Hawaiian archipelago is no exception to the long list of islands whose ecosystems have been impacted by cat introductions. As early as 1903, an ornithologist reported how “on Lāna‘i, in walking up a single ravine, I counted the remains of no less than 22 native birds killed by cats.”³ Unfortunately, feral cat predation on Hawai‘i’s threatened and endangered bird species continues to this day: between 2012 and 2015, the Kaua‘i National Wildlife Refuge attributed the deaths of 237 endangered waterbirds to feral cats alone; in addition, feral cats have also been documented preying on Newell’s shearwaters, wedge-tailed shearwaters, the O‘ahu elepaio, ‘alae ‘ula, and

¹ Medina, et. al., *A Global Review of the Impacts of Invasive Cats on Island Endangered Vertebrates*, GLOBAL CHANGE BIOLOGY, 2011, at 3509 (emphasis added); see also Medina, et. al., *Underlying Impacts of Invasive Cats on Islands: Not Only a Question of Predation*, BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION, 2014, at 328.

² Medina, et. al., *Underlying Impacts of Invasive Cats on Islands: Not Only a Question of Predation*, BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION, 2014, at 327-338.

³ Kim Steutrmann Rogers, *Feral Cats are a Serious Threat to Hawai‘i’s Endangered Birds, Monk Seals and Dolphins*, HONOLULU MAGAZINE, Oct. 12, 2016.

Hawaiian petrels, among others. **In one recent case on Kaua'i, a single feral cat has been estimated to have killed at least 101 endangered birds over a six month period.** In addition to depredation and associated displacement from critical habitat, forensic evidence now suggests that cats may also impact a range of endangered native species through the transmission of fatal diseases, such as cat-borne toxoplasmosis;⁴ dead specimens of critically endangered 'alala and 'ilioholoikauaua, as well as nai'a, have recently been found to have been infected by this disease.⁵ **Without proactive and timely controls over our ever-increasing feral cat population – estimated in 2012 to number 300,000 on O'ahu alone – many such culturally significant native species face devastation and even potential extinction in the near future.**

The failure to address feral cat populations in a timely manner may also pose a particular threat to Native Hawaiians and others who frequently recreate in and subsist from nearshore waters, or who consume produce grown in areas that may be frequented by feral cats. Toxoplasmosis infection, which results from the *Toxoplasma gondii* parasite that reproduces only in felid intestinal tracts, is considered extremely dangerous to pregnant woman and individuals with compromised immune systems.⁶ Even in otherwise healthy individuals, toxoplasmosis infection has also been linked to higher rates of mental illness, including schizophrenia, depression, obsessive compulsive disorder, and brain cancer.⁷ Toxoplasmosis can also significantly slow reaction times, with one study showing that infected individuals may be two and a half times more likely to be involved in a traffic accident.⁸ **With the ability to survive for six months or more in soil or warm seawater,⁹ toxoplasma oocytes shed by feral cat colonies may therefore pose a substantial health risk for those who swim in, eat from, or otherwise enter our nearshore waters, including Native Hawaiians in particular, as well as all those who consume produce from home gardens, community gardens, and commercial farming operations where feral cats may be present.**

By exempting cat “caretakers” from laws relating to the feeding and harboring of feral cats, and promoting the maintenance of cat colonies throughout the islands, this measure may tie the hands of the state and counties from addressing the substantial and

⁴ Toxoplasmosis results from infection by *Toxoplasma gondii*, a parasite that reproduces only in the digestive tract of felid, and that spreads through consumption of oocytes or transmission by mosquitoes or other insects. Oocysts can remain infectious even after extended periods in harsh conditions, and can survive for more than a year in warm moist soil, up to a few years in cold water, and for six months or longer in seawater. D.S. Lindsay, et. al, *Sporulation and survival of Toxoplasma gondii oocysts in seawater*, 50 J. EUKARYOT MICROBIOL 687 (2003); Thierry M. Work, et. al., *Fatal toxoplasmosis in free-ranging endangered 'alala from Hawaii*, 36 J. OF WILDLIFE DISEASES 205, 209 (2010); see also THE CENTER FOR FOOD SECURITY AND PUBLIC HEALTH AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY, TOXOPLASMA INFECTION 2 (2017), available at <http://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/Factsheets/pdfs/toxoplasmosis.pdf>.

⁵ *Id.* at 210; Paul Kvinta, *Hawaii's crazy war over zombie cats*, OUTSIDE MAGAZINE, October 28, 2016; Associated Press, *Dolphin found to have died from parasite found in cats*, HONOLULU STAR-ADVERTISER, May 4, 2016.

⁶ Astrid M. Tenter, et. al. *Toxoplasma gondii: from animals to humans*, 30 INT. J. PARASITOL 1217 (2000);

⁷ E. Fuller Torrey & Robert H. Yolken, *Toxoplasma gondii and Schizophrenia*, 9 EMERGING INFECTIOUS DISEASES 1375 (2003); Jaroslav Flegr, *Effects of Toxoplasma on human behavior*, 33 SCHIZOPHRENIA BULLETIN 757 (2007).

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ Lindsey, *supra* note 4.

growing threats that feral cats pose to our native wildlife and to public health. Notably, “trap-neuter-return” strategies such as that proposed in this measure do not provide any timely relief from the ecological and public health threats caused by feral cat populations. **Such strategies also have not been shown to successfully reduce cat populations, over the decades in which they have been explored; on the contrary, the visible maintenance of a feral cat colony has been shown to in some cases increase rates of cat abandonment, including cats that have not been sterilized.**¹⁰ Accordingly, this measure may only exacerbate feral cats’ impacts on our native wildlife and communities, and severely inhibit our government’s ability to address the looming environmental and public health crisis that may be posed by feral cats.

Therefore, OHA respectfully urges the Committee to **HOLD** HB2593. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

¹⁰ Travis Longcore, et. al. *Critical Assessment of Claims Regarding Management of Feral Cats by Trap-Neuter-Return*, 23 CONSERVATION BIOLOGY 4, 887 (2009). Notably, Trap-Neuter-Release is also considered an inhumane approach for cats themselves, by organizations such as People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. See PETA, Animal Rights Uncompromised: Feral Cats, <https://www.peta.org/about-peta/why-peta/feral-cats/> (last accessed February 8, 2018).

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 1:10:50 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Frances Pueo	Hui Pono Holoholona	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am the founder of Hui Pono Holoholona and oppose to HB2593. Why? As most 501c3, non-profits we are 100% volunteers on a tight very limited budget. We do our community a service by offering low cost/no cost spay and neuter for dogs and cats. We educate and support Trap-Neuter-Return-Manage of cat colonies. This bill is going to cause more harm, by driving feeders "underground" to continue to feed so as not to be identified as a feeder.

We reach out to those that feed to get their colonies S/N, hopefully microchipped and vaccinated for the Upper resp. This cost us monies we do not have, but we apply for grants and have fundraisers. Its a struggle but we are maintaining to offer this service.

This HB2593 mandating us under law to provide for free to a State Agency confidential information of person/persons who do not wish to be known (we could be sued), locations of cat count to each colonies, upkeep of those records, our financial cost burden to supply traps, demading by law our time-YES OUR TIME to monitor the caregivers and etc., **we are not your marshals! This could drive 501c3 non-pofit like ours to just QUIT!**

If this bill is passed, will cause more harm to what we have successfully done in promoting our community to take on TNRM in their neighborhood instead of round up to kill. We have educated the public and continue to do, to S/N and not abandon animals. What leads to animal abandonment is the high kill at the Humane Society, people have told me the cat has a better chance to survive to catch rats then being turned in to the Humane Society.

Frances Pueo (808) 769-1128 Pres.Hui Pono Holohlona 501C3 non-profit

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 8:07:49 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Chelsea	OISC	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite, and Committee Members,

I am in strong opposition to HB 2593 relating to feral cats. This measure would establish a non-profit as caretakers for feral cat colonies.

I am a graduate student at the University of Hawaii and resident of Kahaluu where feral cat colonies are present and an ever-growing problem to public health and our native birds. I frequently visit Kualoa beach park to enjoy the scenery and catch a glimpse of the native Hawaiian stilts that used to frequent the fields, but are now confined to certain areas or completely gone because of the growing feral cat population at this park. I attended UH 10 years ago as an under grad and saw the feral cat problem then and was surprised to see that nothing has changed since, especially at the institute where much of the science about the negative impacts of feral cats has been produced.

The Trap, spay and neuter, and release program has proven ineffective at controlling feral cat colonies. When I've looked at feral cat colonies at Heeia Beach Park and Maunawili where they are consistently fed, there are many cats that do not look healthy and they are obviously reproducing.

Euthanization is a remedy to the public health issue and threat to native species posed by feral cat colonies that can be done humanely. Passing this bill would just contribute to the growing problem and threat. I strongly urge committee members to oppose HB 2593.

Mahalo for you time,

Chelsea Arnott



February 10, 2018

Committee on Agriculture
House of Representatives, State of Hawai'i
State Capitol
410 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Testimony submitted via website:

<http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/submittestimony.aspx>

Re: **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2593**

HEARING DATE: Wednesday, February 14, 2018

TIME: 8:30 a.m.

PLACE: Conference Room 312, Capitol Bldg.

Dear Chair Creagan, Vice-Chair DeCoite, and Committee Members:

As you may know, the Pacific Pet Alliance (“PPA”) is a Hawai'i non-profit organization that promotes responsible pet ownership through education and advocacy. We thank you for the opportunity to submit our testimony in support of HB 2593.

PPA strongly supports the humane treatment of all animals, not just those that are fortunate enough to be cared for as pets and “family members” by their human owners. We are pleased to add our voices to those of the many other animal interest organizations that support and advocate for “Trap-Neuter-Return” (TNR) strategies for non-domesticated free-roaming cats and kittens.¹

By providing a statutorily-sanctioned regulatory framework within which feral cat colonies can be systematically managed and monitored, HB 2593 would harness the energies and goodwill of dedicated volunteers and non-profit rescue organizations to assist in the effective, humane reduction of feral cat populations. This would reduce conflicts and tensions between pro- and anti-feral cat factions, while providing the added benefits of smaller feral cat populations, lower euthanasia rates, reduced nuisance behaviors, and substantial cost savings.

¹ PPA and most other animal interest organizations favor use of the descriptive terms “free-roaming cats” and/or “community cats,” as opposed to the inherently pejorative term “feral cats.” But as HB 2593 uses the term “feral cats,” for purposes of this testimony we will use all of those terms interchangeably.

There should be no doubt: **TNR strategies are proven, effective methods for humanely reducing cat colony populations over time.** Numerous studies by well-credentialed researchers have shown that fertility control using TNR is effective in reducing cat colony size over time. For example, in 2014 researchers J.K. Levy, N.M. Isaza, and K.C. Scott – all at the Department of Small Animal Clinical Sciences at the College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Florida – reported in *The Veterinary Journal* that:

A population of 155 cats in 11 colonies on a Florida university campus was reduced to 23 over 11 years, and three colonies became extinct (Levy et al., 2003). Cats in six colonies in rural North Carolina were reduced by 36% in 2 years and continued to decline or the colonies were extinguished over the next 5 years (Nutter, 2005). In Rome, 103 colonies experienced an average decrease of 22%, while a colony at a Rio de Janeiro zoo fell by 58% over 7 years (Mendes-de-Almeida, et al., 2011). In Florida, 132 colonies containing 920 cats were reduced by 26% in the first year of a TNR program (Centonze and Levy, 2002).

See, J.K. Levy, et al., *The Veterinary Journal* 201 [2014] 269–274. (Citations for the within-cited publications are appended.)

These findings regarding the effectiveness of TNR for population reduction in feral cat colonies most recently have been corroborated by a study published within the last few weeks. The study examined the effectiveness of a TNR program conducted in Chicago, Illinois, where a county law permitting TNR was enacted in 2007. The researchers reported that from a population of 195 free-roaming (“feral”) cats from 20 existing colonies, “[c]olony populations, when grouped by the number of years enrolled in the program, declined by a mean of 54% from entry and 82% from peak levels. Results from coexistent TNR programs in the Chicago area are consistent with these findings.” Eight of the 20 colonies were entirely eliminated; all but three colonies experienced reductions in size from peak levels, while the others experienced no overall change. Fifteen colonies dropped in size from initial levels or had the same population at the study’s end as at colony entry.

See, Spehar DD and Wolf PJ, *Animals* 2018, 8, 14 (published on January 18, 2018).

Consider also that **HB 2593’s proposed implementation of legally-sanctioned TNR strategies would help to transform many devoted volunteer cat-colony caretakers from distrustful opponents of animal control authorities into collaborative colleagues working together within a statutory framework.** This is an important collateral advantage of TNR over the “usual” strategies for animal population control.

Other important advantages of TNR strategies include **lower euthanasia rates** at local humane societies and shelters, **improved health and safety** of the cats and other animals and people in their environments, and **cost savings for animal control authorities.**

Together, all of the advantages afforded by TNR will improve the quality of life not only for community cats, but also for the humans with whom they co-exist.

TNR colony management strategies also help to abate many of the unpleasant nuisance behaviors associated with feral cats. For example, once cats are surgically sterilized, their objectionable screams and yowls that accompany “courtship,” fighting and mating largely cease. Territorial spraying of intensely aromatic urine by tomcats is dramatically reduced, along with the associated noxious odors.

Most neutered cats also tend to roam far less than their un-neutered colony mates, who continue to be governed by uncontrollable hormone-driven reproductive imperatives. **Reduced roaming results in reduced numbers of encounters between feral cats and other animals and birds** upon which they sometimes prey (including threatened or endangered species), as well as in reduced exposure of the cats to risks from motor vehicles, cat-chasing dogs, and, unfortunately, cat-hating humans. What’s more, neutered cats living in properly-managed colonies are consistently fed adequate, healthy diets by their human caretakers, so they are far less prone to engage in hunger-motivated “hunting” expeditions.

PPA acknowledges that for purposes of *short-term* reductions of colony population numbers, research conclusions are divided among published reports as to whether management strategies exclusively using euthanasia (i.e., “trap-and-kill,” the wholesale killing of community cats and kittens) are more effective than TNR-based strategies.² In our view, however, both strategies likely are roughly equivalent in terms of short-term efficacy when the research findings are controlled for difference in methodologies and locales (and, frankly, for differences in undisclosed biases among different researchers).³

But over the longer term, **TNR approaches are much more effective than euthanasia-based (“trap and kill”) policies.** As has been noted by Bryan Kortis, former Program Manager for PetSmart Charities, Inc., the largest funder of companion animal welfare efforts in North America, and National Programs Director at Neighborhood Cats in New York, New York:

Even if the trapping does succeed in removing 100 percent of the colony, a phenomenon known as the “vacuum effect” will kick in. No feral colony is an

² Researchers on both sides of the issue agree that neither strategy can completely eliminate community cat colonies. The species *Felis catus* is notably resilient and has an extraordinary high reproductive capacity unless spayed, neutered, or consistently dosed with contraceptive drugs.

³ Interactions with cats tend to provoke strong human emotions, both ailurophilic and ailurophobic, in contemporary Western human society. It seems that few people are middle-of-the-road when it comes to their attitudes about the felines that are ubiquitous in our communities.

island. Once the members of one colony are removed, members of adjoining colonies or newly abandoned domestics [*pet cats or kittens*] will quickly move in to take advantage of the food source if it still remains, beginning the cycle of breeding anew as one set of cats replaces another. By contrast, TNR leaves a neutered colony in place and the cats, being very territorial, tend to exclude newcomers, thereby breaking the breeding cycle.

(See, <https://archive.li/o/PN7f/www.naiaonline.org/articles/article/trap-neuter-return-plans-provide-a-practical-solution-to-feral-cat-population-growth>).

Practical experience has proven that **rounding up and executing free-roaming (“feral”) cats and kittens will not help to eliminate or seriously reduce their populations over the long term.** Older, slower, and more trusting cats would be the ones most easily trapped and killed, leaving others that are younger, faster, and wiler to survive and continue to reproduce, unchecked. The laws of natural selection cannot be repealed through slaughter; rather, killing-based cat colony management will only lead to increasing populations of the most elusive cats that are the least amenable to capture, sterilization and colony management. Furthermore, as others have noted, the wholesale slaughter of free-roaming cats will leave metaphorical blood on the hands of supposedly “humane” and “rescue” organizations, and result in a great many broken hearts.

In assessing the respective merits as between euthanasia-based and TNR-based strategies, one thing is certain: **“euthanasia” of a healthy cat, or one that can become healthy with reasonable treatment, is cruel and inhumane, plain and simple.** In contrast, colony management using TNR is an effective, morally-justifiable approach that improves the lives and health of free-roaming community cats while allowing us humans to demonstrate and celebrate our kinder, nobler natures.

This proposed legislation presents a “win-win” approach for addressing a serious problem that, until recently, has seemed to be insoluble; it could well be the catalyst for achieving meaningful long-term solutions. **PPA respectfully urges the Committee on Agriculture to vote in favor of HB 2593.**

We would be more than happy to provide the Committee, or any of its individual members, with additional information upon request. You may contact us by email at pacificpetalliance@gmail.com.

Very truly yours,
/s/ Ken Cribbs

Ken Cribbs
Co-Director
Pacific Pet Alliance

References cited by Levy, et al. (supra):

Centonze, L.A., Levy, J.K., 2002. Characteristics of free-roaming cats and their caretakers. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 220, 1627–1633.

Levy, J.K., Gale, D.W., Gale, L.A., 2003. Evaluation of the effect of a long-term trap-neuter-return and adoption program on a free-roaming cat population. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* 222, 42–46.

Mendes-de-Almeida, F., Remy, G.L., Gershony, L.C., Rodrigues, D.P., Chame, M., Labarthe, N.V., 2011. Reduction of feral cat (*Felis catus* Linnaeus 1758) colony size following hysterectomy of adult female cats. *Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery* 13, 436–440.

Nutter, F.B. 2005. Evaluation of a trap-neuter-return management program for feral cat colonies: Population dynamics, home ranges, and potentially zoonotic diseases. *Dissertation, Doctor of Philosophy, North Carolina State University.*

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/10/2018 12:54:18 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Diane Endo	Wild Bird Rehab Haven	Support	No

Comments:

I am a volunteer with Wild Bird Rehab Haven.

i support allowing rescue groups to oversee the feeding and confinement of feral cats by their registered caretakers



improving the quality of lives of pets and their people.

Testimony by Alicia Maluafiti, Volunteer Board President
In strong support of HB 2593 - Relating to Feral Cats

House Committee on Agriculture
Wednesday, Feb. 14, 8:30 am, Rm. 312

Aloha Chair Creagan and Members of the Committee,

Poi Dogs & Popoki (PDP) is a nonprofit animal welfare organization with a mission to help people and their pets. We operate a mobile spay and neuter clinic on the island of Oahu providing affordable services to low income pet owners and caregivers in rural and underserved communities. We are in strong support of SB 2593.

Hundreds of volunteers across the state spend their own time and money to rescue and care for animals – especially cats because they and their offspring flourish in Hawaii. We have received little to no support by any government entity to engage in the only long term, scientifically-proven, humane solution to control this population: Trap-Neuter-Return or TNR. Instead, government workers have sought to criminalize compassion spending millions on a “Kill” strategy that is expensive, lazy and inhumane.

While the nonprofit community as well as the hundreds of cat colony caregivers and animal lovers are committed to saving lives – SB 2593 will simply save tax payers money. And that should be the fiscally responsible reason for passing the bill. Here is an example:

The City & County of Honolulu giveaway almost \$25 million in tax dollars to the Hawaiian Humane Society – in the next 5 years - to manage the lost, abandoned and stray animals on Oahu through the animal control contract. That contract specifically states that they will euthanize 11,500 cats which means they are first processed at intake which could include pickup, sheltered and fed for 48 hours, euthanized, then disposed of through cremation. And that process costs \$206 per animal (a low end estimate). However, the cost to sterilize a feral cat is \$25. This financial burden on Hawaii tax payers could be alleviated with stronger policies in support of spay and neuter.

Free or low-cost sterilization programs have proven to be cost-effective across the nation, reducing the cost of animal control and improving community and societal health. Communities that have established sterilization programs have seen euthanasia numbers drop by 30 to 60 percent. And lower animal admissions plus a lower euthanasia rate equals tax dollar savings.

For the State – this means alleviating the cost and burden to workers and the people they service our schools, our beaches and parks, our harbors, and other state properties inundated with feral cats. Because right now – the “kill” strategy of those departments has failed miserably. They have made NO progress in reducing those colonies and thrown millions of tax dollars down the drain in the process. And year after year – they come down to the legislature in search of more “solutions” to kill these animals, often testifying against TNR.

Its time to embrace the real solution. A compassionate solution. A long-term solution. A more AFFORDABLE and responsible solution than killing. If you pass SB 2593, PDP will commit to participating and helping caregivers TNR

their colonies. We are already doing this now. And with the Big Fix, our mobile spay/neuter clinic, we can bring sterilization services directly to colony sites with the ability to mass TNR up to 70 cats in one day. PDP has also started "Cat Stats," an online colony database to track colonies, caregivers and cats; measure the impact of TNR; hone strategy with mapping; and be better organized. This service is provided free of charge by a nonprofit organization whose mission is to improve the lives of ferals and support the compassionate people caring for them. For PDP's role in this program – if SB 2593 passes – we will require that cat colony caregivers sponsored by PDP participate in the cat stats program which will help us in administering the law and providing timely updates about its success.

We ask for your commitment to do better – to save lives. And put a stop to wasting tax dollars on the lazy, inhumane and costly kill strategy supported by our state and county governments. Please pass SB 2593. Mahalo for your consideration.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds that Free-Roaming cats are a diverse population that can include abandoned and lost pets, owned cats allowed outdoors, and the offspring of these cats. Feral cats, a subset of this population, are unsocialized and unaccustomed to interacting with people. ~~feral cats are non-domesticated cats that typically live outdoors in colonies with other feral cats. The fact that feral cats have not been socialized to interact with humans makes it impractical to place them into adoptive homes. Feral cat colonies create numerous problems for the cats themselves, as well as for as the communities that find their presence to be a nuisance.~~

~~The legislature also finds that feral cats can reproduce at an alarming rate. It is estimated that one unspayed female cat and her unaltered offspring can produce more than four hundred thousand cats within seven years. Although counties may attempt to control the Free-Roaming feral-cat population by euthanizing feral cats, euthanasia does not address the problem of exponential increases in the cat population. When cats from a colony are euthanized, they leave a vacuum that is filled when other unsterilized cats enter the same colony and start reproducing.~~

The legislature further finds that the trap-sterilize-return-manage process is not only more humane than ~~euthanization~~ euthanasia, but less costly. In the trap-sterilize-return-manage process, Free-Roaming feral cats are caught in humane traps, sterilized so that they can no longer reproduce, microchipped and surgically ear-tipped or ear-notched on one ear so that they may be easily identified as sterilized. The management process includes ~~may also include removing fleas and vaccinating the cats and~~ regularly providing food and water, monitoring the cats, sterilizing any cats in the colony, removing any kittens or socialized cats for assessment and potential adoption, and providing care to ill or injured cats, including euthanasia if deemed necessary. When sterilized cats are returned to their colonies, unsterilized cats are less likely to take their place. Thus, with the trap-sterilize-return-manage process, coupled with identifying

and evaluating new arrivals for placement in homes, colony populations can reduce gradually over time through attrition and removal for adoption.

The purpose of this Act is to promote the humane treatment of ~~feral~~ Free-roaming cats by:

(1) Requiring the Hawaii State Department of Health to contract with a bona fide Hawaii registered 501 (c) (3) nonprofit animal care or rescue groups to assist ~~oversee caretakers~~ caregivers of Free-roaming feral cats in carrying out the trap-sterilize-return-manage process;

(2) Exempting registered ~~caretakers~~ caregivers of Free-roaming feral cats from Hawaii state and county laws statutes, ordinances, regulations, rules or other laws, whether promulgated by the Legislature, relevant County Council or other State or County government agency or entity, relating to the feeding and confinement of cats; provided that the ~~caretakers~~ caregivers are registered with ~~the~~ a contracted non-profit animal care or rescue group; and

(3) Establishing a Free-roaming feral-cat trap-sterilize-return-manage program and process.

SECTION 2. The Hawaii Revised Statutes is amended by adding a new chapter to be appropriately designated and to read as follows:

"CHAPTER

Free-roaming FERAL-CATS

§ -1 **Definitions.** As used in this chapter, unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

"Animal care or rescue group" means a society or organization that:

(1) Is incorporated and in good standing as a nonprofit corporation pursuant to Hawaii Revised Statutes Chapter 414D;

(2) Is incorporated for the purpose of ~~providing shelter to animals,~~ promoting, advancing or otherwise facilitating animal welfare, preventing cruelty to animals, or a substantially similar purpose;

(3) Is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a tax exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

~~"Caretaker Caregiver"~~ Caregiver means a person who ~~provides or attempts to~~ assists with the management of a Free-Roaming cat colony by sterilizing, providing food, water and care to one or more Free-Roaming feral cats within the State.

"Colony" means a group of Free-Roaming feral cats that congregate and live together at a location within the State.

"Contracted rescue group" means ~~the~~ an animal care or rescue group that has entered into a contract with the Hawaii State Department of Health pursuant to this chapter.

"Department" means the Hawaii State Department of Health.

~~"Feral cat" means a cat that is not:~~

~~(1) Owned by any person, or has been abandoned by its owner; or~~

~~(2) Confined by any person to any real property.~~

"Registered ~~caretaker~~ caregiver" means a person who is registered as a ~~caretaker~~ caregiver pursuant to this chapter.

~~"Rescue group" means a society or organization that:~~

~~(1) Is incorporated and in good standing as a nonprofit corporation pursuant to chapter 414D;~~

~~(2) Is incorporated for the purpose of providing shelter to animals, promoting animal welfare, preventing cruelty to animals, or a substantially similar purpose;~~

~~(3) Euthanizes or arranges to euthanize an animal only after a licensed veterinarian has determined that:~~

~~— (A) The animal is suffering from an injury, terminal illness, or other health problem that severely affects the animal's quality of life; and~~

~~— (B) Euthanization is necessary to alleviate the animal's suffering; and~~

~~— (3) Is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a tax exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.~~

"Trap-sterilize-return-manage process" means a process that includes humanely capturing a Free-Roaming feral cat, arranging for its sterilization, complying with other applicable standards set forth in this chapter, and subsequently releasing the cat back to its original location if appropriate.

§ -2 Contracted rescue group responsibilities. By January 1, , the Department shall contract with ~~a~~ animal care or rescue groups to:

(1) Register ~~caretakers~~ caregivers of Free-Roaming feral cats;

(2) Maintain records of the names and contact information of registered ~~caretakers~~ caregivers and the location of colonies managed by registered caregivers;

(3) Submit an annual report to the Department that includes, ~~at a minimum~~:

(A) The number of registered ~~caretakers~~ caregivers;

(B) The number of Free-Roaming feral cats captured by registered ~~caretakers~~ caregivers and their dispositions;

(C) The ~~location of each known colony~~ number of known colonies managed by registered caregivers;

(D) ~~An estimate of~~ The number of Free-Roaming feral cats in each known colony and the number that have been sterilized;

(4) Instruct and provide informational materials to each registered ~~caretaker~~ caregiver regarding the care of Free-Roaming feral-cats and the trap-sterilize-return-manage process;

(5) Distribute humane ~~feral~~-cat traps to registered ~~caretakers~~ caregivers at no cost or at a reasonable cost;

(6) ~~Monitor~~ Make reasonable efforts to monitor registered ~~caretakers'~~ caregivers' compliance with this chapter and any rules adopted under this chapter;

(7) Revoke the registration of any ~~caretaker~~ caregiver who is known to fails to comply with this chapter or any rules adopted under this chapter; and

(8) Develop and distribute information and plan events to educate the general public on the care of Free-Roaming feral-cats and the trap-sterilize-return-manage process.

(9) Make reasonable efforts to mediate and resolve concerns regarding the presence of a known colony managed by a registered caregiver on or immediately adjacent to property managed by a federal, state or county agency for the primary purpose of protection of wildlife. Such concerns must be addressed directly and in writing to the contracted rescue group by the relevant agency. Reasonable steps to reduce any adverse impacts to wildlife shall be considered by the contracted rescue group.

(b) With the exception of information submitted in the annual report to the Department, all other information, materials and data collected and held by a contracted rescue group pursuant to this chapter shall be considered confidential and exempt from the disclosure provisions of Hawaii Revised Statutes, Chapter 92F (Uniform Information Practices Act [UIPA]), to the extent UIPA applies, if at all, as well as from any other applicable statutes, ordinances or regulations concerning disclosure of government-held information. This exemption, to the extent UIPA and any other open records laws apply, if at all, is required to avoid the frustration of a legitimate government function.

§ -3 Registered ~~caretaker~~ caregiver ~~privileges~~ exemptions. Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, a registered ~~caretaker~~ caregiver shall be exempt from any ~~state law or county ordinance~~ State or County statute, ordinance, regulation, rule or other law that:

(1) ~~Prohibits or requires a permit for~~ the feeding or care of stray animals or requires a permit to do so;

(2) Mandates the confinement of cats; or

(3) Limits the number of animals that a person may own, harbor, or have custody of;

provided that this section shall not be construed to limit the enforcement of any law or ordinance requiring the sterilization of cats or prohibiting cruelty to animals, ~~if enforcement is not solely based on the fact that~~ Enforcement of any law or ordinance prohibiting cruelty to animals may not be based solely on the registered ~~caretaker~~ caregiver is feeding or otherwise caring for Free-Roaming feral cats in a public or private location.

§ -4 Registered ~~caretaker~~ caregiver ~~responsibilities~~; trap-sterilize-return-manage process. (a) A registered ~~caretaker~~ caregiver who elects to participate in the trap-sterilize-return-manage process shall:

(1) Provide the contracted animal rescue group on an annual basis their name and contact information, the location of each known colony under their care, the number of Free-roaming Cats captured by registered caregivers and their dispositions by colony, the number of Free-roaming Cats in each known colony and the number in each known colony that have been sterilized.

(2) Make reasonable efforts to ensure all Free-roaming Cats under the caregiver's care are sterilized, microchipped and ear tipped or notched. Cats that were sterilized prior to registration of the caregiver and are not microchipped or ear tipped or notched are exempt from the requirement of microchipping and ear tipping or notching.

(3) Make reasonable efforts to remove socialized kittens and socialized cats for adoptive placement.

(4) Make reasonable efforts to provide veterinary medical care for animals suffering from illness or injury.

~~Use humane cat traps that, when in good working order and used properly, do not cause harm to cats;~~

~~—(2) Not leave a set cat trap unattended for more than four hours;~~

~~—(3) Not leave a cat trap unattended for more than a reasonable time if the caretaker knows that the cat trap contains a cat;~~

~~—(4) Have each captured feral cat sterilized by a licensed veterinarian;~~

~~—(5) Have the left ear of each captured male feral cat tipped or notched;~~

~~—(6) Have the right ear of each captured female feral cat tipped or notched;~~

~~—(7) Have each captured feral cat examined and treated for flea infestation; and~~

~~—— (B) Vaccinated from communicable diseases;~~

~~—(8) After following the procedures in paragraphs (4) through (7), as applicable, return the cat to the location where the caretaker initially captured the cat; and~~

~~—(9) Maintain a log of the number of cats the caretaker has caused to complete the trap-sterilize return process, and submit a copy of the log to the contracted rescue group not less than once monthly;~~

~~provided that a caretaker shall not be required to comply with paragraphs (5) through (7) if compliance is cost prohibitive.~~

(5) A registered caretaker shall be exempt from any requirement of subsection ~~(a)~~4 if the requirement would adversely affect the health of a ~~feral~~ cat or if a licensed veterinarian determines that a ~~feral~~ cat should be euthanized because:

(1A) The animal is suffering from an injury, illness, or other health problem that severely affects the animal's quality of life; and

(2B) ~~Euthanization~~ Euthanasia is necessary to alleviate the animal's suffering.

(e6) A registered caretaker shall comply with:

(1a) This chapter and rules adopted under this chapter; and

(2b) All State laws and County ordinances that prohibit cruelty to animals.

§ -5 **Rules.** Not later than January 1, , the Department shall adopt rules, pursuant to chapter 91, necessary for the purposes of this chapter."

§ -6 **Appropriation.** The sum of \$ _____ shall be appropriated to the Department to establish and carry out the purposes of this chapter for two (2) years from the effective date of this measure.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

INTRODUCED BY: _____

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 9:57:55 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Christin Matsushige	HAWAII CAT FOUNDATION	Support	No

Comments:

RE:HB2593 PLEASE SUPPORT - WITH AMMMENDMENTS

Dear Legislators:

The many supporters of HAWAII CAT FOUNDATION (HCF), a 501(c)(3) non profit committed to the welfare of Hawaii's cats, including the effective non lethal reduction of the community cat population through TNRM, strongly

urge you to support this bill - *with amendments*.

We support the intent of HB2593, which would protect cat colony caregivers who register with an animal welfare contractor from rules banning the practice of trap-neuter-return-manage (TNRM).

Responsible cat colony caregivers help to humanely reduce the number of cats on the landscape, improve their quality of life and reduce their impacts on wildlife. We applaud the Legislature's desire to protect these dedicated volunteers.

Some amendments to HB2593 are necessary to achieve its stated goals:

- The definition of "feral cat" should be removed and the term "Free-Roaming cat" should replace "feral cat" throughout the bill.
- Unnecessary restrictions regarding contract eligibility may make it difficult to find qualified groups, especially in smaller communities.
- The program rules should be limited to the fundamental practices of TRNM executed to the best ability of the caregivers.

Please support the version of this bill as amended by local animal welfare groups and cat advocates from across the state.

Thank you,

Christin Matsushige, President

HAWAII CAT FOUNDATION

www.hicat.org



Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

2700 Waialae Avenue Honolulu, Hawaii 96826
808.356.2200 • HawaiianHumane.org

Date: Feb. 14, 2018

To: Chair Rep. Richard P. Creagan
Vice Chair Rep. Lynn DeCoite
and Members of the Committee on Agriculture

Submitted By: Stephanie Kendrick, Public Policy Advocate
Hawaiian Humane Society, 808-356-2217

RE: Testimony in support of the intent of HB2593: Relating to Feral Cats
Wednesday, Feb. 14, 2018, 8:30 a.m., Capitol Room 312

Aloha Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite and Committee Members,

The Hawaiian Humane Society supports the intent of HB2593 to protect cat colony caregivers who register with an animal welfare contractor from rules banning the practice of trap-neuter-return-manage (TNRM).

Responsible TNRM is a humane and effective long-term strategy to reduce the number of cats on the landscape, improve their quality of life and reduce their impacts on wildlife. Feral cats, animals that are unsocialized and unaccustomed to interacting with people, represent just one part of the Free-Roaming cat population. Cats on the landscape also include abandoned and lost pets, as well as owned cats allowed outdoors. The bill as written fails to account for that diversity.

We encourage the state to support the work done by colony caregivers to help this diverse population of animals. We also would like to see caregivers protected from rules that interfere with their efforts to reduce the population of Free-Roaming cats in a humane fashion.

Some changes to HB2593 are required to accomplish those goals:

- The definition of “feral cat” fails to take into account the diversity of the Free-Roaming cat population. The definition should be removed and the term “Free-Roaming cat” should replace “feral cat” throughout the bill.
- The bill implies there will be a single contract awarded by the State Department of Health. Given the scope of the proposed program, each island would need its own

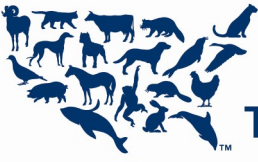
registry, access to traps and other support. The contracts would vary to reflect the needs of each island. Thereby, multiple contracts would be necessary.

- Any qualified animal-welfare nonprofit should be allowed to bid on contracts under the program to preserve as many options as possible, especially in smaller communities.
- The program rules should be limited to the fundamental practices of TRNM executed to the best ability of the caregivers.

We prefer the amended version of HB2593 drafted in cooperation with local animal welfare groups, cat colony caregivers from across the state and the Humane Society of the United States.

That draft addresses the concerns we have highlighted in our testimony. We urge you to adopt those amendments to this legislation.

Mahalo for your consideration and please let me know if I can be of assistance.



THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES

To: Honorable Chair Creagan, House Agriculture Committee members
In Support Of: HB2593, with amendments
Date: February 13, 2018 8:30 a.m.
Testimony By: Keith Dane, Hawaii Policy Advisor, The Humane Society of the United States

On behalf of Hawaii members and supporters of The Humane Society of the United States, I appreciate the opportunity to submit this written testimony in support of HB2593, related to feral cats, with amendments.

The HSUS understands that managing community cats (free-roaming cats who may be feral or stray) is a complex issue that concerns many legislators and agencies mandated to serve and protect the public. The issue will not be solved by a single piece of legislation, however we believe that HB 2593, with the amendments offered, can assist in addressing Hawaii's free-roaming cat population.

The presence of free-roaming or community cats, both feral and stray, across Hawaii is nothing new. Where cat populations are present, the choice is between having a managed population that declines over time and having an unmanaged population that continues to reproduce, creating an unhealthy situation for cats, wildlife and people. Programs using lethal control are ineffective, waste scarce resources, and are unpopular. If this approach worked, then we would not be discussing the issue today. Alternatively, when trap-neuter-return-manage programs (TNRM programs) are implemented effectively, cat populations humanely decline and disease and wildlife predation issues decrease, stabilizing and eventually eliminating the problem. Such programs should be more widely practiced and should have broader support, particularly from agencies concerned with the negative impacts of free-roaming cats.

Yet time and again, policies put into place create barriers to effective TNRM and deter citizen engagement in addressing the issue. Unfortunately, efforts to combat invasive plant and wildlife species often acts counter to TNRM programs, rendering them less effective. Residents who are actively participating in humane population reduction programs such as TNRM, rather than cooperating, are driven underground in an effort to protect cats from the lethal management most often advanced by efforts to control and eradicate invasive species. Properly managed, TNR programs can work, are squarely in line with public opinion, and can tap into a willing volunteer workforce that represents hundreds of dedicated people.

HB 2593 affords these citizens certain protections for engaging in cat population management programs while following a set of best practices set forth in the bill. They register and provide certain cat colony data to an animal welfare organization that has a formal agreement with the Department of Health for such purposes. Recognizing the value of TNRM and the citizens who volunteer their time and money to provide a public service, the Hawaii Legislature has defeated efforts to ban the feeding of free-roaming cats repeatedly. Yet attempts to restrict problem-solving solutions on certain public lands are being made through rule making by government agencies, seemingly ignoring the fact that the public and policy makers have already made it clear that they do not agree with these changes. HB 2593 firmly establish the Legislature's position on the issue and the desire for humane resolution of free-roaming cat overpopulation.

We share common ground with conservationists and animal welfare advocates as our ultimate goal is no unowned, and many fewer owned, cats outdoors leading to much less risk to the cats themselves, no predation of birds and wildlife, the elimination of potential public health concerns and no nuisance-related

issues. Until the day when the population has been reduced and all cats live in loving homes, The HSUS supports and promotes humane management of outdoor cat populations.

The HSUS respectfully asks that you adopt the amendments, agreed upon by many cat welfare organizations across the state, and summarized here:

1. Change terminology to Free-Roaming cat to include any cat living outdoors that contributes to the population.
2. Expand the definition of “animal care and rescue group” to provide a larger pool of potential organization to contract with Department of Health and allows for more than one group to enter into a contract. This will facilitate implementation on the different islands.
3. Provide privacy protections for registered caregivers and cat colony locations. Without such protections many citizens will not participate, fearing exposing the locations of colonies will make the cats vulnerable to harm by those not in support of TNRM programs.
4. Create a process for reducing adverse impacts to wildlife that is more in line with the capacity of the contracted animal care and rescue organizations. The cat-wildlife conflict is a complex issue that extends beyond the scope of this particular bill.
5. Clarify that cat caregivers are upholding their responsibilities under this bill by making a good faith effort to comply. While a caregiver can continuously set traps in order to get the remaining cats in their colony sterilized, they can’t make the cat go in.
6. Removes the requirement that the ear tip is done on the left ear for males and the right ear for females. As long as a cat can be identified as sterilized by one tipped ear, the cat’s gender is irrelevant.
7. Change caregiver reporting requirement from monthly to annually to reduce the administrative burden on contracting organizations and encourage greater compliance among caregivers.
8. Insert a blank appropriation for the Department of Health to carry out their subcontract with non-profit animal care or rescue groups as this amount will be dependent upon the human (and cat) population of each county.

The amendments better align the legislation with nationally accepted best practices for TNR programs as well as remove unnecessary barriers to public participation. We feel these changes make this a stronger piece of legislation. While this is a complex issue, the task ahead is not impossible. Cats living outdoors are the current reality and we have a choice to actively manage the problem or not. We ask that you pass this bill with our recommended amendments, for the benefit of the cats, people and environment of Hawaii.

Keith Dane
301-312-1489

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds that Free-Roaming cats are a diverse population that can include abandoned and lost pets, owned cats allowed outdoors, and the offspring of these cats. Feral a subset of this population, are unsocialized and unaccustomed to interacting with people. ~~feral cats are non-domesticated cats that typically live outdoors in colonies with other feral cats. The fact that feral cats have not been socialized to interact with humans makes it impractical to place them into adoptive homes. Feral cat colonies create numerous problems for the cats themselves, as well as for as the communities that find their presence to be a nuisance.~~

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The legislature further finds that the trap-sterilize-return-manage process is not only more humane than ~~euthanization~~ euthanasia, but less costly. In the trap-sterilize-return-manage process, Free-Roaming feral cats are caught in humane traps, sterilized so that they can no longer reproduce, microchipped and surgically ear-tipped or ear-notched on one ear so that they may be easily identified as sterilized. The management process includes ~~may also include removing fleas and vaccinating the cats and~~ regularly providing food and water, monitoring the cats, sterilizing any cats in the colony, removing any kittens or socialized cats for assessment and potential adoption, and providing care to ill or injured cats, including euthanasia if deemed necessary. When sterilized cats are returned to their colonies, unsterilized cats are less likely to take their place. Thus, with the trap-sterilize-return-manage process, coupled with identifying

and evaluating new arrivals for placement in homes, colony populations can reduce gradually over time through attrition and removal for adoption.

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"Colony" means a group of Free-Roaming feral cats that congregate and live together at a location within the State.

"Contracted rescue group" means ~~the~~ an animal care or rescue group that has entered into a contract with the Hawaii State Department of Health pursuant to this chapter.

"Department" means the Hawaii State Department of Health.

~~"Feral cat" means a cat that is not:~~

~~(1) Owned by any person, or has been abandoned by its owner; or~~

~~(2) Confined by any person to any real property.~~

"Registered ~~caretaker~~ caregiver" means a person who is registered as a ~~caretaker~~ caregiver pursuant to this chapter.

~~"Rescue group" means a society or organization that:~~

~~(1) Is incorporated and in good standing as a nonprofit corporation pursuant to chapter 414D;~~

~~(2) Is incorporated for the purpose of providing shelter to animals, promoting animal welfare, preventing cruelty to animals, or a substantially similar purpose;~~

~~(3) Euthanizes or arranges to euthanize an animal only after a licensed veterinarian has determined that:~~

~~— (A) The animal is suffering from an injury, terminal illness, or other health problem that severely affects the animal's quality of life; and~~

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(1) Register ~~caretakers~~ caregivers of Free-Roaming feral cats;

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(3) Submit an annual report to the Department that includes, ~~at a minimum~~:

(A) The number of registered ~~caretakers~~ caregivers;

(B) The number of Free-Roaming feral cats captured by registered ~~caretakers~~ caregivers and their dispositions;

(C) The ~~location of each known colony~~ number of known colonies managed by registered caregivers;

(D) ~~An estimate of~~ The number of Free-Roaming feral cats in each known colony and the number that have been sterilized;

(4) Instruct and provide informational materials to each registered ~~caretaker~~ caregiver regarding the care of Free-Roaming feral-cats and the trap-sterilize-return-manage process;

(5) Distribute humane ~~feral~~-cat traps to registered ~~caretakers~~ caregivers at no cost or at a reasonable cost;

(6) ~~Monitor~~ Make reasonable efforts to monitor registered ~~caretakers'~~ caregivers' compliance with this chapter and any rules adopted under this chapter;

(7) Revoke the registration of any ~~caretaker~~ caregiver who is known to fails to comply with this chapter or any rules adopted under this chapter; and

(8) Develop and distribute information and plan events to educate the general public on the care of Free-Roaming feral-cats and the trap-sterilize-return-manage process.

(9) Make reasonable efforts to mediate and resolve concerns regarding the presence of a known colony managed by a registered caregiver on or immediately adjacent to property managed by a federal, state or county agency for the primary purpose of protection of wildlife. Such concerns must be addressed directly and in writing to the contracted rescue group by the relevant agency. Reasonable steps to reduce any adverse impacts to wildlife shall be considered by the contracted rescue group.

(b) With the exception of information submitted in the annual report to the Department, all other information, materials and data collected and held by a contracted rescue group pursuant to this chapter shall be considered confidential and exempt from the disclosure provisions of Hawaii Revised Statutes, Chapter 92F (Uniform Information Practices Act [UIPA]), to the extent UIPA applies, if at all, as well as from any other applicable statutes, ordinances or regulations concerning disclosure of government-held information. This exemption, to the extent UIPA and any other open records laws apply, if at all, is required to avoid the frustration of a legitimate government function.

§ -3 Registered ~~caretaker~~ caregiver ~~privileges~~ exemptions. Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, a registered ~~caretaker~~ caregiver shall be exempt from any ~~state law or county ordinance~~ State or County statute, ordinance, regulation, rule or other law that:

(1) ~~Prohibits or requires a permit for~~ the feeding or care of stray animals or requires a permit to do so;

(2) Mandates the confinement of cats; or

(3) Limits the number of animals that a person may own, harbor, or have custody of;

provided that this section shall not be construed to limit the enforcement of any law or ordinance requiring the sterilization of cats or prohibiting cruelty to animals, ~~if enforcement is not solely based on the fact that~~ Enforcement of any law or ordinance prohibiting cruelty to animals may not be based solely on the registered ~~caretaker~~ caregiver is feeding or otherwise caring for Free-Roaming feral cats in a public or private location.

§ -4 Registered ~~caretaker~~ caregiver ~~responsibilities~~; trap-sterilize-return-manage process. (a) A registered ~~caretaker~~ caregiver who elects to participate in the trap-sterilize-return-manage process shall:

(1) Provide the contracted animal rescue group on an annual basis their name and contact information, the location of each known colony under their care, the number of Free-roaming Cats captured by registered caregivers and their dispositions by colony, the number of Free-roaming Cats in each known colony and the number in each known colony that have been sterilized.

(2) Make reasonable efforts to ensure all Free-roaming Cats under the caregiver's care are sterilized, microchipped and ear tipped or notched. Cats that were sterilized prior to registration of the caregiver and are not microchipped or ear tipped or notched are exempt from the requirement of microchipping and ear tipping or notching.

(3) Make reasonable efforts to remove socialized kittens and socialized cats for adoptive placement.

(4) Make reasonable efforts to provide veterinary medical care for animals suffering from illness or injury.

~~Use humane cat traps that, when in good working order and used properly, do not cause harm to cats;~~

~~—(2) Not leave a set cat trap unattended for more than four hours;~~

~~—(3) Not leave a cat trap unattended for more than a reasonable time if the caretaker knows that the cat trap contains a cat;~~

~~—(4) Have each captured feral cat sterilized by a licensed veterinarian;~~

~~—(5) Have the left ear of each captured male feral cat tipped or notched;~~

~~—(6) Have the right ear of each captured female feral cat tipped or notched;~~

~~—(7) Have each captured feral cat examined and treated for flea infestation; and~~

~~—— (B) Vaccinated from communicable diseases;~~

~~—(8) After following the procedures in paragraphs (4) through (7), as applicable, return the cat to the location where the caretaker initially captured the cat; and~~

~~—(9) Maintain a log of the number of cats the caretaker has caused to complete the trap-sterilize return process, and submit a copy of the log to the contracted rescue group not less than once monthly;~~

~~provided that a caretaker shall not be required to comply with paragraphs (5) through (7) if compliance is cost prohibitive.~~

(5) A registered caretaker shall be exempt from any requirement of subsection ~~(a)~~4 if the requirement would adversely affect the health of a ~~feral~~ cat or if a licensed veterinarian determines that a ~~feral~~ cat should be euthanized because:

(1A) The animal is suffering from an injury, illness, or other health problem that severely affects the animal's quality of life; and

(2B) ~~Euthanization~~ Euthanasia is necessary to alleviate the animal's suffering.

(e6) A registered caretaker shall comply with:

(1a) This chapter and rules adopted under this chapter; and

(2b) All State laws and County ordinances that prohibit cruelty to animals.

§ -5 **Rules.** Not later than January 1, , the Department shall adopt rules, pursuant to chapter 91, necessary for the purposes of this chapter."

§ -6 **Appropriation.** The sum of \$ _____ shall be appropriated to the Department to establish and carry out the purposes of this chapter for two (2) years from the effective date of this measure.

SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

INTRODUCED BY: _____



Shaping the future for birds

**Testimony of American Bird Conservancy
Opposing HB 2593 Relating to Feral Cats
House Committee on Agriculture
Wednesday, February 14, 2018, 8:30 AM, Room 312**

On behalf of American Bird Conservancy and our members throughout Hawai‘i, I am writing to express our organization’s **opposition to HB 2593**. We strongly believe that trapping, sterilizing, and then returning (TNR) feral cats is inappropriate public policy to address the overpopulation of cats throughout Hawai‘i.

Although trapping and sterilizing feral cats is an important component of management, the re-release of these cats to parks and communities throughout the state is counterproductive. Not only is this release inhumane abandonment, scientific studies have overwhelmingly indicated that [TNR programs do not reduce feral cat populations](#) and are [opposed by the public in Hawai‘i](#). These programs also fail to consider impacts on human and wildlife communities that states are required to protect. For these reasons, TNR is opposed by the following organizations:

[American Association of Wildlife Veterinarians](#) | [American Ornithologists’ Union](#) | [International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council](#) | [National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians](#) | [National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association](#) | [The Wildlife Society](#)

Feral cats are one of the world’s most harmful invasive species and have contributed to the extinction of 33 species on islands. The Hawai‘i Department of Land and Natural Resources’ [Hawaii Invasive Species Council website](#) recognizes the serious threat from feral cats, in part because of the risks to native Hawaiian birds such as endangered Palila, ‘Alae Ke‘oke‘o (Hawaiian Coot), ‘A‘o (Newell’s Shearwater), ‘Ua‘u (Hawaiian Petrel), and others. For example, a 2015 report from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recorded 252 likely cat kills of native birds just at Hanalei National Wildlife Refuge between 2012 and 2014. Feral cats, sterilized or not, are highly efficient predators that, like brown tree snakes, do not belong roaming Hawai‘i.

Feral cats also spread parasites and diseases, such as the parasite that causes toxoplasmosis. Toxoplasmosis is among the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s [five neglected parasitic diseases](#) targeted as a priority for public health. Each cat may spread hundreds of millions of infectious eggs in its feces, contaminating the environment for years. Infection in humans can result in miscarriages, blindness, memory loss, or death and has been linked to several neurological disorders. Recent [deaths of Hawaiian monk seals, Nēnē](#), and other species suggest widespread cat-caused contamination of land and water. Maintaining feral cats in colonies concentrates and enhances the spread of this parasite and threatens the health of Hawai‘i’s residents and tourists. Indeed, [the Department of Health’s own report](#) identified feral cats as a **very high risk factor** for the spread toxoplasmosis.

State-sponsored support of TNR also creates a bureaucratic nightmare. How many resources from the Department of Health will be wasted on a failed strategy to oversee and maintain the thousands of feral cat colonies across the state? Furthermore, the Endangered Species Act (ESA) protects threatened and endangered species from “take,” including the kind that results from maintained feral cat colonies. Sanctioning these cat colonies is a significant liability that will likely result in legal challenges. For example, the state of New York is currently being sued for violation of the ESA due to its support of feral cat colonies in a state park. Such liabilities also extend to human health. Should people test positive for diseases such as toxoplasmosis or cat-scratch disease, the state could be held responsible for its role in supporting exposure to the vector.

American Bird Conservancy appreciates the concern for cats and the current overpopulation crisis, but dedicating precious government resources to TNR is not the answer. Rather than supporting the release of cats, legislation is needed to separate these animals from the environment. For example, HB 2593 could be amended to require that all trapped and sterilized cats be placed in an enclosure, such as [exists on Lana'i](#), could support the recommendations of the [Kauai Feral Cat Task Force](#), or could provide incentives to keep pet cats safely contained. American Bird Conservancy would be more than happy to work with the committee to develop language to this effect.

American Bird Conservancy and its members appreciate your attention and ask you to please consider the impacts to Hawai'i's people and native wildlife. **We respectfully request that you oppose HB 2593.**

Mahalo for your consideration,



Grant Sizemore, M.S., AWB®
Director of Invasive Species Programs
American Bird Conservancy
gsizemore@abcbirds.org

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 2:37:24 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
annette owens	The Pacific Cooperative Studies Program	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Honorable Sirs and Madams,

it is with experience I request you support the bill allowing non-profits to care for and control feral cats on Hawaiian islands. Like the Nene goose in Haleakala, efforts to control the invasive Axis deer were successful in mitigating addition harm to the species and habitat. Hawaii is an incredibly important and unique ecosystem with avian species that must be protected for future generation. I implore you to support this bill—the outcomes are exclusively positive.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Annette Owens

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/7/2018 11:07:49 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dennis Y. Fujii		Support	No

Comments:

As a former feral colony provider, I support HB 2593. TNR is a more humane way of managing Hawaii's feral cat population. Thank you.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/7/2018 11:12:03 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
stacey nsgata		Support	No

Comments:

Please support this bill. It's the right thing to do.

we the community, the people are the ones who made this feral cat population. We didn't fix our cats, we set them into the wild to fend for themselves. We made them feral. We did this..

so now we must take responsibility and change it by fixing them, helping them, educating others, and being humane.. to correct our mistake. It's not a hard decision, if we work together we can get a hold of this. These cats are a living creatures who are misunderstood.. they are just trying to survive, and they are fearful of us. They need our help, our understanding, our kindness.

So please, I ask,,, pass this bill.... because it's the right thing to do...the humane thing..

thank you.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 2:32:33 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nani Dart		Support	Yes

Comments:

Every animal has a right to live a full and happy life. Killing healthy animals just because they are feral is inhumane and sick.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 5:50:10 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Barbara Bennett		Support	No

Comments:

Aloha

I have been caring for 5 years. In my colony on Kauai they where loving, polite fera;s because they where treated with loving care. Most importantly is theTNR process.

I totally support Bill HB2593. A humane process should always be the answer to problems for animals.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 6:56:23 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
krista harmon		Support	No

Comments:

Hello,

I have been helping the caretakers of the feral cat communities for just about a year now.

they trap and fix the adult cats and I take the kittens, socialize them and find them loving forever homes. I have personally placed over 50 kittens into loving homes.

These are God's creatures we have no right to do anything except care for them.

I am sure you would not consider mass murder of our homeless community. No you would not. You offer them assistance and shelter.

Thank you.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 7:22:27 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
garry p. smith	Pension tax opponents	Support	No

Comments:

HB2593 will provide some help in reducing and managing a huge feral cat problem. The

state needs to do all it can to assist cat caregivers to manage a colony of cats with spay and neuter programs.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 8:20:37 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Wendy Kan		Support	No

Comments:

I am in support of this measure. While I understand that there is a problem with the number of feral cats on our Islands, I do not support euthanizing them as a means to reduce their population. I personally have taken two feral kittens (at 3 weeks old) into my home to foster. Now, 8 months later these two kittens are completely domesticated and part of our family. If not for my good friend and Poi Dogs and Popoki, these two angels might not have made it.

This same neighbor, along with at least 2 others, has worked with Cat Friends and Poi Dogs and Popoki to help sterilize the feral cats in our neighborhood in West Oahu. In the 9 nine months that I know they have been helping, they have been able to spay or neuter at least 25, possibly more, cats.

I think this bill will help to make sure that these feral cat colonies are treated humanely.

Thank you,

Wendy Kan

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 9:24:05 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Letha DeCaires		Support	No

Comments:

I support HB2593 Relating to Feral Cats because it offers a way to provide a solution to the problem of feral cats without massive euthanasia.

Our community needs to embrace a strong neuter program for all animals. This is a great example of how our government can put in place that policy of support. I really appreciate the work that Poe Dogs and Popoki have done.

Thank you for hearing my testimony.

Letha Sundquist DeCaires

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 9:31:19 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kim Murphy	citizen	Support	No

Comments:

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 9:53:43 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sheryl Matsumoto		Support	No

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity for my voice to be heard by my legislative representatives.

I once read a quote which said 'The world is changed by your example, not your opinion.' Since that time, I have spent a portion of my life giving back to the community, I was eager to find my place here when my husband and I moved to Hawaii in 2008.

With my work schedule and getting to learn more about my community, I found I didn't have much time to give any existing organizations. While exploring my neighborhood, which includes a beautiful park, I saw a few friendly cats around the park. I began feeding one who was particularly friendly when I would walk through it. One day I found a kitten along side the road abandoned and helpless. I took her home, nursed her back to health where she is a wonderful member of my family.

With that, I could see a place where my limited time would be appreciated. The kindness one does for an animal may not change the world, but it WILL change the world for that animal.

Over the last 9 1/2 years I have been visiting the Heiau, I have rescued cats, TNR'd those I could and provide food & love to the animals I encounter there - including chickens, pigs, rabbits & dogs. I am there rain or shine, all at my own expense. I respect the land and the people who take care of the park and do not leave any waste. I pick up my own trash and often the trash left by others.

I know not everyone shares my ideals and I have heard opinions from many people who visit this park - both positive and negative. I am still not a part of any organizations, but respect & support the concept of organizing a basic process to take care of these animals who are abandoned through no fault of their own. Animals have few rights, but they have every right to be here.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this issue and your support. And thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts.

The greatest ethical test that we will ever face is the treatment of those who are at our mercy (Lyn White).

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 11:12:04 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dana Jenkins		Support	Yes

Comments:

I am in support of HB2593 relating to feral cats. The trap-neuter-release program humanely and compassionately addresses the cat overpopulation dilemma. With experienced organizations helping these cat colonies, they can offer long-term solutions. Hatred and cruelty are not the answers. Hawaii is beautiful with beautiful and compassionate people. Working together, we can help both us and the animals live together peacefully. We can create a better place for us both.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 11:55:12 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David Schofield		Oppose	No

Comments:

While I have worked in the field of marine mammal and wildlife conservation for 30 years and I currently work as the Regional Marine Mammal Response Program Coordinator for NOAA Fisheries Service I am submitting this testimony as a private citizen.

HB2593 does not protect our Kieki and ocean users that recreate where feral cats roam and are fed and therefore poses a threat to human health from toxoplasmosis.

In addition, toxoplasmosis is now a threat to endangered hawaiian monk seals and is the cause of 8 deaths that we know of and it has been detected in dolphins here in Hawaii, not to mention native birds.

There should be no legislation on the books by law makers in Hawaii that supports the growth and perpetuation of cat feeding or Spay-neuter-release programs as these measures do not manage the population and in the case of feeding make it go up.

Common sense suggests that legislation on feral cats should focus on making it illegal to feed cats and eradication measures are needed to rid the environment of this human health and environmental threat.

Please see the attached NOAA fact sheet on toxoplasmosis and the Longcore Paper and the op ed from Chair Case in 2016

Thank you

David Schofield

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 12:34:18 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Javier Mendez-Alvarez		Oppose	No

Comments:

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 12:46:09 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Katie Laventure		Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill and believe it will help the community and implement TNR programs.
Thank you

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 1:10:16 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lisa Hatzenbuhler		Support	No

Comments:

I am in support of this bill. It is inhuman to kill these defenseless animals. I work in a State boat harbor and see them everyday. I have rescued quite a few that people have just dumped off there . If they could all be TNR I think that would greatly help the situation. I can't imagine killing them to stop the problem. If you think that is a solution them maybe we should kill off people that are homeless because they have no where to go. I believe the animals have rights also, they just can't speak or take care of themselves.

Thank you, Lisa Hatzenbuhler

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 3:03:36 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Yvette R. Eason		Support	No

Comments:

I'm a caretaker to 2 small colonies of cats that live on property that our tiny rent home is located. I believe if we care takers had legislative support to properly care for and TNR the cats considered feral that there would be LESS dumping ferals trapped elsewhere and dumped some were else. For 2 years I cared for the same 2 families of cats, 1 family had 5 members the other had 4, ALL born on this property. then in 2017 I was inundated by people trapping elsewhere and dumping "their ferals" near by. If we had more support from the legislature & humane society with the proper care & TNR process that people would be inclined to properly & humanely deal with the feral cats. Many of these "ferals" have been abandoned, escaped, lost or dumped house cats which stand a good chance of being adopted. One suggestion i make is to offer incentives beneficial in some way, to land owners with large properties or agricultural land owners so they'd be willing to allow volunteers under supervision of the humane society to manage a colony the colony living on their property. By "managed colony" I mean keeping records, feeding & tnr of all "colony" members. allot of these cats are considered feral to no fault of their own but there are many true ferals. Regardless of their feral origins, they don't deserve to die because they don't have a home! Please help these cats to be humanely TNR and regularly cared for instead of being put to sleep. I would volunteer to manage a colony in ewabeach under supervision of the humane society! Thank you for "listening"!

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/9/2018 8:26:11 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Gabriele Schmidt-Stelljes		Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill because it regulates colony caretakers making sure that they TNR their cats. Also I believe it is the humane way to handle this. Thank you!

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/9/2018 10:55:38 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dana Jones		Support	No

Comments:

I sincerely support HB2593. The non-profits and individuals helping to control out of control cat populations are doing more than just feeding. We spend our own money doing TNR. IT WORKS if people would become more responsible with their pets.

Please support this bill so that we can do the right and humane thing in our State. Eradication and and killing by any means, is an absolutely horrible solution.

Mahalo for your compassion and passing this bill.

Dana Jones

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/9/2018 11:46:32 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jody Smith		Oppose	No

Comments:

Please do not allow the passage of this legislation which will further endanger our native wildlife (especially our unique Hawaiian birds found only here and very endangered by predators) by allowing cats to roam uncontrolled across the Hawaiian landscape. Feral cats have no place in our island ecosystem, they need to be controlled and cared for rather than allowed to be left out, exposed to disease. They are a source of toxoplasmosis which can harm humans and definitely can harm native monk seals, dolphins, and native birds.

Lanai Cat Sanctuary has a better idea

<http://lanaicatsanctuary.org/>

Keep the feral cats confined and cared for, while letting our UNIQUE NATIVE BIRDS AND MAMMALS survive without CAT PREDATORS. Trap neuter release does not eliminate the predatory instinct of cats -- we can no longer allow these little predators on our landscapes. Please kill this bill.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/9/2018 3:49:10 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Deborah Wilson		Support	No

Comments:

I SUPPORT HB 2593

It allows for Trap-Neuter-Return in lieu of euthanasia of feral cats. TNR is the ONLY long term humane and compassionate solution to cat overpopulation.

The current agency being paid a huge amount of money continues to intake more and more not less, so euthanasia is obviously not the answer!

I dare you to take a look at their annual numbers over the last several years!

As a taxpayer I see hhs/ animal control costing upwards of \$4 million while intakes number remain sky high so obviously just killing them is not a solution \$ wise or a solution if one was to look at it humanely!

Thsnk you!

Deborah

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/10/2018 1:44:23 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lisa Thompson		Support	No

Comments:

I support HB2593 regarding Trap Neuter Return Manage (TNRM) in lieu of euthanasia as a humane and effective method of controlling the feral and stray cat population. TNRM costs very few taxpayer dollars and is funded mostly by private citizens and nonprofit animal welfare organizations.

Regards,

Lisa Thompson

Honolulu, HI

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/10/2018 9:28:17 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joy Inada		Oppose	No

Comments:

I am definitely not in support of this bill! I have fed feral cats,dogs and pigeons at boat harbors and to allow the so called eradication of these animals makes no sense. The cats help in controlling the mice population at homes and harbors it's been proven amongst home owners like myself. I'd never believe it myself if it didn't happen to me. I love to go fishing,and upon catching an invasive fish,I feed it to a feral cat as they need to be fed also. But mainly, to allow keiki to see this inhumane manner of population control is hideous.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/10/2018 11:20:44 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lisa Kaneshiro		Support	No

Comments:

TNR should be the first option a community goes to if we have the resources and volunteers to do this (which we do with the nonprofit animal welfare organizations). Animal Welfare organizations should be tasked with taking care of the feral cat issue because they can be trusted to make fair and humane decisions.

Entrusting anyone at a particular property to take care of a feral cat issue will open the door to various / potential problems that can / should be avoided (e.g. accidental killings of pets) and will give nefarious people a lawful way to abuse / use for their own personal reasons (e.g. revenge pet killings, animal tortue / cruelty, etc.).

Thank you for reading this testimony.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 2:29:49 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lana Giannella		Support	No

Comments:

Dear Hawaii State Legislature Members,

My name is Lana Giannella, and I live on Oahu. I am writing to ask that you support **HB 2593 Relating to Feral Cats**. As the owner of seven indoor-only cats that originally were abandoned, lost, homeless, or feral, my interest in supporting the bill is personal and close to my heart. The core components of the bill are not complex, but they would facilitate efforts to improve the process of curbing the growth of the feral cat population in Hawaii. Moreover, enacting the bill will ensure all of this is done in a humane manner.

- The state and county should allow Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) in lieu of euthanasia of feral cats.
- Nonprofit animal welfare organizations will oversee feral cat colony caregivers, the TNR efforts at the colonies, and tracking of colony numbers.
- TNR and colony management are necessary in all areas: parks, beaches, boat harbors, and government property supported by taxpayer dollars.

The State Department of Land and Natural Resources should **not** be involved in the management of the feral cat population, period. I want the DLNR to use my tax dollars for the myriad of other issues specifically pertaining to their areas of expertise and responsibility. Please do not let Hawaii lose its humanity by allowing unregulated cat killing by the DLNR, which has no business being involved in this issue. Hawaii is better than that! The nonprofit animal welfare organizations and the cat colony caregivers and other volunteers like myself have the experience and the desire to manage and curb the feral cat population through humane means. Feral cat overpopulation is also a problem on the mainland, so many other states are dealing with similar issues. With the proper legislation in Hawaii, other states will look to us as a model of how to address these issues and do it humanely.

Thank you for your service and for taking time to read my testimony.

Mahalo,

Lana Giannella

February 12, 2018

Aloha Chair Creagan and Vice Chair DeCoite, of the House of Representatives
Agriculture Committee.

RE: **HB 2593: RELATING TO FERAL CATS**

Please accept this **written testimony** in **support** of HB 2593, Relating to Feral Cats.

The purpose of HB 2593 is to promote the humane treatment of feral cats by:

- (1) Requiring the Department of Health to contract with a non-profit animal Rescue Group to oversee (manage and track colony numbers) caretakers of feral cats;
- (2) Exempting registered caretakers of feral cats from state and county laws relating to the feeding and confinement of cats; provided registered caretakers are registered with the contracted Rescue Group; and
- (3) Establishing a feral cat trap-sterilize-return process ("TSRP")

My support of HB 2593 is in concurrence with the Community Cat Coalition (drafter of HB 2593), and Legislature's findings that TSRP is more humane than euthanization and less costly.

The TSRP entails:

- Feral cats caught in humane traps
 - Sterilized so they no longer can reproduce
 - Surgically ear-tipped or ear-notched on one ear for easy sterilization identification
 - Flea removal
 - Vaccination

Upon return of TSRP cats to their colonies, unsterilized cats are less likely to take their place. I have implemented such in my own neighborhood, and personally witnessed TSRP effectiveness.

Thus, in lieu of the DLNR cat killing mandate--feral cat colony populations can gradually reduce in number over time at boat harbors, City parks and beaches, and government property with the team effort of: the Department of Health, contracted non-profit animal Rescue Group, and registered caretakers of feral cats implementation of TSRP via passage of HB 2593.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this manner from a voting member and taxpaying citizen of the State of Hawaii.

Paris K. Chai, Esq.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 10:46:23 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jane E Arnold	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support HB 2593.

Trap/Neuter/Return is a humane and effective way to deal with feral cat colonies. It causes the population of a feral cat colony to decrease over time because no new kittens are born and the adult cats eventually die a natural death.

HB 2593 also provides for oversight of cat colony caregivers by a non-profit animal welfare organization, which will promote responsible caregiving.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 11:39:10 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Celia Lee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support HB2593 because it is the right way to address issues with feral colonies. I have known many feral colony supporters including in my immediate family and they are dedicated to addressing the feral cat population in a humane way.

The organizations and individuals are in place to support this bill, and it makes sense to put it into effect.

REgards,
Celia Lee

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 12:13:04 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Christy Martin	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I'm submitting this letter of testimony in opposition to HB2593. Not more than a generation ago, pet dogs were allowed to roam off leash, whether they were being taken for a walk, or just simply let out in an area without fences. There were growing populations of feral dogs in many areas. Many of those feral or free-roaming dogs were not adoptable. Against the wishes of a segment of the population, concerned citizens and decision-makers began to change laws, and attitudes and norms began to change. Today, there are still feral dogs, and some irresponsible pet owners, but I think you'll agree that the situation is better, for pets, people, and the environment. Efforts to normalize the support of feral cats in public areas may seem humane for the feral cats, but it is not in the best interest of cats, communities, and the environment.

The scenario that TNR advocates use to support this model is flawed. Let's say there are 100 feral cats in an area and they support themselves by foraging in garbage, catching food, etc. When people start taking care of these cats, they are ADDING resources, which supports more cats, so more cats come. If you spay/neuter at least 90% of the original cats, the remaining 10% can repopulate the colony within a few years. In addition, new cats will continue to move in because of the increased available resources, almost guaranteeing that a colony caretaker never reaches 100% spay/neuter. Further, when you normalize TNR and increase the number of people participating, you increase the available resources and locations. All of this does impact a segment of the community and the environment, and the feral cats still aren't well-protected or cared for. A reduction in the number of feral cats over time is an admirable goal, but TNR advocates have yet to provide a scientifically valid (and repeatable) method for achieving this. Exempting colony caretakers from laws is equally, if not more problematic. Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 12:40:16 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
mike biechler	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB2593 in its current form. Feral cat populations are a threat to humans, numerous protected marine species, and our marine and coastal environments. Cats are the only creatures that can reproduce *Toxoplasmsis Gondii* (Toxo) and are therefore the most logical spot to try to reduce the prevalence of the parasite. Infected cats often never show any symptoms of illness but can spread thousand of Toxo eggs each, which remain infectious for years and infect humans and animals that unknowingly ingest the eggs. Humans can also become infected by eating animals that have ingested the parasite's eggs.

Toxo is extremely dangerous to pregnant woman, children, and those with compromised immune systems, often leading to slowed reactions, increased likliness of mental disorders, brain cancer, and depression. Furthermore, Toxo is the confirmed cause of death of numerous protected Monk seals, Spinner dolphins, and Green sea turtles in recent years.

While I, and many other people, love cats, it is unsafe and irresponsible to allow them to remain on State lands given their invasive nature, potential health and environmental effects, and the proven inability of Trap, Neuter, Release (TNR) programs to control feral cat populations. The current proliferation of feral cats is prima facie evidence that recent TNR actions have been ineffective. TNR encourages dumping of domesticated cats resulting in increased feral cat populations and further spread of Toxo. Giving legal protections to those that encourage and promote ferral cat colonies on State property is sanctioning the spread of Toxo.

Lastly, it is well documented that Hawaii's native and endangered birds have been killed at alarming rates by feral cats in recent years. Despite fencing and other measures, a single feral cat can decimate years of efforts to return these species to healthy levels.

PLEASE HOLD OR DEFER HB 2593 to better enable our parks and land managers to control the out-of-hand cat colonies in our State.

Mike Biechler

Waialua, HI

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 12:44:53 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Terry Myer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support bill HB 2593. The caregivers for the feral cat populations at the boat harbors and parks provide a necessary service to all our communities. They help maintain the cat populations by having the cats spayed and neutered. If the cats are sick or injured, they take care of them. They feed the cats to keep them there. This makes the cats better rat and mice. The cats keep the rat and mice populations down which in turn keeps down the diseases that the rodents can pass on to humans. Please support HB2593!

Mahalo! Terry Myer

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 2:09:21 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Angela Huntmer	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

There is no way that the Department of Health should be dealing with abandoned and feral cats other than catching and euthanizing them. NO support for HB2593! Feral cats spread toxoplasmosis and that has led to the death of some of our endangered monk seals. Feral cats kill native, threatened and endangered birds. They must be eliminated. I am vegan and do not consume any animal products personally but I am strongly in favor of eliminating feral cat populations along with feral dogs, rats, mice and mongoose in the interests of preserving our unique and fragile biodiversity. Sentimental attachment to cats over wild species is misguided and dangerous. Thank you.

decoite2 - Amanda

From: Rosemary Karlsson <rosemarykarlsson@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, February 10, 2018 9:11 AM
To: AGRtestimony
Subject: HB2593 to protect free-roaming cats

Please support HB2593 to protect free-roaming cats who are part of a managed Trap-Neuter-Return program. These programs have worked elsewhere and they will work here.

Rosemary Karlsson
16-1885 Uilani Drive
Keaau, HI 96749
808-966-6589

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 4:09:49 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
ANDREW SALENGER	Individual	Comments	No

Comments:

I believe any feral cat bill must take into account the effect of feral cats on all birds and marine mammals but especially the endemic endangered Hawaiian Monk Seal. Because feral cats carry toxo that directly kills the seals, there needs to be more restrictions on feral cat colonies to take every effort to reduce the spread of toxo. I love my house cats, but frankly I believe saving a Hawaiian Monk Seal is more important than a feral cat. So I support modifying the language of this bill to make sure no exemptions are given to places within coastal areas or near any discharge or runoff points. I'm sure there are many people more knowledgeable than myself that can offer solutions to encourage humane treatment of feral cats in a way that first and foremost looks to protect one of Hawaii's greatest natural resources, the endemic endangered Hawaiian Monk Seal.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 4:40:36 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Susan Hammer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support the intent of HB2593, which would protect cat colony caregivers who register with an animal welfare contractor from rules banning the practice of trap-neuter-return-manage (TNRM).

Responsible cat colony caregivers help to humanely reduce the number of cats on the landscape, improve their quality of life and reduce their impacts on wildlife. I applaud the Legislature's desire to protect these dedicated volunteers and the cats who suffer when populations are not in check.

The following are some amendments to HB2593 that are necessary to achieve its stated goals:

1. The definition of "feral cat" should be removed and the term "Free-Roaming cat" should replace "feral cat" throughout the bill.
2. Unnecessary restrictions regarding contract eligibility may make it difficult to find qualified groups, especially in smaller communities.
3. The program rules should be limited to the fundamental practices of TRNM executed to the best ability of the caregivers.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 4:54:30 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kathy Takayama	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

All animals need to be protected and be given a chance at a great life. I'd love to see Hawaii be the most loving and caring state to all animals! It will take time but with the right people, in this case cat experts and lovers, we can control the population humanely.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 5:22:17 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
M. Markl	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hello Committee Members And Chair(s):

I totally support HB2593 and all bills that find compassionate to our feeling animals in need. The no kill animal animal helpers should be considered heros and models of what the islands should be doing.

They do what Hawaii markets to the world but that very few people actually do. Usually they are giving of their own money, time and heart to help our fellow creatures in need in compassionate ways. The legislative and people of Hawaii should support these heros in all ways because they demonstrate the heart and spirit of Aloha rather than a sterile, cold moneyed spirit.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 6:56:31 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sharon Walker	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This is the humane way to deal with the feral cat population and is very effective.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 7:52:02 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lois Crozer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 8:17:18 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Richard	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha legislators,

I wish I could attend in person to provide oral testimony, but my work schedule prohibits my participation. HB2593 should go a long way in actually reducing the stray (unwanted pet) problem. There is a grassroots army of volunteers working hard, not costing the tax payer, to solve the issue. In my experience, oft times that grassroots army is hamstrung by (well meaning) civil servants and misguided rules that limit the volunteer's ability to get into some of the biggest problem areas. HR2593 will create an environment where more traps can be set, more animals be sterilized, and possibly, someday, getting the stray problem under control. What has happened in the past has not worked. Lets try something positive, like HR2593.

Aloha

Rich Thompson

Resident and registered voter.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 9:33:11 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Selene Mersereau	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this bill and sincerely hope you let it pass. Aloha and thank you.
Selene Mersereau

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 9:50:01 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ashley Brown	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Cats kill native animals.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/12/2018 10:44:24 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
kellie cowper johnasen	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Please do not kill harbor cats. The cats keep the rodent population down. These cats are Trapped

Neutered and Released. The neutered cat stops the spread of Toxoplasmosis. The facts behind this bill are misleading. If the rodents are not taken care of by cats the use of poisons are not safe to birds and endangered species such as the owl. The cats do not cost taxpayers money but a rodent population will.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 12:57:53 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mary James	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Testimony on **HB2593, Relating to Feral Cats**

House Committee on Agriculture Hearing

February 14, 2017, 8:30 am, Room 312

Mary James

felinitous@yahoo.com

I support HB2593 with amendments. I have been involved in feral cat issues since the 1980's. When I worked at the Legislature and afterwards, I took care of the colony in the parking lot behind the Department of Health. It began with about 15 cats, none of which were sterilized. I began caring for them and had them all sterilized to avoid additional kittens. There is no longer a colony in the area as all cats either died of natural causes or were adopted. Today, I'm taking care of the last cat from the colony in my home.

This bill provides a good starting point for a discussion on how to manage the feral cat colonies. Colony caretakers are dedicated to sterilizing the cats, providing food and water and veterinary care when necessary, all at their own expense. I have seen a proposed draft to amend HB2593 which has been circulated widely to those interested in the topic. This draft improves on the bill greatly but there still needs to be continued discussion of many of the details in the bill. For example, should the registration of a colony include its location? I'm certain many caretakers would avoid registering if that remains a requirement, even if it is intended to be kept confidential. Perhaps the requirement could allow for a general location, such as a zip code, if the caretaker would prefer not to give the exact location.

The addition of "manage" to "trap-sterilize-return" is essential. I also appreciate the paragraph that encourages the various wildlife agencies and feral cat caretakers to work together.

Finally, it is unclear whether there will be only one nonprofit organization working with the caretakers on each island or if the caretaker can work with any nonprofit

organization that meets the requirements set out in the bill. I think the latter would be preferable.

I look forward to continuing discussions on helping the feral cat colonies and their caretakers.

[Please disregard this submittal if the earlier one was accepted. I did not see any indication that it had been received so I'm sending another copy.]

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 8:30:34 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lee Cuccia	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

There is a lot of incorrect information about feral cats being passed along as facts, especially when it concerns toxoplasmosis, and therefore supporting the cats has become controversial. However, the Humane Society of the US has done studies confirming that TNR is the most effective as well as the most humane method of dealing with the overpopulation of cats. It must be supported. Hawaii is supposed to be the Aloha State, yet we fail miserably when it comes to protecting animals of any kind: native or invasive. Fed, neutered and healthy cats will have so much less of an impact than what currently exists, and culling cats...which is what has been done...obviously is not effective. Please support this endeavor. Mahalo!

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 9:20:47 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Durana K Amoncio	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support TNR as a humane way to try to get control on the population issue. Cats are NOT pests, they can be tranformed into loving family members, I myself have two that I saved from the streets and are now happy healthy indoor cats. Both neutered! I know they will not add to the population "problem" we seem to have here, **but please letting those feral/stray cats starve is NOT the right way to remediate the issue.**

Again, please allow TNR - I am an avid follower of many states TNR programs and they work wonders, saving/adopting and helping bring down the overpopulation of these poor defenseless animals. WE CAN GET A GRIP ON THE SITUATION, TNR IS NEEDED - NOT SLOW AND PAINFULL, UNNECESSARY AND CRUEL DEATH STARVATION. Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,

Fellow Hawaiian, and lover of ALL life.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 12:21:04 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Irene Baniaga	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 12:21:23 PM
Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jackie Woodruff	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Mahalo for initiating this bill. I have become a colony caregiver over the past 8 years and work closely with a non-profit no-kill shelter.

In the time I've been a voluntary caregiver, I've witnessed the original 6 colony cats at my workplace die out to 2 by natural causes, accidents, or at the hands of people being cruel. Which means that TNR is absolutely working because there were none populated from the original 6.

The problem is irresponsible pet owners. When a pet owner has a cat that isn't sterile and the cat has kittens, the pet owner dumps the kittens out to fend for themselves. When a pet owner moves off-island and chooses to leave their housecat behind.....or they move into a new apartment where pets aren't allowed, they're dumping their cats!! Then, caregivers like me have to start the TNR process again. We get our network together to help us catch the newcomers and get them sterilized as soon as possible.

I can attest with absolute truth that nobody on the entire premises has ever contracted or passed along toxoplasma or any other disease.

I pay out of pocket for vet care besides TNR, such as flea prevention! Us caregivers spend our own money to provide humane services to innocent domestic and feral cats. The cats in the colony I care for are hardly feral at all. They're former pets and I've been fortunate to re-adopt several. They all love people and they are confused, wet, cold. They each have names on their new microchips and they have obvious, individual personalities. Ferals are not wildlife. Caring for small domestic animals that have feelings is very rewarding to caregivers and I would be absolutely devastated and heartbroken if some selfish people who refuse to acknowledge the hard work I've done to make things better were to come along into my colony and remove any of my cats to be euthanized.

TNR does work. Please press forward in assisting us caregivers who utilize our networks to provide sterilization and veterinary care.

Mahalo,

Jackie Woodruff

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 12:21:32 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Katie Rose	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite, and the members of the House Committee on Agriculture,

I am writing to express my concern with HB2593. Hawai'i's bird populations have already been decimated by invasive species such as rats, mongoose, and, indeed, feral cats. Feral and free-roaming cats have no place on the Hawaiian landscape as they pose an imminent threat to endangered Hawaiian wildlife, both directly through hunting and indirectly as a vector of infectious zoonotic diseases. Toxoplasmosis infects many species of native wildlife including the 'alala (Work et al., 2000), Hawaiian monk seal (Honnold et al., 2005), nene (Work et al., 2002), spinner dolphins (Migaki et al., 1990), livestock, humans, and others. As a person of Hawaiian ancestry and also studying to be a wildlife biologist at Oregon State University I am deeply troubled by the unscientific approach that has been used to promote TNR and the maintenance of feral cat colonies on Hawai'i and worldwide. Cats are wonderful, but they belong inside of homes and not outside on the landscape. It should be considered of utmost importance to remove feral cat colonies from our sensitive Hawaiian landscape by any means necessary including euthanasia if homes cannot be found. Rescue groups promoting TNR are unwilling to look at the litany of scientific research that highlights the negative effects of cats on wildlife, and the ineffectiveness of TNR in reducing feral cat numbers. I hope you will do the right thing and vote for our wildlife, and not for TNR and rescue groups in this matter. In fact, I'd urge you to go a step further and legislate against pet cats being allowed to wander. Thank you for your time .

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 1:10:13 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Paul Smith	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

This is an irresponsible bill that should NEVER be passed and instituted into law.

Feral cats are introduced, non-native, invasive predators that have been established in the fragile Hawaiian Island ecosystem. They pose a clear and present threat to a large number of the threatened and endangered species found throughout the Hawaiian islands. Direct predation of endangered shearwaters, Oahu elepaio, and other terrestrial and marine birds by feral cats has been repeatedly documented throughout the islands. Multiple deaths of critically endangered Hawaiian Monk seals have been directly attributed to toxoplasmosis infection resulting from feral cat feces runoff into the ocean. Support of TNR will only serve to maintain this scourge on the environment.

From a practical perspective, over 50% TNR colonies fail to reduce feral cat populations within their action area. The most effective colonies have only managed to reduce feral cat populations by about 40% over a 10 year period. These results were achieved with significant financial input for sterilization and maintenance of an active adoption program. These "successful" programs were also analyzed at a local level, and failed to make any impacts on a landscape scale. Many TNR programs fail outright because of lack of oversight, inconsistent volunteerism, and variable funding, leaving the community back at square one after implementation of this "humane" tactic. TNR is not effective and does not meet the needs of the community for reducing feral cat populations.

From the financial side, there is nothing positive about this bill. Multiple millions of federal and state dollars are spent every year on conservation and preservation of threatened and endangered flora and fauna. All of the military services, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources, the Hawaii Department of Agriculture, and numerous non-governmental agencies are tasked through regulatory requirements to implement measures to protect and preserve threatened and endangered wildlife in Hawaii. Much of their action is aimed at controlling predators, including feral cats. Passage of this bill would create new government spending that would work DIRECTLY AGAINST the legally mandated tasks of these agencies.

From a community perspective, passage of this bill would signal that the legislature is choosing to place the desires of a loud and organized minority of the population over

the comfort, safety, health, and well being of the majority. Passage of this bill will remove avenues of recourse for members of the community that have legitimate complaints regarding cat colonies and their caretakers. Citizens will be forced to live with the smell of cat urine and feces associated with cat colonies. Citizens with cat allergies will have no way to alleviate the problem if their neighbor wants to feed a feral cat colony, and cats are routinely roaming their property.

I urge that this horrible bill be cut down now. Passage of this bill would be fiscally, environmentally, and morally irresponsible. The state of Hawaii should be looking at ways to eliminate invasive predators from the Islands, not protect them!

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 1:22:28 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stephanie McLaughlin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

The definition of feral cat should be removed and the term "free roaming cat" should replace "feral cat" throughout the bill. Please support the version of this bill as amended by local animal welfare groups and cat advocates from across the state.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 1:40:24 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David Duffy	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I am writing as a private citizen. I have published in the refereed scientific literature on feral cat management and the risks that cats impose across the Pacific.

Hawaii has numerous endangered birds that are found nowhere else on Earth. Cats allowed outside are highly effective predators against which our Hawaiian species do not have defences. Trap, neuter and release may sterilize cats but it returns them to the wild as killing machines. In addition, cats shed Toxoplasmosis eggs which run off into the sea during rains and are absorbed by fish and shellfish and in turn consumed by Hawaiian monk seals and other sealife, causing brain damage and death. Toxoplasmosis has also been associated with human illness including blindness and birth deformities.

This bill would essentially place cat colonies and their managers above the law, would permit the continued killing of our Hawaiian species, and would enshrine a health risk on our aina and our people.

Please do not approve this bill.

Many thanks,

David Duffy Ph.D.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 1:57:06 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stephen Canham	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I oppose HB 2953. Trap/Neuter/Release does nothing to protect native and non-native bird species from feral cat predation. We need to eradicate feral cat colonies, period. I worked at UH Manoa for 36 years; kind-hearted cat feeders did some TNR and yet we still had numerous packs of feral cats that fouled the outdoor areas and hunted urban birds.

I am not a cat-hater. In fact, I have a wonderful pet cat. But we must eradicate the feral colonies, which as I trust you know grow exponentially, despite the well-intended cat feeders. Native and non-native low- and ground-nesting birds have no chance. We introduced the cat, we can eliminate it as a non-valuable predator. Please do not be misled by well-meaning but short-sighted feral cat supporters. Thank you.

Stephen Canham, PhD

Kaneohe, Oahu

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 2:03:10 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tami Schatz	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This is the only solution to help with the cat-over-population problem in the islands. By allowing for colony caregivers to feed the feral cats, gain their trust and perform TNR it is enabling the cat population to be gotten under control in the most humane way possible. For those who say that cats are killing endangered bird and small prey, they need to realize that if the cats are being fed on a regular basis by colony caretakers they are less likely to need to hunt for birds and other small prey as a means to nourishment. Trap-Neuter-Release works and helps to keep colonies from growing and keeps them maintained in an efficient manner and caretakers should be able to do so without interference or threat from those who are uneducated in regards to the positive impact caregivers who TNR are having on the over-population problem.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 2:05:37 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Janeel Hew	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I stand in SUPOORT of HB2593.

Trap and release WORKS.

The killing of feral cats sends the wrong educational message to the community and will bring about the deaths of pets mistaken as feral.

Mahalo for your time and consideration in supporting of HB2593.

Janeel Hew

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 2:20:02 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Bret Nainoa Mossman	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha,

Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite, and the members of the House Committee on Agriculture, I am writing to express my concern with HB2593. Feral cats are recognized as one of the most damaging invasive species in the world and are responsible for the extinction of 30-40 species globally including several native birds here in Hawai'i. Cats continue to pose major threats to birds and other wildlife in Hawai'i as well as to public health.

Feral cats are the leading cause of adult seabird mortality throughout the state and have driven populations of 'u'au (Hawaiian petrel) down nearly 90% and a'o (Newell's shearwater) by 70% on Kaua'i since the 1990s. These birds are an important cultural resource found only here in Hawai'i. Cat colonies pose significant risk to these seabirds especially during fledging periods as these birds can become confused by lights and become grounded where they are then easy prey for colony cats. Cats have also been observed catching and killing several other species of native endangered birds in low elevations including 'alae 'ula (Hawaiian gallinule), 'alae ke'oke'o (Hawaiian coot), ae'o (Hawaiian stilt), NA"nA" (Hawaiian goose), u'au kani (Wedge-tailed shearwater) and many migratory species of shorebirds such as kA• lea (Pacific golden plover) and 'ulili (wandering tattler). In addition to these birds in low elevations cats can spread to all habitat types in Hawai'i and prey upon all species of forest birds such as 'i'iwi, 'elepaio, palila, and the recently returned to the wild 'alala.

Cats also spread disease to native birds and marine mammals and toxoplasmosis (which can only be transmitted by cats) is the leading pathogenic cause of death for Hawaiian monk seals. Toxoplasmosis has also been found in nA"nA", 'alala, and other seabirds. Toxoplasmosis also has very negative affects on people and has been linked to fundamental psychological changes, depression, schizophrenia and miscarriage in pregnant women.

HB2593 is trying to put forward several unfounded principles and misconceptions about the TNR process. For one there is little to know evidence of a "vacuum" effect when you remove a cat from an area of course a cat will likely fill it but if humane euthanasia is continued over the long term there will be zero cats on the landscape. TNR on the other hand has been completely unsuccessful in reducing and removing cats from an area.

There is a large amount of literature on the topic now and again and again it has been found that it does not reduce cat numbers in fact in many areas cat numbers have increased because people feel more comfortable abandoning cats and sterilized well fed cats are less territorial leading to higher cat densities. Additionally, practicing humane euthanasia in areas will encourage people not to dump their pets keeping more cats out of the environment.

Regarding TNR being more cost efficient: TNR may be cheaper over the short term but over the long term it will lead to greater costs in terms of human health, wildlife loss and a degradation of public spaces. Trapping and euthanizing cats instantly removes them from the environment preventing future damages from that animal.

TNR is widely practiced in Hawai'i and continues to degrade our coastal areas, allow the inhumane keeping of cats, contributes to the decline of endangered species, and facilitates population growth of other invasive mammals such as pigs, rats, and mongoose. These practices directly threaten culturally important resources and jeopardize the foundation of many Hawaiian cultural practices. As a person of native Hawaiian decent it pains me to see the legislature consider actions that threaten the survival of culturally significant species to preserve an invasive predator on the landscape. Caving to pressures from animal welfare groups and perusing TNR will prove to be disastrous and will undoubtedly contribute to the further decline and extinctions of our precious cultural resources. Please vote down this measure or be prepared to be added to the list of causes for the extinction of our native species.

Mahalo nui for your time,

Bret Nainoa Mossman

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 2:21:13 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lucille Homcy	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support allowing the responsible management of feral cat colonies.

Please pass HB2593

Mahalo

Lucille Homcy

Haleiwa

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 2:27:27 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jessica Hallman Behnke	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

As a wildlife biologist on Kaua'i for 11 years, I have observed firsthand that cats are a lethal threat to endangered birds, with one cat capable of destroying an entire colony of seabirds in a single night. Trap-sterilize-return, otherwise known as Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR), has proven ineffective and only further stacks the odds against native species already in peril. Hawai'i's only remaining wildlife is dying at the hands of irresponsible cat owners and enthusiasts. There is no place for outdoor cats in Hawai'i. In the interest of protecting the natural legacy of these islands, I oppose this measure.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 2:27:35 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jennifer Homcy	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

I am writing in support of HB 2593 requiring DOH to allow Non-Profit organizations to manage feral cat colonies in Hawaii. I am a marine scientist and worked in coastal resource biology and conservation for over 20 years. My responsibilities included stranded marine mammals and sea turtles. Although we have seen monk seal mortality related to toxoplasmosis, the sources are not traceable. Humans also carry toxo and considering the amount of waste water contamination in our coastal waters due to spills and outdated cesspools, there is no guarantee that eliminating feral cats will resolve these issues.

I support HB 2593.

Mahalo

Jennifer Homcy

Haleiwa

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 2:49:11 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Johanna van de Woestijne	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite, and the members of the House Committee on Agriculture, I am writing to express my concern with HB2593.

With my training in medical microbiology and medical doctorate from Stanford U, I am perhaps more aware than most cat feeders of the degradation of public health standards posed by maintaining feral and free roaming cats on the landscape. I absolutely oppose any form of outdoor feeding or allowance of free roaming cats, due to their ecto and endo parasites impact on humans and the wildlife.

The only form of feral or free roaming cat management that might mitigate some of the public health impacts is sanctuary behind predator proof fences, containing the cats on the inside, and use of litter boxes with proper disposal (NOT flushing). Sanctuary would be a total waste of tax payers money though and should only be allowed on private property, at private expense.

For public health reasons, I fully support removal of all feral and unowned free roaming cats and humane euthanasia when no homes or sanctuary space is available. Cats absolutely should not be released to rescue groups, but either prepared for rehoming and adoption into forever homes, or euthanised. Rescue groups release cats again into wildlife areas and public spaces, causing further spread of the cats parasites.

I was appalled the last time I visited the islands that feral cats were everywhere I looked and treated as a tourist attraction and wildlife, rather than pest animals, which degrade habitat and health, killing directly and indirectly with their parasites. Neutering does nothing to stop the cat parasite *Toxoplasma gondi*, a protozoan parasite shed by cats in feces. A single infected cat sheds millions of *T gondii* oocytes into the environment, which sporulate and become infective, remaining viable for months to years.

Toxoplasmosis has led to deaths in a number of animal species including sea otters (*Enhydra lutris nereis*; Kreuder et al., 2003), Hawaiian crows (*Corvus hawaiiensis*; Work et al., 2000), Hawaiian geese (*Branta sandvicensis*; Work et al., 2002), Hawaiian monk seals (*Monachus schauinslandi*; Honnold et al., 2005), spinner dolphins (*Stenella longirostris*; Migaki et al., 1990), and red-footed boobies (*Sula sula*; Work et al., 2002). Toxoplasmosis also affects livestock (Dubey and Jones, 2008) and oysters

(Lindsay et al., 2004; Esmerini et al., 2010).

In humans the cat parasite *T gondii* can cause fetal demise in first trimester and severe development defects in later trimesters, including hydrocephalus, microcephaly, blindness, deafness, calcifications in organs and the central nervous system, thought to be the cause of 20% of idiopathic seizures. Both in congenital and adult toxoplasmosis, the parasite can recrudescence and cause ocular lesions resulting in vision impairment or loss. Globally the cat parasite is a leading infectious disease cause of vision loss. Feral and free roaming cats have the highest infection rates, compared to indoor only cats fed fully cooked food. I absolutely oppose releasing feral or unowned cats back to the environment for public health reasons.

25% of outdoor cats also are infected with *Toxocara catii*, shedding eggs in their feces, typically of concern in sandy play areas, beaches, parks frequented by cats (and dogs). It too is a concern as the larval stage can enter the brain and eye, causing damage mainly due to inflammation.

There many more diseases and infections caused by cats, which are mostly avoided in indoor only cats. I've attached the excellent review by Chris Lepczyk et al, *Applied Animal Behavior Science* 173 (2015) 29-39, A review of cat behavior in relation to disease risk and management options. I direct you to table one for a more complete table of cat diseases and management concern.

I agree completely with Dr Lepczyk's conclusion:

Beside the negative effects of TNR on wildlife (e.g., Longcore et al., 2009; Lepczyk et al., 2010), TNR cat colonies are an ineffective management option for disease risk reduction as they may actually increase risk as they “can increase immigration and kitten recruitment, which would lead to naive populations of cats that would be a source for zoonotic diseases including rabies and toxoplasmosis.” (Gerhold and Jessup, 2012). Because colonies that do not have adequate and continuing veterinary care could infect free-ranging domestic cats (Murphy et al., 1999), it could “impose a financial and emotional burden on adjacent cat owners that either is not usually considered in discussions of cat colonies or is dismissed” (Duffy and Capece, 2012). Furthermore, having a large number of cats in any colony simply poses a greater potential for any disease transmission due to density dependence. Given that TNR has been demonstrated to be less cost effective (Lohr et al., 2013) and less preferred than removal approaches (Lohr et al., 2014; Lohr and Lepczyk, 2014), the use of TNR for managing disease would be a poor choice.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 2:57:04 PM
Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joel Mark	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB2593. Exempting cat colony caretakers from state laws will only exacerbate the feral cat problem in the State which is directly threatening the health and welfare of not only several endangered species such as the monk seal, but also the community as a whole. Hawaii needs less feral cats, and should not promote Trap Neuter Release which has time and time again been proven not to work.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 3:15:47 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melinda Buck	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I Melinda Buck support HB2593. Allow Trap, Neuter and Release in lieu of euthanasia of feral cats. TNR is the most effective answer to control the feral community cat population. Require non-profits animal welfare organizations to oversee at colony caregivers. I have seen a decrease in the cat population in colonies with TNR. I personally have paid out of the pocket for many animals that have been abandoned by inhumane people. TNR works please support HB 2593

Thank you,

Melinda Buck

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 3:42:31 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cynthia F Tucker PsyD	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support the intent of HB2593, which would protect cat colony caregivers who register with an animal welfare contractor from rules banning the practice of trap-neuter-return-manage (TNRM).

Responsible cat colony caregivers help to humanely reduce the number of cats on the landscape, improve their quality of life and reduce their impacts on wildlife. We applaud the Legislature's desire to protect these dedicated volunteers.

Some amendments to HB2593 are necessary to achieve its stated goals:

- The definition of "feral cat" should be removed and the term "Free-Roaming cat" should replace "feral cat" throughout the bill.
- Unnecessary restrictions regarding contract eligibility may make it difficult to find qualified groups, especially in smaller communities.
- The program rules should be limited to the fundamental practices of TRNM executed to the best ability of the caregivers.

I support the version of this bill as amended by local animal welfare groups and cat advocates from across the state.

decoite2 - Amanda

From: Jennifer Chiwa <jennifer.chiwa@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2018 1:24 AM
To: AGRtestimony
Subject: Testimony in Support of HB 2593 for Hearing 2/14/18 at 8:30 am

Aloha Members of the Committee on Agriculture. My name is Jennifer Chiwa.

Please support HB 2593. However, please consider making the following changes:

- (1) Replace 'feral cats' with 'free roaming cats' throughout the text of this bill.
- (2) Eliminate restrictions on contract eligibility to increase interest of qualified groups.
- (3) Limit program rules to basic practices of trap - sterilize - return - manage.

Thank you.

Jennifer Chiwa

decoite2 - Amanda

From: Ginny Tiu <g2@hokua.org>
Sent: Tuesday, February 13, 2018 8:19 AM
To: AGRtestimony
Subject: Please support HB 2072 and HB 2593

Dear Chair Creagan and Committee members,

Please pass HB 2593 as amended. I realize that free roaming cats are an issue that needs to be addressed, but we must always look for humane and effective ways.

Please pass HB 2072 but strike the proposed amendment reducing the penalties for violators and clarify that each animal involved in a violation constitutes a separate offense. These animals are living creatures who suffer as we do but totally depend on us to do the right thing for them.

Thank you very much for your kind consideration.

Aloha,
Ginny Tiu

Sent from my iPhone

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 3:59:06 PM
Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Julia Parish	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

The Department of Health should not be required to contact a nonprofit animal rescue when they need to manage a feral cat. The State of Hawaii needs to eliminate feral cat colonies as they pose significant threats to human health, native and threatened animal species, and blight our scenic landscape, detracting from Hawaii's beauty and impacting communities welfare. The State needs to eliminate the concept of registered caretakers of feral cats.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 5:24:15 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Springer Kaye	Big Island Invasive Species Committee	Oppose	No

Comments:

The Committee strongly opposes this bill which encourages the adoption of practices that are not supported by science and which result in locally increased populations of a widespread introduced predator known to harbor diseases and parasites and prey upon native wildlife.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 7:17:34 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Taylor Marsh	Native Ecosystem Services LLC	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite, and Committee Members,

As a biologist currently with the US Army, I am in strong opposition to HB 2593 relating to feral cats. I am an active community member in Kaneohe/Kahaluu and I have seen an explosion of cat colonies all over Oahu over the past five years in particular. We should all know by now that the organism that cats carry and transmit, *Toxoplasmosis gondii*, is released into our environment through feces and saliva and has been found in dead endangered Hawaiian Monk Seals and dead dolphins, but this bacteria is also highly present in households and public places and effects pregnant women and children. The perpetuation of cat colonies will only lead to a worse situation for public and environmental health. The impact of feral cats on threatened native wildlife like shorebirds, even if they do happen to be spayed or neutered, is no new news. This bill is alarming to the environmental and health communities not only in Hawaii but across the US.

As a conservationist, I personally have seen the creation of new cat colonies by non-profits like Cat Friends Hawaii and the Humaine Society which promote trap, sterilize, and release. This method clearly doesn't work and if you look at most public parks, park-and-rides, libraries, harbors, etc, you will notice that these areas are intentionally placed as "colonies" for these non-profits to feed cats on a schedule layed out by the organization and that these colonies are increasing in size. I actually cound individual cats at my near-by Heeia State Park colony on a regular basis. Maintaining a cat population that is increasing, not decreasing, is a neusance, unhealthy, and irresponsible. Euthanizing cats properly is very humaine and cost-effective because other organizations and nations have done similar work to reduce cat numbers effectively. If you have ever been hiking in the mountains on Oahu, you will have seen cat feces or even cats along upland trails. This is an indicator of the size of the problem that we are dealing with.

This is clearly an issue of cats being cute and cuddly to humans and many are attached to that emotional connection to cats and other animals like cats. The thought of euthanizing an entire colony or even an individual cat seems terrible and wrong to the cat colony promoters. The bigger picture here is an obvious health and environmental problem that we face and we must deal with now. There is a proper way to humainely

ethanize cats in colonies to drastiacally reduce numbers. We must use these methods instead of adhearing to the well-funded, well-organized cat colony promoters in the state.

If our government representatives care about aina and public health, they will surely consider voting AGAINST this bill.

Thank you for your time,

Jordan Taylor Marsh

Native Ecosystem Services LLC

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 5:46:26 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rae	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

February 14, 2018

Dear Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite, and members of the House Committee on Agriculture,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB2593 relating to feral cats.

I am a Hawai'i resident, born and raised on Oahu, with a degree in Biology and a Masters in Environmental Studies. TNR does not work. Just because "no kill" methods may make us feel better, it doesn't change the fact that TNR is inhumane, fiscally irresponsible, and a national embarrassment. I've grown disheartened and frustrated by the increasing numbers of cats smashed on roadways, hunting in protected areas, emptying burrows in native seabird colonies, and using public beaches as litter boxes. I've been seeing cats up in mountain areas where I had not seen them before. I've been trapped in a hotel parking lot because a colony of cats was being fed behind my car. The smell is what hits your first. Then looking at these animals, I could see the poor condition in many of the cats were in. No amount of food thrown at them could make up for the lack of ongoing care. And I'm tired of reading articles that highlight the political will and conservation efforts of places like New Zealand, then juxtaposing their triumphs with the struggles of Hawai'i and the rest of the United States to get the feral cat issue under control because the solutions are tough and unpopular. We are islands. There is finite space. And this finite space is occupied by rare native species that are found nowhere else in the world. Species that have been shown via video footage or necropsies to have suffered mortalities due to cats. TNR cannot possibly do enough to stem the growth of the hundreds of thousands of cats in our islands. TNR is not the solution to help reduce our growing feral cat epidemic.

This bill starts with false statements in SECTION 1. The bill states, "although counties may attempt to control the feral cat population by euthanizing feral cats, euthanasia does not address the problem of exponential increases in the cat population. When cats from a colony are euthanized, they leave a vacuum that is filled when other unsterilized cats enter the same colony and start reproducing."

Let's think about this for a second. When a cat is taken out of the population and humanely euthanized, it can't reproduce. When a cat is sterilized and returned to a

colony, it can't reproduce. The only difference between the two scenarios is that one is returned to the population and the other is removed. Yes, another cat will fill in for the cat taken out of the population, because our islands are overrun by so many cats. If you keep with the humane euthanasia program, you can begin chipping away at the population numbers. Another cat cannot take the place of a sterilized cat because the cat is still there, but that doesn't mean that other cats are not still reproducing around it. A cat colony is not like a fenced sanctuary; "non-colony" cats can still come and go. If humane euthanasia is like bailing out a sinking boat with a small bucket, TNR is like bailing out your sinking boat with a thimble that's got holes in it.

The bill goes on to say, "The legislature further finds that the trap-sterilize-return process is not only more humane than euthanization, but less costly. In the trap-sterilize-return process, feral cats are caught in humane traps, sterilized so that they can no longer reproduce, and surgically ear-tipped or ear-notched on one ear so that they may be easily identified as sterilized. The process may also include removing fleas and vaccinating the cats."

TNR is not less costly than humane euthanasia. For humane euthanasia you need to trap, transport, euthanize the animal and it's done. For TNR, you would need to trap, transport, sterilize, remove fleas, provide vaccinations, and transport the animal back to the colony. I'm also assuming you'd also want to continue care when possible right? So add on to the initial TNR costs the additional costs of ongoing veterinary care for sickness and injuries, food, water, maintenance, etc. The statement that TNR is less costly just doesn't add up.

The biggest issue I have with this bill is section 3, registered caretaker privileges, which exempts feral cat caretakers from state law and county ordinances. Laws and ordinances are created for a reason and we all should have to follow them. It's infuriating that organizations/individuals that are degrading our environment, putting cats in inhumane conditions, jeopardizing our native wildlife and natural resources, and deteriorating public health would be granted immunity for their actions. I understand that caretakers mean well, they put a lot of effort and heart into their work. However, good intentions do not change reality.

For the sake of our environment, native wildlife, public health and even the welfare of cats, please do not move HB2593 forward.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 5:51:37 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
carole richelieu	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 6:50:41 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alex Wang	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Trap-neuter-release has been proven in scientific studies time and again to not be effective. Feral cats are the main vector of toxoplasmosis harming our native birds, dolphins, monk seals and is even detrimental to human health. Let's not handicap our tools to a healthier society. If a cat is trapped it should not be released into the wild again.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 7:00:15 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Elizabeth Kellam	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 7:11:25 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jacqueline Diaz	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this bill.

I am outraged that our Department of Land and Natural Resources is ignoring the will of the people and attempting to circumvent the legislature with changes to the Administrative Rules designed specifically to kill outdoor cats. DLNR's proposed rules are inhumane, costly and ineffective.

Trap-neuter-return (TNR) provides an effective alternative to the traditional model of killing cats; cats are caught, neutered and returned to live out their lives and in this case, serve as an important rodent deterrent in the harbors. As well, TNR programs are cost-effective, reduce the burden and bureaucracy for local animal shelters, and can play a critical role in effectively addressing Hawaii's' legitimate conservation and environmental issues.

Homeless animals are persecuted through no fault of their own as are the countless dedicated and compassionate community members who struggle to care for these cats (despite the emotional and financial strain) when no one else gives a damn. Let these decent people continue with Trap/Neuter/Return/Manage and don't cause the agonizing and senseless deaths of these unfortunate animals by way of starvation, poisoning or any other vile method that humans come up with. These animals are not for your disposal. There is no justification for the proposed cruelty. There is something so very wrong that we have to plead for compassion.

Thank you for your time.
Jacqueline Diaz

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 8:06:47 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
kim brandau	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support the use of TNR on the feral cat colonies around the island. I feel it is the humane way to deal with the feral cat over population issue.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 8:53:18 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alexis E. Jamison	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Please pass HB 2593 Relating to Feral Cats. Trap-neuter-return, or TNR, has been proven to be the most humane and effective way to manage and reduce feral cat populations. While there have been great efforts to TNR across the island and the state, volunteers have been prevented from doing so in much needed areas such as near boat harbors, city parks, and other government properties. Ultimately, this has stifled efforts to further reduce the feral cat population. TNR can only be successful if it is allowed, and thus it is extremely important that TNR be allowed in more areas.

I believe that passing HB 2593 will ultimately reduce feral cat colony numbers and protect our environment, while simultaneously reducing the massively high annual euthanasia rate of stray cats at the Hawaiian Humane Society (85+% in Fiscal Year 2016, with 7,496 stray cats euthanized, including 3,787 being feral/unsocialized). As the Aloha state, we must show all animals compassion and work together for a humane solution to the feral cat overpopulation problem.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 8:54:23 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Danielle Patton	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please pass HB 2593 Relating to Feral Cats. Trap-neuter-return, or TNR, has been proven to be the most humane and effective way to manage and reduce feral cat populations. While there have been great efforts to TNR across the island and the state, volunteers have been prevented from doing so in much needed areas such as near boat harbors, city parks, and other government properties. Ultimately, this has stifled efforts to further reduce the feral cat population. TNR can only be successful if it is allowed, and thus it is extremely important that TNR be allowed in more areas. I believe that passing HB 2593 will ultimately reduce feral cat colony numbers and protect our environment, while simultaneously reducing the massively high annual euthanasia rate of stray cats at the Hawaiian Humane Society (85+% in Fiscal Year 2016, with 7,496 stray cats euthanized, including 3,787 being feral/unsocialized). As the Aloha state, we must show all animals compassion and work together for a humane solution to the feral cat overpopulation problem. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Danielle Patton

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 8:59:31 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Shiloh Francis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Trap-neuter-return, or TNR, has been proven to be the most humane and effective way to manage and reduce feral cat populations. While there have been great efforts to TNR across the island and the state, volunteers have been prevented from doing so in much needed areas such as near boat harbors, city parks, and other government properties. Ultimately, this has prevented efforts to further reduce the feral cat population. TNR can only be successful if it is allowed, and thus it is extremely important that TNR be allowed in more areas.

I believe that passing HB 2593 will ultimately reduce feral cat colony numbers and protect our environment, while simultaneously reducing the massively high annual euthanasia rate of stray cats at the Hawaiian Humane Society.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 9:09:44 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dawn Bruns	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 9:34:59 PM
Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Shawne Schmidt	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

ALOHA,

I am in support of HB 2593 Relating to Feral Cats. By working together we can make our aina a better place for generations to come.. Mahalo Nui

LATE

I strongly support HB 2593 Relating to Feral Cats.

I am a responsible cat owner who anguishes over the many community/feral cats on the streets of Oahu. These animals are not there by choice. They are there because, at some time in the past, irresponsible owners failed to spay/neuter their cats, let them roam free or abandoned them.

Fortunately, there are several non-profit organizations who devote their time, energy and often personal funds to help these cats. They practice Trap/Neuter/Return (TNR), which is the only humane way to stop these cats from reproducing. Euthanasia is not the answer.

I support this bill because it:

Requires both the state and county to allow TNR in lieu of euthanasia of feral cats

Requires nonprofit animal welfare organizations to oversee cat colony caregiver and the TNR efforts at those colonies

Requires cat colony caregivers to register with a nonprofit and manage their colony including TNR and tracking colony numbers

Cat overpopulation is a major problem on Oahu. Please vote for this bill which will allow the aforementioned non-profit organizations to work with dedicated and committed caregivers to reduce the number of cats roaming the street or being euthanized.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions at Tiger2Balm@aol.com or 808 395 1300.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my opinion on this important issue.

Jo Ann C. Kocher

7124 Naakea Street

Honolulu, HI 96825

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 10:27:32 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kelley Streadbeck	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 10:28:30 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Chloe Hartwell	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please pass HB 2593 Relating to Feral Cats. Trap-neuter-return, or TNR, has been proven to be the most humane and effective way to manage and reduce feral cat populations. This will ultimately reduce the feral cat population more effectively than euthanasia. I was greatly disappointed to learn of the high euthanasia rates of the Hawaiian Humane Society, and believe that this bill is a more humane and strategic approach to feral cat over-population. The bill would facilitate oversight and support for volunteers, and grant them access to important areas that can benefit from TNR.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 10:44:04 PM
Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nicolas T Lopez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 10:48:05 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Tatiana Kekauoha	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I was blessed enough to find two beautiful "feral" cats. I guess that's what they might have been called. When I found them they were no more than a month old. They didn't choose the life, or where they were born. I sometimes wonder if they were a puppy would someone else have helped? Doesn't all life matter and hold equal. I think that TNR is a great program. Some of these cats were abandoned by their owners. If we can give them another shot at life then I think it's worth it. Cats are great hunters and I think complexes and businesses could use them to keep their properties pest free. I think designated caregivers should be granted special privileges in order to take care of colonies. These people are helping these cats, sometimes even reuniting pets with their owners

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/13/2018 11:24:42 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jessica Palomino	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Today, I was made aware of a few reasons people are in opposition to this bill. I am going to refute the main argument I heard and explain why I believe this bill is the best solution to Hawai'i's feral cat problem.

Toxoplasma. Cats (pets or feral) can be vectors for this parasite, which can spread to monk seals and kill them. Monk seals are endangered and there is no argument that they need to be protected. However, after visiting NOAA's website and reading about the threats to the monk seal population, of the 10 primary threats (sea level rise, entanglement, overfishing) 7 were human-related, and only one 1 referenced toxoplasmosis. Interestingly, humans can also carry toxoplasma (as well as rats, a population that is controlled by the cat population).

Opponents to this bill argue that mass euthanasia of the cat colonies would be better, because sterilization won't be quick enough to protect the monk seals. If we really care about monk seals, then the better route would be to address the true threat to the monk seals: humans.

It's just not practical to perform a mass killing of one species so another can thrive. Logistically, where will you find veterinarians who will support performing euthanasia after euthanasia of animals many of us share our homes with? If you are not a cat person yourself, substitute the word "cat" with "dog" and note your innate response to those words. If you squirmed at the thought of mass murder, it's because you are human, and you were created with compassion.

The most compassionate route to allow the animals of Hawai'i to live without harm is to establish a spay-neuter-release program. We need more funding and better programs established to systemically sterilize the feral cat population on our island. With effective sterilization, we would dramatically decrease the feral cat population within years. The lifespan of a feral cat is usually 2-7 years. If less cats are able to reproduce, over time, the feral cat population would become a non-issue.

Spay-neuter-release is not a complex concept, it just requires a systematic approach, volunteers, time, and funding, all of which would be supported by this bill.

This is why I support bill HB2593.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 6:08:40 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mark S. Lee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Bonus to TNR is the area containing the colony will have dramatically reduced rodent populations. Also, TNR is just the right thing to do.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 12:00:21 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Helene P Navaro	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in full support of this bill HB2593. It is crucial that State and County allowing Trap Neuter Return. TNR helps control cat overpopulation in a humane way and TNR is effective. Having Non-Profit animal welfare organizations oversee cat colonies is a definite plus. Caregivers to be registered with non-profits to get support and in return non-profits ensure that TNR is in place at the managed colonies.

Catch and Kill is so outdated and shows no compassion from the Aloha State.

Kill Cats by any means possible is so wrong in many levels. There are expert opinions of both sides of the same coin. As government officials, we ask that you show compassion and kindness in your decision by supporting this so very important bill HB2593.

Mahalo Nui Loa!

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 6:54:33 AM
Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
maile mclaurin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support the intent of HB2593, which would protect cat colony caregivers who register with an animal welfare contractor from rules banning the practice of trap-neuter-return manage (TNRM).

Responsible cat colony caregivers help to humanely reduce the number of cats on the landscape, improve their quality of life and reduce their impacts on wildlife. We applaud the Legislature’s desire to protect these dedicated volunteers.

Some amendments to HB2593 are necessary to achieve its stated goals:

- The definition of “feral cat” should be removed and the term “Free-Roaming cat.” should replace “feral cat” throughout the bill.
- Unnecessary restrictions regarding contract eligibility may make it difficult to find qualified groups, especially in smaller communities.
- The program rules should be limited to the fundamental practices of TRNM executed to the best ability of the caregivers.

I support the version of this bill as amended by local animal welfare groups and cat advocates from across the state.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 7:38:16 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Denise S. Honda	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am in SUPPORT of HB2593. TNRM is effective and needs to be given a chance with the support of the State. The people involved in caring for feral/free-roaming cats are knowledgeable in what they do and have the passion to make it successful. Please support this bill; it is the humane thing to do.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 8:50:05 AM
Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
JoAnn Chisholm-Dueno	Hearts For Animals Inc	Support	No

Comments:

This is an important step for our society to care for innocent animals who are "feral" due to lack of HUMANS responsibility. People leave the animals to their own defenses, have litters of kittens and then often dump them. So many animals are euthanized at the HHS, which is an absolute sin!

With a proper and well-managed catch and release program, consistent feeding schedules, vaccinations etc. the animals can live quite well without causing strife for communities.

We as a 501c3 would and do help with cat colonies on our side of the Island. North Shore. We at Hearts For Animals Inc 100% disagrees with the testimony that these cats cause such destruction as stated in the bill.

Sincerely,

JoAnn Chisholm Dueno

Founder/CEO

Hearts For Animals Inc.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 9:44:39 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jill Voeks	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a Hawaiian Veterinarian for the past 25 years I have seen T.N.R.M programs a huge benefit to solving cat population issues. In 2017, I testified against a bill that was designed to

create a task force against trap neuter release programs. I found the

head of DLNR (who was also the state chair person – Susanne case)

wanted tens of thousands of dollars of our tax money to make this

task force exempt from the sunshine act. Then later in the year DLNR

held 2 hearings to stop feeding of cats that community members had

already neutered. This activity is counter productive. This bill may end the head butting and respect the TNRM programs as a part of the solution.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 10:03:24 AM
Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Galen Reid	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

This measure fails our feral cats and native wildlife. Aside from the obvious issue that cats are a primary predator on our imperiled native and endemic avian species we must also look at this measure as upholding a very inhumane method of dealing with our pet cat species. Leaving our pets to be malnourished, contract diseases and to be crushed by vehicles in both urban and wild landscapes is COMPLETELY inhumane. True cat lovers would never consider turning their pets out into the wild. Judging by the numbers of crushed cats observed daily on my commute, I wonder how many of those died slowly and inhumanely, or how many flopped off the road after a collision to waste away unobserved. If I expand upon the 2-3 dead cats I observe daily on my regular 12-mile commute, and consider that I'm only observing the ones which did die right away and not roll or limp off the road, which may amount to 1/2 to 2/3 of total cat collisions, I predict that on Kauai alone 50 or more cats are killed by vehicles every day in an inhumane fashion. This number could easily be multiplied on Oahu by a factor of 10. If we consider turning our pets back into the wild, we should simultaneously overhaul our transportation system. Real cat lovers would never support this measure. The select minority attempting to push this through, who may derive a sense personal satisfaction from feeding and watching these abandoned cats, should broaden their perspective to include a view promoting humane treatment of the species as a whole. They should not allow their personal hobbies to mandate either an unfair future for feral cats or the fate of our precious few remaining native Hawaiian wildlife species. True lovers of animals would never support this measure, and I strongly oppose it.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 10:37:01 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Angela Stemen	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

As a resident of Hawaii and a cat lover I strongly oppose this measure. The practice of TNR is opposed by PETA, The Wildlife Society, The American Veterinary Medical Association, The National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians, and the Department of Land and Natural Resources of the State of Hawaii. This method leaves our feral cats homeless and highly prone to disease and death by injury. PETA states that a feral cat has a life span of 1-5 years, while a house cat lives for 12-20. What kind of life are we giving these cats by leaving them in the wild where they are run over by cars and contract parasites and other diseases. TNR is a method that makes people feel better and benefits their conscience, leaving the cats without benefit. There is no scientific evidence that TNR reduces population size. Free roaming feral cats are a detriment to our native wildlife, which is in danger everyday due to invasive predators, such as cats. I oppose this measure not only because I want to see our native wildlife thrive but to protect the cats from a life of hunger, disease and mutilation by the many vehicles that maim cats everyday on Kauai and other islands.

Thank for your time and listening to my comments.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 10:55:37 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sheri S Mann	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

There are way too many feral cats on the landscape that are uncared for and populations are growing exponentially every day. Feral cats carry diseases that are deadly to humans and native bird populations. Spade and neuter programs do not stop cats from carrying deadly diseases, nor do they stop cats from defecating on beaches, public schools and in urban areas. Hawaii is a tourism based economy and feral cats do not embolden visitor experiences.

Some native birds, who were here long before any cats, deserve to be protected. Remove feral cats from the environment. It is the humane thing to do.

Thanks

Sheri S. Mann

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 11:08:09 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Megan Vynne	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Creagan, Vice Chair DeCoite, and Committee Members,

I am in strong opposition to HB2593.

Having worked directly with endangered, endemic seabirds in the mountains of Kaua'i I see first hand the damage caused by feral cats to Hawaii's native wildlife. Every year the organization I work for, Kaua'i Endangered Seabird Recovery Project, documents seabird adults and chicks depredated by feral cats. As these seabirds are slow to reach sexual maturity and only lay one egg a year this is detrimental to their populations particularly as a single cat can kill many birds in a short amount of time. Already much time and money is spent trying to control feral cats in the mountains and it is an ever losing battle as more and more feral cats seek sanctuary in the far remote areas of the island of Kaua'i. It is devastating to watch as these endemic seabirds which already face a variety of threats are continually hunted by an introduced species for which they have no evolutionary defence. Cats belong in homes not in the wild. Besides the innumerable health problems which feral cats in the landscape pose to humans, as residents of Hawai'i it is our responsibility to protect the native wildlife here and this measure would do exactly the opposite.

Thank you for your time,

Megan Vynne

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 11:14:31 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lucas Fortini	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Let me start by saying I am a cat lover who has cared for 3 indoor cats in Oahu for over 10 years as if they were family. Having said that, having feral cats roaming the islands is inhumane to wildlife and the cats themselves.

Despite years of study, there is not a single objective study that shows TNR reduces cat populations over time.

But most important of all, the approval of this bill essentially is putting the lives of feral cats over the lives of several native Hawaiian bird species that are slaughtered by cats across the islands, leading several species towards extinction.

I beg you to please chose Native Hawaiian birds over feral cats. There are millions of cats all around the world. Having cat populations unchecked in Hawaii means we are pushing native birds ever closer to extinction!!

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 11:18:52 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Julia Diegmann	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB2593. Exempting cat colony caretakers from state laws will only exacerbate the feral cat problem in the State which is directly linked to the health and welfare of Hawai'i's endemic bird species.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 11:23:17 AM
Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ruby Pap	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

There are way too many feral cats on the landscape that are uncared for and populations are growing exponentially every day. Feral cats carry diseases that are deadly to humans and native bird populations. Spade and neuter programs do not stop cats from carrying deadly diseases, nor do they stop cats from defecating on beaches, public schools and in urban areas. Hawaii is a tourism based economy and feral cats do not embolden visitor experiences.

Native birds, who were here long before any cats, deserve to be protected. Remove feral cats from the environment. It is the correct human and humane thing to do.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 11:27:00 AM
Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kim Rogers	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Feral cats populate Hawaii's landscape from seal level to mountain summit and are doing so at an exorbitant rate. Feral cats carry diseases that are deadly to humans as well as native bird and native marine mammal populations. Spay and neuter programs do not stop cats from carrying deadly diseases, nor do they stop cats from defecating on beaches, public schools, and in urban areas. Furthermore, science has shown that even well-fed cats will hunt and kill.

Hawaii is a tourism based economy and feral cats do not embolden visitor experiences. Imagine if the New York Times wrote about all the cats using Hawaii's beaches as litter boxes. Those are not the kinds of stories we need/want about Hawaii.

Hawaii's native birds and marine mammals were here long before any cats and deserve to be protected. Remove feral cats from the environment. It is the correct human and humane thing to do.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 11:30:22 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lisa Crampton	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I strongly oppose the proposed measure. Feral cats pose terrible risks to human and wildlife health as the definitive host for toxoplasmosis. They are also major predators on our native, endangered wildlife. State and county agencies need the discretion to manage cat colonies as they see fit to protect the public and wildlife, regardless of whether those colonies are overseen by registered caretakers. Further more, trap-sterilize-return has been shown to be an ineffective technique at reducing feral cat colonies.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 11:30:43 AM
Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jennifer Higashino	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha, There is a feral cat crisis, which should not be cultivated by government lenience. Cats are a domestic pet that do not belong in open spaces and the wild. Would you support this type of legislation for dogs? Feral cats cultivate diseases, kill our unique native species, and continue a cycle of unmanaged population growth. TNR has been studied throughout the nation and has been proven repeatedly it does not work to reduce feral cat polulations. It is not humane. It is NOT in the public interest to support this bill.

Mahalo, Jennifer Higashino

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 11:31:38 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mele Khalsa	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I strongly oppose feral cat colonies and I do not think the state or county should continue turning a blind eye to these hazards. Cat colonies are hazardous to human health and wildlife in a way that TNR programs and feeding/management does not address. Please do not allow cat colonies to persist on state or county lands.

These wild cats can bite or scratch people, especially children, and give them cat-scratch disease. One of my good friends in Waimea got badly infected with this after trying to rescue a feral cat. Her whole arm swelled up for weeks! Bites from these feral animals can become infected, like what happened to my friend in Hanapepe. He tried to catch a feral kitten and it bit him on his hand. It quickly became infected and he had to miss work and take antibiotics to fight the infection off. Children are especially at risk. One of my friends in Anahola said her son was attacked by a cat as a toddler. It scratched him across the face. These animals should not be allowed by the State and County to roam freely across a land where they don't belong.

The negative impacts of feral free-roaming cats on native wildlife are well documented and reported widely. There are even pictures and videos of feral cats eating native birds way up in the mountains! And now NOAA says that our native seals and marine mammals are dying from toxoplasmosis too because so many feral cats are using our beaches as litterboxes! A baby was recently born on Kauai with health defects from toxoplasmosis that the mother received from using the beach at Lydgate Park in Kapaa, where cat colonies are supported. This should not continue! Do not allow these dirty, invasive pests to take over our islands. Cats should be kept inside, **not** TNR re-released onto the landscape to spread diseases to humans and native animals and kill birds by the millions. Please do not support this bill.

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 12:40:34 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jennifer	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I STRONGLY oppose this bill. Feral cats are introduced, non-native invasive predators that are wreaking havoc on our struggling native ecosystem. They are a direct and indirect threat to our threatened and endangered species. TNR is irresponsible, inhumane, and immoral. Animal welfare groups fail to acknowledge not only the public health and wildlife impacts but also the cultural impacts this bill promotes. As a native Hawaiian I implore you to do the right thing and NOT support this bill.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 12:41:31 PM
Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Patricia Lau	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Legislators,

Finally some sensible legislation. I am a volunteer w/Catfriends, Hawaii Cat Foundation & Hawaiian Humane Society. I am an active trapper all over the Island of Oahu. I do it on my own time, money & resources. I trap, neuter, return for the love of the innocent & helpless animals who did not ask to be born into a feral cat colony nor dumped by some irresponsible people. I just was, recently with two other trappers, harassed by HCC security who did not want us on their property. We were doing a community service. This kind of hindrance must be stopped if we are to ever get control of the feral cat population. Please support this bill. Thank you for your time & service.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 12:54:16 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Elizabeth Kain	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I speak on behalf of the native, endemic and endangered animals throughout Hawaii. Populations throughout the islands are in decline, many due to the fact that feral cats are found throughout the landscape. Feral cats have no place on the landscape in such a sensitive ecosystem like ours here in Hawaii. It is a proven fact that spay, neuter and release does not affect populations of feral cats. THIS is FACT. By allowing people to continue to feed feral animals and establishing a spay, neuter and release program you are signing a death warrant for the remaining native, endangered animals in our beautiful state. There is a place for cats, indoors. There is no place for cats outdoors here in Hawaii. You must hold those that feed feral cats responsible for their actions, although they may not see them as harmful it is the responsibility of you as law makers to do what is right for Hawaii and not solely what makes a few cat feeders feel good.

On top of the environmental consequences to native wildlife, by allowing feral cats to persist on the landscape, the cats themselves are living a life of disease and injury that is no life for any animal.

The third and important issues that must be addressed are the disease transmission from cat to other mammals, and humans. I see feral cats often on beaches, beaches that small children play at. I for one know many small children put sand in their mouths during the course of a day at the beach, with so many cats around, they are ingesting Toxoplasmosis. If a pregnant women comes into contact with cat feces, or spores from their feces (that can live in soil for months at a time) it can have devastating effects on her unborn child, causing numerous birth defects. Is it right that a mother should not be able to take her kids or pregnant women go to the beach for fear of terrible disease for her child? Because of feral cats? NO, this is not right and we should not stand for this.

Please do not pass this, and think about the long term devastating effects and precedent this is start.

Mahalo for your time,

Elizabeth Kain

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 1:08:50 PM
Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Yuki Reiss	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Feral cats are a dangerous nuisance on Kauai and throughout the Hawaiian islands. They are distinct from cats that are kept as pets. These are wild cats that are left to roam and predate on native birds. Trap-neuter-release programs still leave these animals to many months or years of killing, thus this solution does not solve the problem. Feral cats not only are a threat to native birds, but are also carriers of toxoplasmosis, which has been found to kill marine life such a monk seals and even dolphins! This disease is also a threat to human health. This bill, and any bill that enables cat colonies to continue thriving, should not be passed.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 1:16:17 PM
Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Andrea Erichsen	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I appreciate the intent of the legislation to encourage humane and consistent treatment of cats and protecting the environment. However, as an ecologist, I must urge that there must be more stringent oversight or approvals for registered caretakers to ensure the cats and their practices are not promoting disease spread by cats to Hawaii's native wildlife or enhancing cat populations to the detriment of native wildlife, most of which are highly endangered. State and federal laws protecting native wildlife should come first and always be complied with to the highest level possible, Feral cat populations need to be contained and populations reduced with a goal of achieving close to zero. I hope the effects of this legislation if passed, will be monitored and evaluated carefully to make improvements and adjustments as needed.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 1:47:05 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Seana Walsh	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Feral cat populations in the islands are out of control, and continue to grow exponentially. Feral cats carry diseases (e.g., toxoplasmosis) that are deadly to humans and marine life like the Endangered Hawaiian monk seal and spinner dolphins. Cats are also a major threat to native, Endangered bird populations. Spay and neuter programs do not stop cats from carrying deadly diseases, nor do they stop cats from defecating in public places such as beaches, public schools and residential areas. Furthermore, Hawai'i is a tourism based economy and feral cats do not enhance visitor experiences. Remove feral cats from the environment. It is the correct and humane thing to do.

LATE

HB-2593

Submitted on: 2/14/2018 1:53:42 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/14/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dustin Wolkis	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Feral cat populations in the islands are out of control, and continue to grow exponentially. Feral cats carry diseases (e.g., toxoplasmosis) that are deadly to humans and marine life like the Endangered Hawaiian monk seal and spinner dolphins. Cats are also a major threat to native, Endangered bird populations. Spay and neuter programs do not stop cats from carrying deadly diseases, nor do they stop cats from defecating in public places such as beaches, public schools and residential areas. Furthermore, Hawai'i is a tourism based economy and feral cats do not enhance visitor experiences. Remove feral cats from the environment. It is the correct and humane thing to do.