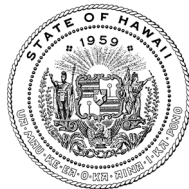


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR

SABRINA NASIR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
Ka 'Oihana Mālama Mo'ohelu a Kālā
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

TESTIMONY BY LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 220

February 10, 2023
10:00 a.m.
Room 325 and Videoconference

RELATING TO THE SPAYING AND NEUTERING OF ANIMALS

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) opposes this bill.

House Bill No. 220: 1) establishes a Spay and Neuter Special Fund (SNSF) within B&F to finance spaying and neutering surgery and associated veterinary care to reduce pet overpopulation and reproduction of free roaming cats; 2) establishes an advisory committee to assist B&F in establishing SNSF disbursement eligibility criteria and procedures; 3) sets membership and reporting requirements for the advisory committee; 4) allows taxpayers to contribute \$5 of their income tax refund into the SNSF; 5) appropriates \$50,000 in general funds for FY 24 and FY 25 to be deposited into the SNSF; and 6) appropriates \$50,000 in special funds out of the SNSF for FY 24 and FY 25 to be expended for purposes of the SNSF.

B&F strongly believes that it is not the appropriate agency to administer the SNSF and its related program functions. First, B&F does not possess the required subject-matter expertise on spaying and neutering animals or any other related veterinary services as these are outside of B&F's statutory purview. Second, B&F does not have any experience in administering a purchase of service/grant program as

proposed in this bill. Finally, with the ongoing statewide financial management systems replacement project, B&F does not have the staff capacity to: 1) develop SNSF rules (drafting proposed rules, conducting hearings on proposed rules, posting final rules, etc.); 2) support the advisory committee (scheduling and coordinating meetings, preparing and posting meeting notices, payment of travel expenses, taking and preparing written minutes, etc.); 3) undertake procurement of services (prepare purchase of service/grant request for proposals, evaluate responding proposals, prepare contracts with selected proposers, etc.); and 4) manage the service contracts.

B&F recommends that funds be appropriated directly to the counties instead because they have historically been responsible for animal control functions. The counties can then allocate these funds to entities best able to perform the desired services in their area.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 11:34:29 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cathy Goeggel	Animal Rights Hawai'i	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

ARH and our members throughout the state ask that HB220 be passed and implemented.

Mahalo!



PO Box 1130, Kīlauea, HI 96754
808.828.0384 | info@kilaueapoint.org
www.fkwr.org | Facebook & Instagram @fkwrkauai

Opposition to HB 220

February 8, 2023

Representative Cedric Gates
Chair, House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Aloha e Representative Gates:

I am Executive Director of Friends of Kaua'i Wildlife Refuges, the nonprofit "Friends Group" that supports and advocates for the work of the three national wildlife refuges located on the Island of Kaua'i, including Hanalei National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), Hulē'ia NWR and Kīlauea Point NWR. On behalf of the organization and its supporters, **I wish to express our opposition to HB 220.**

Friends of Kaua'i Wildlife Refuges, along with other wildlife conservation groups and professionals, public health officials, and many animal welfare advocates, oppose the use of public funds to purposely maintain feral cats roaming the beach parks, natural areas, and neighborhoods of our state through the program known as Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR).

Trap-Neuter-Release is simply not the answer and should not be supported through the allocation of public funds. Spayed/neutered cats that are allowed to roam outside can remain a threat to human health, endangered birds and marine mammals for up to 15 years. Cats belong indoors to protect the delicate balance of our island ecosystem. It is safer for the cats, and absolutely essential for our birds.

Hanalei NWR provides a critical refuge for endangered and endemic native Hawaiian birds. Most of these birds are found nowhere else in the world and in some cases, such as the 'ālae 'ula (Hawaiian Common Gallinule), there are less than 1,000 individuals left in the world. They evolved here without any mammalian predators and have no defenses against them. Within the Refuge, we consistently witness predation from feral cats, many of which have been trapped, neutered, released and fed by well-meaning community members. It has been proven that sterilizing and feeding cats does not reduce their instinct to kill. In fact, it can make them even more effective hunters of our endangered birds which have nowhere else in the world to live, nest, rest, feed and thrive. Last year, 66 cats were trapped and removed from Hanalei NWR alone, representing a mere fraction of the total number of cats that crossed the Refuge.

There is also a serious human health risk to allowing cats to roam our islands. Cats are carriers of diseases such as toxoplasmosis, which can only be spread through cat feces. Toxoplasmosis runs off of cat colonies and into our oceans, coming into contact with humans, Hawaiian Monk Seals, and dolphins, where it causes miscarriage, birth defects and can be fatal.

In addition to the incredible harm caused by feral cats to Hawai'i's wildlife – and the known significant human health risks by allowing these cats to roam the landscape – residents of Hawai'i do NOT support maintaining colonies of feral cats roaming outdoors. In fact, a [2014 study](#) found that 87% of residents wanted to see a decrease in feral cats across the state and 78% supported removing feral cats from the environment permanently. The most popular method of feral cat management was live trapping and euthanasia and the least popular was TNR – the very action SB 998 would support with dedicated public funding.

I urge you to oppose HB 220 and the allocation of public funding for programs that would purposely maintain feral cats roaming the landscape (e.g., TNR). Such programs put Hawai'i's people and our precious wildlife at risk and are not supported by science or the majority of Hawai'i's residents.

I deeply appreciate your kind consideration of my testimony and can be reached at 808.828.0384 ext. 1 or thomas@kilaueapoint.org.

With aloha,



Thomas Daubert
Executive Director

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 1:46:06 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Courtney Gomes	Hawaiian Humane Society	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a Kaimuki resident, I, Courtney, support HB220. This measure would benefit many animals and citizens alike. If more cats and dogs are able to be fixed from HB220, than there will be less strays, surrenders, and homeless struggling to care for these pets. HB220 would also be preventing cats and dogs from spreading different illnesses to domestic pets housed in homes (i.e a stray cat or dog entering a residential area), and areas where other animals are present (eg. zoos, Hawaiian Humane Society, rescue shelters, etc.). This bill would also help shelters and rescues provide more personalized care and interaction time with the animals presently in their care ready for adoption, making sure these non-profits do not go over animal capacity. All in all HB220 will help animals and communities alike in reducing animal population, controlling the high amount strays and surrendering of pets, and provide homeless pet caretakers the assistance they need to help them care for their pet.



February 8, 2023

To: Chair Rep. Cedric Asuega Gates
Vice Chair Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa
And Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

Submitted By: Kaua`i Humane Society

RE: HB220: Relating to the spaying and neutering of animals

Testimony in support.

The Kaua`i Humane Society (KHS) supports House Bill 220 and the campaign to establish a spay and neuter fund across Hawai`i. KHS took in almost 2,500 animals in 2022, 64% of which came to the shelter unaltered (not spayed or neutered). In addition to the spays and neuters performed for KHS animals an additional 1,071 spay and neuter surgeries were performed for the public (pet owners). KHS alone performed over 2,600 spay and neuter surgeries in 2022. This does not include the spays and neuters that were performed by the multiple veterinary clinics or the four other animal welfare organizations on Kaua`i. Kaua`i is struggling with pet overpopulation; there are simply not enough homes for the homeless animals of Kaua`i.

In 2022, KHS took in 517 neonate kittens, those are kittens that were born in 2022. Though this is a significant population it is 199 kittens less than 2021. Our efforts to spay and neuter thousands of animals a year alongside Greater Good Charities' Good Fix program, that spayed and neutered almost 2,000 cats in a two-week time frame, is demonstrating a decline in unwanted litters in the canine and feline population (including ferals) thanks to spay and neuter.

Financial support toward spay and neuter efforts can help decrease the homeless pet population and free-roaming cat population. The spread of toxoplasmosis (*Toxoplasma gondii*) in the environment could be halted by the spaying and neutering of cats, as kittens are at the greatest risk of being infected by the parasite and shedding the parasite into the environment, potentially endangering wildlife.

We urge you to pass House Bill 220 as it will allow taxpayers to support an initiative that supports their community, their environment, and saves lives. This bill is to the benefit of pets, free-roaming cats, wildlife, the environment, and the residents of Hawai`i. Thank you for considering our testimony.

Respectfully,
Nicole Schafer Crane
Executive Director
Kaua`i Humane Society
nicole@kauaihumane.org

8 February 2023
BIISC
23 E Kawili St
Hilo, HI 96771
biisc@hawaii.edu



Attn: House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems
RE: HB220

Aloha,

BIISC would like to state opposition to the measures outlined in HB220 for Trap, Neuter, Return. As in many other island environments, cats are a very destructive invasive species in Hawai'i. Many of our native endangered animals, found nowhere else in the world but our islands, are directly threatened by the presence of cats on the landscape. Not only do cats directly predate on our vulnerable native birds, they carry and spread the disease toxoplasmosis which has already killed several Hawaiian monk seals.

Sterilization, while key to reducing our pet overpopulation problem, does nothing to stop these destructive impacts on our native wildlife. Additionally, decades of research have clearly demonstrated that TNR does not lead to the successful reduction of cat populations. In contrast, the existence of cat colonies persuades residents to “dump” unwanted cats.

For the last two years, we have worked with professionals on the monk seal recovery team at NOAA and in animal welfare from the Humane Society “turning off the tap” of feral cats – stopping people from dumping unwanted cats, and encouraging residents to spay or neuter every pet cat before it can produce a litter. We deeply believe in resolving this problem humanely. However, it is humane to neither our native animals nor the cats themselves to consign cats to a lonely, dangerous life outdoors where they cause devastating impacts to our environment.

We ask that you oppose HB220.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.

Franny Brewer
Manager

In Support of Approval of HB220

Spay and neuter of cats and dogs, both owned and free-roaming is essential to reduce and control the overpopulation of these animals on the island. This should be a concern of every island residents to prevent unwanted litters and prevent euthanasia of unwanted pets. The State of Hawaii have many low income residents who cannot afford this surgical procedure for their pets, nor can they afford to feed and provide veterinary care for new litters. Thus birthing of future generations of cats and dogs continues to occur.

Currently there is no County/State program to support spay and neuter. As such organizations including KARES, AdvoCATS and CatsNIP on Hawaii that conduct spay/neuter clinics and provide the service FREE to residents must raise the funds themselves through countless grants to mainland private and corporate foundations as well as from private donors. For KARES alone we spent \$55,000 in 2022 plus countless volunteer hours to accomplish spay/neuter of 500 dogs and 100 cats. Hundreds of hours are also spent writing competitive grants to fund this work. Each organization can do more surgeries given funding through this proposition.

If every household were to contribute a small amount through a tax credit we could substantially augment delivery of spay/neuter surgeries. Thank you for considering approval of HB220.

Elaine K. Anderson, PhD

Vice President, Kohala Animal Relocation and Education Service (KARES)

I am submitting testimony to **strongly oppose** H.B. 220. Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment.

HB 220 Supports TNR for feral cats, a known injurious species to Hawai'i's threatened and endangered wildlife and a well-known threat to public health. TNR has been scientifically proven to be ineffective in reducing the feral cat population by multiple peer-reviewed studies.

The Hawaiian archipelago is known as the endangered species capital and is critically important for endangered and endemic native Hawaiian birds, particularly wetland birds and seabirds, many of which are found nowhere else in the world. Native Hawaiian wildlife evolved without mammalian predators and have no defenses against them and need urgent action to protect them from extinction. As these native species are legally protected by the Federal and State of Hawai'i's Endangered Species Act, there is an obligation to meet that legal mandate.

Also, of much concern is that it is inhumane to abandon cats outdoors without a family to provide for the necessary regular veterinary and routine health care and also the need for daily socialization of these domestic pets. Cats indoors and as members of a human family are healthier and they live longer and happier lives. It is essential that cats are required to be under the control of the pet owners at all times, whether on a leash, in a catio, or indoors. This protects the pets, the public and more urgently the threatened and endangered native wildlife of Hawai'i

Another important factor is that Human Health is also at stake. Outdoor feral cats pose a serious health risk to humans, as they are a vector for toxoplasmosis. Toxoplasmosis is dangerous to humans, where it causes miscarriage, birth defects, and can be fatal. Cats are also a vector for multiple other diseases that can seriously affect humans, including cat scratch disease (*Bartonella henselae*), Campylobacter infection, Salmonella, Giardia and cryptosporidium. Additionally, endangered native birds, the Nēnē and 'Alalā have been killed by exposure to toxoplasmosis. Hawaiian monk seals, Hawaiian spinner dolphins and Humpback Whales are also at risk, as toxoplasmosis can and does kill marine mammals. In recent years it has been a significant cause of mortality for critically endangered Hawaiian monk seals in particular.

A comprehensive study of Hawaii residents by [Lohr and Lepczyk in 2014](#) revealed that the vast majority of Hawaii residents agreed with this stance. We should not allow our native Hawaiian birds to be pushed to extinction by a minority of people who do not understand the drastic impact that cats have on an isolated island ecosystem.

I look to the Legislature to meet the legal, the biodiversity conservation, the public health, and the humane obligations by opposing HB 220.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this critically important issue.
Linda Elliott
Hāwī, HI 96719

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 10:51:31 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rae Okawa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

While I support and always recommend people spay and neuter their pets, I do not support creating a special fund that will specifically benefit trap-neuter-release (TNR) programs. TNR does not work. It creates inhumane conditions for the animal. Feral colonies also promote continued abandonment because people feel that their pets will be looked after and that they'll be ok on their own. I would imagine the abandonment would decrease if the potential penalties were much harsher - i.e. fines for the abandoner and the risk of humane euthanasia for their animal. TNR is a symbolic feel-good gesture that unfortunately stops the hard solutions from being discussed and halts any significant progress towards stemming the feral issue.

I am also concerned about the impact of growing feral colonies on native and endangered populations - and a state-sponsored program to provide for the release of predator animals back on the landscape. It would be a different story if this bill provided support for spaying and neutering and then finding new loving homes for these animals. That would be great. But TNR organizations will dump them back out in the environment where they don't belong. What happens when these state-funded predators decimate native seabird populations and otherwise interfere with conservation goals to protect native Hawaiian biodiversity? If these conservation programs are also state-funded, that was just a huge loss of those state resources. I've also seen testimony acknowledging the real threat and devastation of toxoplasmosis from cats, then going on use that as a justification for TNR. To this, I just want to point out that spayed and neutered cats still poop (unless they get run over by cars or die of disease, but that's a terrible way to pass that I wouldn't wish on any creature). I've also seen lots of testimony claiming that humane euthanasia doesn't work and that only TNR can solve the problem. This I never understood. Spayed/neutered cats don't reproduce, and neither does a humanely euthanized cat. The only difference is with humane euthanasia, you are now less one cat. Humane euthanasia is an accepted practice for pets, so why is suddenly a travesty for feral animals?

Sidenote, I do support the updating of the language in the statute from "husband and wife" to "married couple". Everything else TNR-related in this bill, no.

Creating this fund will only feed into the growing loop of animal abandonment and will do nothing to address the hard facts and difficult solutions. On top of that, it's fiscally irresponsible. Let's not continue with this effort to procure the tiniest bandaid for a gaping flesh wound. Please defer this measure. Or, if you chose to move it forward, I would like to suggest that the bill is updated so that the use of the fund covers spaying and neutering of owned pets only. I acknowledge that there are many in our community that want the companionship of a pet but may

not have the financial resources to cover these types of procedures. It would be preferable to see this bill promote responsible pet ownership instead of financially support a detrimental animal abandonment program.

The reality is... the real solutions to the cat population crisis are hard and honestly seriously suck. But if we continue to allow TNR to be supported, the best case it will lead to the loss of financial resources, worse case it will lead to the loss of more biodiversity plus the gruesome demise of increasingly more and more cats. TNR has been active in our islands for decades and we're still up to our ears in cats and it's getting worse. There are more cats smashed on roads, there are more cats using beaches as litter boxes, there are now cats wandering up in our mountains, there are hoards of cats putting community members at odds. Throwing more money at the practice of TNR won't do any good.

Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 11:41:06 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jay Penniman	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please send this bill to trash. The following list of objections:

1. Cats are an invasive predator in Hawai'i and have already contributed to the extinction of 2 Hawaiian birds
2. Cats contaminate the landscape with *Toxoplasma gondii*, which is a serious public and wildlife health risk
3. TNR programs DO NOT successfully reduce cat populations
4. Sterilized cats still kill wildlife and contribute to infectious parasite and disease risks
5. Sterilized cats still cause nuisances in communities – who wants a cat colony in their backyard?
6. [The Hawai'i Invasive Species Council opposes TNR](#)
7. A [2014 study](#) found that 78% of Hawai'i residents want feral cats *REMOVED* from the environment permanently, not re-abandoned via TNR
8. Alternatives to TNR exist and include, among other things, (a) mandatory enclosure of cat colonies and (b) using allocated funds to exclusively sterilize owned cats

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 11:43:29 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
tia pearson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

1. Cats are an invasive predator in Hawai‘i and have already contributed to the extinction of 2 Hawaiian birds
2. Cats contaminate the landscape with *Toxoplasma gondii*, which is a serious public and wildlife health risk
3. TNR programs do not successfully reduce cat populations
4. Sterilized cats still kill wildlife and contribute to infectious parasite and disease risks
5. Sterilized cats still cause nuisances in communities – who wants a cat colony in their backyard?
6. 78% of Hawai‘i residents want feral cats *REMOVED* from the environment permanently, not re-abandoned via TNR
7. Alternatives to TNR exist and include, among other things, (a) mandatory enclosure of cat colonies and (b) using allocated funds to exclusively sterilize owned cats

Unfortunately, [SB 998](#) passed out of the Senate Agriculture and Environment Committee on Monday. If SB 998 and HB 220 are both passed within their respective chambers without amendment, then tax dollar-funded TNR will be the law of the land throughout Hawai‘i, with devastating and lasting consequences.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 11:48:40 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Azelski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Stong support. Thank you.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 12:09:31 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
nancy harter	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 220. I deal with problems related to feral cats daily in my neighborhood and they are an ongoing negative issue for life in Hawaii. Not only do their feces carry disease, they threaten bird populations as well as pollute our ocean. Rather than put funding into TNR, which does not work to reduce cat populations. I have personal experience with this in my neighborhood so know first hand. Please consider putting funding into a more broad-reaching solution to eliminate feral cat populations in Hawaii. Feral cats are an invasive species and should be dealt with as such, not neutered and released,. Please oppose HB220. Thank you.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 1:16:13 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Taurie Kinoshita	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of HB 220. This bill is crucial; spaying and neutering affordably are the only means of humanely stopping the sad cruelty endured by animals who have been abandoned by their families. Thank you for your consideration. Sincerely, Taurie Kinoshita

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 1:41:29 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephanie McLaughlin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this very important bill which will save wildlife in Hawaii and will prevent overpopulation by the feral cat community in a humane way. Killing wildlife with poisoning is NOT the answer because it will kill other wildlife and pets.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 1:43:39 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jill Adams	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TNR has not been shown to effectively control feral cat populations in scientific study. Please don't waste money on this.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 1:47:30 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
helen raine	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Legislatures,

I strongly oppose bill HB220.

I am a conservation professional working to protect endangered and endemic native Hawaiian birds, particularly wetland birds and seabirds. These birds are found nowhere else in the world and in some cases, such as the ‘alaie ‘ula (Hawaiian Common Gallinule), there are less than 1000 individuals left in the world. They evolved without mammalian predators and have no defenses against them.

Allowing cats to roam free on the landscape is a disaster for these birds. In a four-year period (2014 – 2018), over 250 native waterbirds were killed by feral cats on Hanalei National Wildlife Refuge in Kauai, including around 100 Hawaiian Gallinules and 40 Koloa Ducks. That is a major crisis for any endangered bird species.

In addition, there is a serious human health risk to allowing cats to roam our islands. Cats are carriers of diseases such as toxoplasmosis, which spreads through only through cat feces to Hawaiian Monk Seals, dolphins and humans, where it causes miscarriage, birth defects and can be fatal.

‘Trap-Neuter-Release’ (TNR) is not an answer. Spayed/neutered cats which remain outside are still a threat to human health, endangered birds and marine mammals. Cats belong indoors to protect the delicate balance of our ecosystem in the Hawaiian Islands. It is safer for the cats, and essential for the birds.

A comprehensive study of Hawaii residents by [Lohr and Lepczyk in 2014](#) revealed that the vast majority of Hawaii residents agreed with this stance. We should not allow our native Hawaiian birds to be pushed to extinction by a minority of people who do not understand the drastic impact that cats have on an isolated island ecosystem.

As a State, we invest millions of dollars in the conservation of endangered species. I am very tired of finding literally hundreds of carcasses of endangered or native birds ripped apart by feral

cats every year. If this bill passes, it will perpetuate that slaughter, undermining efforts to protect endangered species and wasting our conservation dollars and resources.

Thank-you for your consideration,

Helen Raine

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 1:49:05 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Heidi Hansen	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I vehemently oppose allocating funds to ineffective feline control programs such as this proposal. I am writing to encourage our leaders to take a lesson from New Zealand, and take a swift and heavy hand toward all threats to our environment. Cats need to be ERADICATED from Hawaii's delicate nature and enclosed and/or completely banned from the state. There's a myriad of better solutions out there that should be given much more attention, support, and funding to preserve our ecosystem. This current proposal is a frustrating waste of my tax dollars.

1. Cats are an invasive predator in Hawai'i and have already contributed to the extinction of 2 Hawaiian birds
2. Cats contaminate the landscape with *Toxoplasma gondii*, which is a serious public and wildlife health risk
3. TNR programs do not successfully reduce cat populations
4. Sterilized cats still kill wildlife and contribute to infectious parasite and disease risks
5. Sterilized cats still cause nuisances in communities – who wants a cat colony in their backyard?
6. [The Hawai'i Invasive Species Council opposes TNR](#)
7. A [2014 study](#) found that 78% of Hawai'i residents want feral cats *REMOVED* from the environment permanently, not re-abandoned via TNR
8. Alternatives to TNR exist and include, among other things, (a) mandatory enclosure of cat colonies and (b) using allocated funds to exclusively sterilize owned cats

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 1:53:01 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julia Diegmann	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill.

Cats are invasive and prey on our native Hawaiian bird species. They are spreading Toxoplasma, posing not only a risk for wildlife, but also for the public. We know that TNR does not successfully reduce cat populations and that sterilized cats still kill wildlife. Many of our native Hawaiian species are at the brink of extinction. We should focus all our efforts on making sure we protect them and not an invasive species that causes harm to our environment.

Thanks,

- Julia Diegmann.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 2:06:41 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Selene Mersereau	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Funds for trap, neuter, spay is the humane solution to abandonment, overpopulation and irresponsible pet guardianship. People are dumping their cats all over the islands. A serious, illegal problem. That needs to be addressed.

Please support this bill.

Selene - Kailua

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 2:42:14 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Franny Kinslow Brewer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I would like to submit testimony opposing this bill. As someone who has worked years both in animal welfare and natural resources conservation on this island, I strongly feel that there is no place on our island for TNR. Twenty years ago, when TNR was first appearing as a movement, I was an early believer and indeed was a colony caretaker - feeding daily, trapping weekly, and taking cats in for their S/N appointments at a local vet. I spent my own money and hours of my time, as I was truly committed. One of the promised outcomes of TNR, I was told then, was that within 5-8 years the colony of non-reproductive cats would naturally die off and so the situation would then be resolved.

It was a pretty idea that never came close to fruition. I watched as the existence of the colony attracted people to dump their cats, and I was told often that they just couldn't "bring themselves" to take the cat to a shelter (where I worked to adopt out many cats!). In a month I'd be lucky to fix four cats in a colony of 35 - a number that would become meaningless when a mother cat with 5 kittens appeared the next day. Never did we approach even a 50% spay/nueter rate for that colony- and never did I see any other colony on the west side of the island get past that milestone either. Cats continued to fight and breed in managed colonies. I visited the area of my former colony this past summer, and found that it is just as large as it was in 2002 - twenty years ago! "Natural attrition" never materialized, but the cats there are still being fed - probably by someone as well-meaning and naive as I was then.

In looking at the modern arguments for TNR posted by Allie Cat Allies and other TNR proponents, I found that the "attrition" selling point has been muted (after 20 years, even they are aware this is not valid). The measures of "success" now proudly listed on their website are entirely built around the "health" of the cat. They list as successes that colony cats live slightly longer than non-colony strays, that the cats have lower incidences of disease, that they are generally in better health than non-colony cats - all measures that focus solely on the outcome for the cat (which is still abysmally bad when compared to properly cared-for pet cats).

In Hawaii, the outcome of a "slightly better off" stray cat is just inexcusable when we are facing an extinction crisis for our native Hawaiian wildlife. Toxoplasmosis killing our seals, seabird chicks being dragged from their nests and mutilated and murdered - now, as a professional in conservation, am exposed to these horrors too often. As a loving cat parent myself, I understand the inclination to want to save dumped and unwanted animals - a problem that is the product (like all invasive species) of carelessness by humans and not the fault of the cats themselves.

However, we cannot abandon our kuleana to care for the animals who are a part of these islands, who evolved with this very place itself, and who have nowhere else to go.

I believe the people who support TNR are well-meaning, as I met many of them over the years and know that their depth of feeling for cats is real. However, their view is myopic. They cannot claim to be animal lovers and ignore the suffering of so many other animals by keeping cats free on the landscape. In my time in animal welfare, I saw stray cats (including ear-tipped colony cats) shot, poisoned, hit by cars, attacked by dogs, and even hung by fishing wire. Cats do not belong outdoors. If there is funding to help cats, it should be used to move colonies to fenced, protected sanctuaries where they can be properly cared for.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 3:09:02 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mele Khalsa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a conservation professional working to protect endangered and endemic native Hawaiian birds. These birds are found nowhere else in the world and many have few individuals left in their populations. They evolved without mammalian predators and have no defenses against them. Allowing cats to roam free on the landscape is disastrous for these birds.

In addition, there is a serious human health risk to allowing cats to roam our islands. Cats are carriers of diseases such as toxoplasmosis, which spreads through only through cat feces to Hawaiian Monk Seals, dolphins and humans, where it causes miscarriage, birth defects and can be fatal.

‘Trap-Neuter-Release’ (TNR) is not an answer. Spayed/neutered cats which remain outside are still a threat to human health, endangered birds, and marine mammals. Cats belong indoors to protect the delicate balance of our ecosystem in the Hawaiian Islands. It is safer for the cats, and essential for the birds.

A comprehensive study of Hawaii residents by [Lohr and Lepczyk in 2014](#) revealed that the vast majority of Hawaii residents agreed with this stance. We should not allow our native Hawaiian birds to be pushed to extinction by a minority of people who do not understand the drastic impact that cats have on an isolated island ecosystem.

As a State, we invest millions of dollars in the conservation of endangered species. I am very tired of finding literally hundreds of carcasses of endangered or native birds ripped apart by feral cats every year. If this bill passes, it will perpetuate that slaughter, undermining efforts to protected endangered species and wasting our conservation dollars and resources.

For the sake of our many unique native species please oppose this bill.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 3:23:43 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Greg Puppione	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

1. Cats are an invasive predator in Hawai‘i and have already contributed to the extinction of 2 Hawaiian birds
2. Cats contaminate the landscape with *Toxoplasma gondii*, which is a serious public and wildlife health risk
3. TNR programs do not successfully reduce cat populations
4. Sterilized cats still kill wildlife and contribute to infectious parasite and disease risks
5. Sterilized cats still cause nuisances in communities – who wants a cat colony in their backyard?
6. [The Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council opposes TNR](#)
7. A [2014 study](#) found that 78% of Hawai‘i residents want feral cats *REMOVED* from the environment permanently, not re-abandoned via TNR
8. Alternatives to TNR exist and include, among other things, (a) mandatory enclosure of cat colonies and (b) using allocated funds to exclusively sterilize owned cats

Please do not support this bill.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 3:36:20 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bill Dixon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill makes it easy for Hawaii taxpayers to help fund the spay/neuter of pets, including feral cats, at no significant cost to the state. These funds will benefit low-income pet owners who may struggle to afford spay/neuter services. The funds also will support nonprofits that have a proven track record of reducing pet overpopulation in Hawaii. Please note that this bill does not add cats to the landscape. Rather, it prevents the cats that are already there from breeding. Thus, it is a sensible way to protect wildlife.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 3:44:57 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
lynne matusow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is a humane solution to reduction of the over population of free roaming cats. It is much needed. This bill helps protect wildlife as it reduces the number of cats. With spay neuter fewer cats will breed.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 3:47:49 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Eubank	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB220.

Thank you.

Susan Eubank

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 4:41:20 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carole R. Richelieu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill establishes a spay and neuter special fund for the spay/neuter of pet cats and dogs and Free-Roaming cats and allows funds from an income tax check-off to be deposited into the special fund. This bill ultimately **protects** wildlife. The alternative to the spay/neuter of Free-Roaming cats is more cats, not fewer cats. This bill does not add cats to the landscape; it prevents the cats who are already there from breeding.

The number one barrier to addressing the issue of cat and dog overpopulation is insufficient access to free or low-fee spay/neuter. The state does not allocate any funding to address these issues.

This bill allows concerned and caring taxpayers an easy way to support the spay/neuter of pet animals and Free-Roaming cats at no significant cost to the state. Nonprofits who rescue and rehome animals often struggle to fund pre-adoption spay/neuter to make sure the pets they adopt out are not contributing to pet overpopulation and many low-income and houseless pet owners struggle to access affordable spay/neuter for their animal companions.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 5:23:34 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Luke Nagasako	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

Rep. Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair

Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair

DATE: Friday, February 10, 2023

TIME: 10:00 AM

RE: HB220 Relating to the Spaying and Neutering of Animals

In Support

Dear Representative Gates, Representative Kahaloa, and members of the committee,

I am an elementary school student living in Honolulu.

I think that spaying and neutering cats is important because when animals are spayed/ neutered then it addresses overpopulation.

This would help nonprofit organizations having rescued animals be spayed/ neutered because some organizations struggle with paying for spaying/neutering.

This would help cats even though it is preventing more cats because too many cats could actually hurt cats. This bill would not remove or add cats from the landscape but prevent there being new cats that would contribute to overpopulation.

I urge you to support this bill.

Thank you,
Luke Nagasako

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 6:28:41 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaleiheana-a-Pohaku Stormcrow	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly oppose this bill. Feral cats are an invasive predator that are confirmed to have caused the extinction of at least two native birds, and continue to threaten the persistence of many that are endangered and on the brink of extinction from high-elevation species like Palila to sea birds like ‘ua‘u kani. As a wildlife biologist, I have witnessed first-hand the destruction that these animals cause when there is no predator control at a field site. The Hawai‘i Invasive species council opposes TNR.

Further, their feces also cause Toxoplasmosis, which kills endangered sea life like Hawaiian monk seal, as well as other sea-faring mammals who get infected.

Trap Neuter Release (TNR) has shown over decades to not reduce feral cat populations. It may prevent them from breeding, but it is not going to lower population numbers unless there are other restrictions such as not allowing people to feed feral cat colonies, or requiring that people spay and neuter their pets AND keep them inside. TNR is NOT a good, humane or ethical solution. Additionally, cat colonies smell absolutely abysmal and have no place existing in our neighborhoods. A 2014 study found that 78% of Hawai‘i residents want feral cats REMOVED from the environment permanently, not re-abandoned via TNR. Alternatives to TNR exist and include, among other things, (a) mandatory enclosure of cat colonies and (b) using allocated funds to exclusively sterilize owned cats.

As a wildlife biologist and ecologist, it is my strong belief that these predators have no place on our landscape and that we should be doing everything we can to eliminate them via euthanasia, not allowing them to persist on the landscape via taxpayer-funded TNR programs.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 6:49:22 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christel Collins	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

REPRESENTATIVE CEDRIC ASUEGA GATES, CHAIR

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

HB 220 RELATING TO THE SPAYING AND NEUTERING OF ANIMALS.

Friday Feb 10, 2023

10:00 AM

Conference Room 325 via Videoconference

IN SUPPORT

Aloha Chair Gates. My name is Christel Collins. I am testifying in favor of HB 220 relating to the spaying and neutering of animals.

Studies show that spaying/neutering is the single most effective action for reducing the suffering of feral cats and dogs.

It is no secret that feral cats suffer greatly in Hawaii. Easy targets for cruelty, they have been shot with arrows and used for fish bait. Their impact on our native birds and monk seals is tragic and causes the cats to be treated with even more enmity.

Unwanted dogs, though not as vilified as feral cats, are regularly found starving and disease-ridden and maltreated in our islands.

I volunteer with and donate regularly to groups like the Hawaiian Humane Society, PAWS of Hawaii, and Kaaawa K-9. These groups cannot keep up with the large numbers of cats and dogs that need homes, food, shelter and medical treatment.

Overpopulation is the problem, and spay/neuter is the answer.

I also support this bill as a strong conservationist who cares deeply about our native birds and monk seals. This bill will help our native species by reducing the number of feral cats.

This law would allow non-profit groups, who already do so much with so little, to help reduce the suffering of our animal population at no significant cost to the State.

Many people, like myself, want to help reduce animal suffering but do not know how to make a real difference. The establishment of an income tax checkoff option for a State of Hawaii spay/neuter fund will allow us that option.

I urge the Committee to hear and pass HB 220, and I thank the legislators who introduced it.

Mahalo,

Christel Collins

Christel.j.collins@gmail.com

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 7:38:44 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
tania victorine	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need to protect our native birds.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 7:43:50 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sheena Lopes	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Taxing individuals to spay and neuter free roaming cats does not help save our manu oiwi. As a citizen of this state I DO NOT want my tax dollars going to a bill that does not solve the problem of invasive species like cats killing our indigenous birds. The spaying and neutering will NOT stop the cats from destroying native nests nor stop them from pooping that has toxoplasma that is harmful to an endangered bird such as the Alala. If we want to continue to allocate money to saving our birds, this bill does nothing but continue to put our forest birds in danger, thus WASTING money while not solving the problem which is cats! It is counter productive and I would rather much get taxed for efforts to save the birds than to protect INVASIVE SPECIES SUCH AS FREE ROAMING CATS. Again, this bill is counter productive to endangered manu oiwi efforts and I DO NOT want to get taxed for something I cannot support. The manu oiwi matter, NOT THE INVASIVE PREDATORS!!!

8 Feb, 2023

Dear Honorable Senator/Representative

I write to strongly oppose HB220 which would use public funds to support trap and neuter for feral cats. If passed, this bill is sure to exacerbate threats to Hawaii's wildlife. Because they have evolved in isolation, native Hawaiian wildlife are particularly susceptible to ravages imposed by introduced predators and disease. Cats are not native to Hawaii and are a prime example of the negative impacts of introduced predators and disease.

The decline of native endangered newell's [shearwaters](#) and native wedge tailed [shearwaters](#) is in part due to predation by feral cats. Cat also spread the parasite *Toxoplasma gondii* that was responsible for elimination of native Hawaiian [crows](#) from the Big Island. *T. gondii* is also a major cause of death in native [Hawaiian geese](#) and Hawaiian monk [seals](#).

The feral cat lobby in Hawaii is effective, shrill, and on message. They have successfully brought forward this deplorable bill in spite of the fact that most residents of [Hawaii](#) do not want public lands polluted with feral cats or public funds used to those ends. Moreover, HB220 will do nothing to control feral cats in Hawaii. Whilst the feral cat lobby can surely trot out cherry-picked studies that TNR can reduce cat populations, the overwhelming scientific [consensus](#) is that TNR just allows cats to persist on the landscape and continue their depredations on native wildlife.

Cats are not to blame for this situation. Rather, it is humans who refuse to take responsibility for proper housing and care of unfortunate animals that are left to fend for themselves. Humane solutions exist to reduce cat populations including holding people accountable for proper care of their cats, or housing feral cats away from wildlife in [enclosures](#).

Hawaii's native wildlife needs a voice, and you can provide that voice by voting down HB220. Alala, nene, monk seals, and a panoply of native Hawaiian forest and seabirds will thank you if you do.



Thierry M. Work MS, DVM, MPVM
1918 Alewa Drive
Honolulu, HI 96817

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:00:40 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marie McKenzie	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to state my opposition to SB 998. Trap, neuter, release (TNR) leaves feral cats

I believe in protecting endangered and endemic native Hawaiian birds. These birds are found nowhere else in the world and in some cases, such as the ‘alae ‘ula (Hawaiian Common Gallinule), there are less than 1000 individuals left in the world. They evolved without mammalian predators and have no defenses against them. Allowing cats to roam free on the landscape is a disaster for these birds.

In addition, there is a serious human health risk to allowing cats to roam our islands. Cats are carriers of diseases such as toxoplasmosis, which spreads through only through cat feces to Hawaiian Monk Seals, dolphins and humans, where it causes miscarriage, birth defects and can be fatal.

‘Trap-Neuter-Release’ (TNR) is not an answer. Spayed/neutered cats which remain outside are still a threat to human health, endangered birds and marine mammals. Cats belong indoors to protect the delicate balance of our ecosystem in the Hawaiian Islands. It is safer for the cats, and essential for the birds.

A comprehensive study of Hawaii residents by Lohr and Lepczyk in 2014 revealed that the vast majority of Hawaii residents agreed with this stance. We should not allow our native Hawaiian birds to be pushed to extinction by a minority of people who do not understand the drastic impact that cats have on an isolated island ecosystem.

As a State, we invest millions of dollars in the conservation of endangered species. I am very tired that there are literally hundreds of carcasses of endangered or native birds ripped apart by feral cats every year. If this bill passes, it will perpetuate that slaughter, undermining efforts to protected endangered species and wasting our conservation dollars and resources.

I urge you to oppose this bill.

Mahalo nui.

Marie.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:01:54 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tia Yagi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to state my opposition of HB220 to Trap, neuter, release (TNR) feral cats

I am a conservation enthusiast supporting the protection of endangered and endemic native Hawaiian birds. These birds are found nowhere else in the world and in some cases, such as the ‘alaie ‘ula (Hawaiian Common Gallinule), there are less than 1000 individuals left in the world. They evolved without mammalian predators and have no defenses against them. Allowing cats to roam free on the landscape is a disaster for these birds.

In addition, there is a serious human health risk to allowing cats to roam our islands. Cats are carriers of diseases such as toxoplasmosis, which spreads through only through cat feces to Hawaiian Monk Seals, dolphins and humans, where it causes miscarriage, birth defects and can be fatal.

‘Trap-Neuter-Release’ (TNR) is not an answer. Spayed/neutered cats which remain outside are still a threat to human health, endangered birds and marine mammals. Cats belong indoors to protect the delicate balance of our ecosystem in the Hawaiian Islands. It is safer for the cats, and essential for the birds.

A comprehensive study of Hawaii residents by Lohr and Lepczyk in 2014 revealed that the vast majority of Hawaii residents agreed with this stance. We should not allow our native Hawaiian birds to be pushed to extinction by a minority of people who do not understand the drastic impact that cats have on an isolated island ecosystem.

As a State, we invest millions of dollars in the conservation of endangered species. I am very tired of seeing literally hundreds of carcasses of endangered or native birds ripped apart by feral cats every year. If this bill passes, it will perpetuate that slaughter, undermining efforts to protected endangered species and wasting our conservation dollars and resources.

I urge you to oppose this bill.

Many thanks

Tia Yagi

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:02:41 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Bursack	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to state my opposition to HB 220. Trap, neuter, release (TNR) leaves feral cats

I am a conservation professional working to protect endangered and endemic native Hawaiian birds. These birds are found nowhere else in the world and in some cases, such as the ‘alae ‘ula (Hawaiian Common Gallinule), there are less than 1000 individuals left in the world. They evolved without mammalian predators and have no defenses against them. Allowing cats to roam free on the landscape is a disaster for these birds.

In addition, there is a serious human health risk to allowing cats to roam our islands. Cats are carriers of diseases such as toxoplasmosis, which spreads through only through cat feces to Hawaiian Monk Seals, dolphins and humans, where it causes miscarriage, birth defects and can be fatal.

‘Trap-Neuter-Release’ (TNR) is not an answer. Spayed/neutered cats which remain outside are still a threat to human health, endangered birds and marine mammals. Cats belong indoors to protect the delicate balance of our ecosystem in the Hawaiian Islands. It is safer for the cats, and essential for the birds.

A comprehensive study of Hawaii residents by Lohr and Lepczyk in 2014 revealed that the vast majority of Hawaii residents agreed with this stance. We should not allow our native Hawaiian birds to be pushed to extinction by a minority of people who do not understand the drastic impact that cats have on an isolated island ecosystem.

As a State, we invest millions of dollars in the conservation of endangered species. I am very tired of finding literally hundreds of carcasses of endangered or native birds ripped apart by feral

cats every year. If this bill passes, it will perpetuate that slaughter, undermining efforts to protect endangered species and wasting our conservation dollars and resources.

I urge you to oppose this bill.

Many thanks

Michael Bursack

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:04:54 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katelyn Yockey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The organizations who work to spay and neuter the feral animals on the island make a massive impact on reducing the populations as well as monitoring the overall numbers present. The greatest obstacle for many involved is resources. PETFIX specially has the greatest impact and not only works with feral animals but also personal ones to provide affordable options to our communities. This work helps alleviate the impacts of cats on our native species. This is one of the solutions needed to create changes, especially in urban areas.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:06:16 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sheldon Abril	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB220.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:13:10 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Teresa Powell	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose spending tax payer money on feral cats. Spay and neuter programs are not solving the problem of the disease they spread and the decimation of our native bird population. Cats do not belong in our ecosystems. They should be only in homes and fenced yards.

I also wish I had more options to deal with neighborhood cats that use my organic garden as a litter box and fight outside my bedroom window in the middle of the night. I do not want a cat. Why should I have to deal with anyone else's cat or feral cats.

The island of Hawaii no longer has a humane society and Rainbow friends won't take any cats so we have no way to keep feral cats or neighbor cats out of our yard. I have to spend quite a bit of money fencing in my garden and yard because of problems that are not my doing and have no recourse against.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:13:18 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ariel Imoto	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to state my opposition to HB 220. Trap, neuter, release (TNR) leaves feral cats

I am a conservation professional working to protect endangered and endemic native Hawaiian birds. These birds are found nowhere else in the world and in some cases, such as the ‘alaie ‘ula (Hawaiian Common Gallinule), there are less than 1000 individuals left in the world. They evolved without mammalian predators and have no defenses against them. Allowing cats to roam free on the landscape is a disaster for these birds.

In addition, there is a serious human health risk to allowing cats to roam our islands. Cats are carriers of diseases such as toxoplasmosis, which spreads through only through cat feces to Hawaiian Monk Seals, dolphins and humans, where it causes miscarriage, birth defects and can be fatal.

‘Trap-Neuter-Release’ (TNR) is not an answer. Spayed/neutered cats which remain outside are still a threat to human health, endangered birds and marine mammals. Cats belong indoors to protect the delicate balance of our ecosystem in the Hawaiian Islands. It is safer for the cats, and essential for the birds.

A comprehensive study of Hawaii residents by Lohr and Lepczyk in 2014 revealed that the vast majority of Hawaii residents agreed with this stance. We should not allow our native Hawaiian birds to be pushed to extinction by a minority of people who do not understand the drastic impact that cats have on an isolated island ecosystem.

As a State, we invest millions of dollars in the conservation of endangered species. I am very tired of finding literally hundreds of carcasses of endangered or native birds ripped apart by feral

cats every year. If this bill passes, it will perpetuate that slaughter, undermining efforts to protect endangered species and wasting our conservation dollars and resources.

I urge you to oppose this bill.

Mahalo,

Ariel

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:21:20 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaydee Park	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB220, this bill does not properly address the feral cat problem as it pertains to its devastating effects on native bird populations.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:22:34 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kate Reimann	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB220 because it doesn't not adequately address the problem.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:25:55 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lori Poaipuni	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill because the method proposed has been found to increase the impact of cats and does not work to reduce the population. It sanctions keeping large number of cats in public spaces and not address the problems directly.

Mahalo!

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:30:06 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amy Allen	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose my tax dollars being used to trap and release feral cats. Even if the cat has been neutered or spayed it will continue to spread disease to monk seals and dolphins as well as kill birds including endangered endemic species for the remainder of its life. Please consider the non feral populations and do not pass this bill out of committee.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:36:07 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Candice Nozaki-Wong	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

NO THANKS

Opposition of SB998

I would like to state my opposition to SB 998. Trap, neuter, release (TNR) leaves feral cats

I am a conservation professional working to protect endangered and endemic native Hawaiian birds. These birds are found nowhere else in the world and in some cases, such as the ‘alaie ‘ula (Hawaiian Common Gallinule), there are less than 1000 individuals left in the world. They evolved without mammalian predators and have no defenses against them. Allowing cats to roam free on the landscape is a disaster for these birds.

In addition, there is a serious human health risk to allowing cats to roam our islands. Cats are carriers of diseases such as toxoplasmosis, which spreads through only through cat feces to Hawaiian Monk Seals, dolphins and humans, where it causes miscarriage, birth defects and can be fatal.

‘Trap-Neuter-Release’ (TNR) is not an answer. Spayed/neutered cats which remain outside are still a threat to human health, endangered birds and marine mammals. Cats belong indoors to protect the delicate balance of our ecosystem in the Hawaiian Islands. It is safer for the cats, and essential for the birds.

A comprehensive study of Hawaii residents by Lohr and Lepczyk in 2014 revealed that the vast majority of Hawaii residents agreed with this stance. We should not allow our native Hawaiian

birds to be pushed to extinction by a minority of people who do not understand the drastic impact that cats have on an isolated island ecosystem.

As a State, we invest millions of dollars in the conservation of endangered species. I am very tired of finding literally hundreds of carcasses of endangered or native birds ripped apart by feral cats every year. If this bill passes, it will perpetuate that slaughter, undermining efforts to protect endangered species and wasting our conservation dollars and resources.

I urge you to oppose this bill.

Many thanks

Candice Nozaki-Wong

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:40:58 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patti Lai	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Opposition of SB998

I would like to state my opposition to SB 998. Trap, neuter, release (TNR) leaves feral cats to kill our endemic Hawaiian birds.

Although I am not a conservation professional, I am a person who was born and raised in the islands. It saddens me to think that the very few remaining endemic birds are fighting a losing war - because we can't, or won't help them survive. They're trying to survive against mosquitos and feral cats. Please don't misunderstand me - I love all animals and even try to help trap feral cats to get them adopted here on Oahu. I even have a former feral cat that adopted me. But he lives indoors (after being neutered) and never goes outside.

'Trap-Neuter-Release' (TNR) is not an answer. Spayed/neutered cats which remain outside are still a threat to human health, endangered birds, as well as marine mammals. Cats belong indoors to protect the delicate balance of our ecosystem in the Hawaiian Islands. It is safer for the cats, and essential for the birds.

Too often, people that aren't from the islands and those that don't understand the severity of the diminishing numbers of our native birds get too much of a say.

To be able to teach and show future generations that we still have living proof of what our ancestors saw and lived side-by-side with, would be amazing.

Please, I urge you to oppose this bill.

Very respectfully,

Patti Lai

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:41:43 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joshua Pang-Ching	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill. Feral cats need to be controlled and not allowed to thrive. They harm our native birds and mammals and belong indoors.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:42:00 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laurel Nakanishi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Lawmakers,

I am a teacher and environmental writer. I would like to voice my opposition to HB220. Spayed/neutered cats which remain outside are a threat to endangered and endemic native Hawaiian birds. These birds are found nowhere else in the world, but they are killed in large numbers by feral cats. Instead of allocating money to this project, perhaps we could better fund conservation efforts to save what native species we have left.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Laurel Naknaishi

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:44:37 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
jillian wenderlich	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am opposing this bill! We need to do better for our native species!

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:48:36 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bret Mossman	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Person Gates, Vice chair Kahaloa and members of the committee,

I am writing in strong opposition to HB220. While I fully support expanding access to spay and neuter services for owned pet cats, sanctioning TNR and the keeping of feral cat colonies is a major disservice to our communities. I strongly encourage this committee to either differ this bill, or amend it so that it provides individual spay and neuter vouchers for residents rather than relying on TNR organizations as middlemen and bans the feeding of free roaming/feral cats in Hawai'i (like what just went into effect on Kaua'i this January).

The vast majority of peer reviewed literature has found that TNR does not work to reduce free roaming cat populations and can even worsen negative impacts. When cats are fed, their densities increase, and a 2020 paper found that they even kill more wildlife than would be expected of similar wild carnivores. Additionally many TNR organizations also provide large amounts of food for other invasive species like mongoose, without doing anything to remove or control them.

As a member of the conservation community and as a wildlife biologist, I implore you to follow the best available science and vote down this bill. Our native birds, bats, and marine mammals are some of the most threatened in the world and state sanctioned TNR will undermine years of conservation work and waste millions of dollars reversing important restoration work.

As a Kanaka, I am begging you to help be part of the solution for healing our 'āina and removing invasive species like cats. We have lost untold cultural practices as cats and other invasive species have caused the catastrophic decline of our native species. Please help be part of the solution and vote down this bill.

Mahalo nui for your time and consideration.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:49:13 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacob Merkel	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please do not let this bill move forward. Feral and stray cats need to be completely removed from areas if they don't have an owner with a secure home. Treat stray and feral cats the same as stray and feral dogs. You don't see packs of wild dogs in our parks and hanging around beaches, so cats shouldn't be allowed the same freedom, especially because cats are one of the main reasons why our native Hawai'ian birds are going extinct! Furthermore, cats spread toxoplasmosis which sickens and kills our native sea life!

Mahalo,

Jacob Merkel

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:49:15 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Walter Malterre	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to state my opposition for bill HB220. Hawaii, like many other places in the world, has a unique geography and ecosystem consisting of many animals and plants that cannot be found anywhere else. Unfortunately it seems that Hawaii has increasingly become a cautious example of how not to properly take care of a fragile and unique environment.

With the introduction of many non native species Hawaii is on the fast track to losing most, if not all, of its native flora and fauna. It is imperative that we favor native species over introduced no matter if the introduced grows roots, walks on four legs, or flies in the air. I agree that killing cats is unfortunate as it is through no direct fault of their own, but we must take serious measures to preserve our struggling native species. If proponents of the bill wish to help the cats so much why don't they welcome the animals into their home and care for them like the pets they deserve to be? It is easy to cry foul play against the cats when you're only caring for them at arms length. I hope our leaders and legislators will seriously consider stopping this bill.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:50:19 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Antonia Loomis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to state that I oppose HB220.

The native and indigenous species of Hawai'i should always be put above an introduced one. The birds in Hawai'i are like no other and deserve to be protected.

If the state is going to invest money into that protection they should atleast spend their money on a program that works and benefits the ecosystem.

TNR is a sad cop out for a solution to a bigger problem that needs a more hands on solution and one developed by individuals that care about the aina and the animals who live on it.

I urge you to oppose this bill and do better for the indigenous bird and animals of Hawai'i. Find a REAL solution.

Antonia Loomis

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:54:05 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dane	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Method does not reduce cat population. Instead creates more feral cats causing native Hawaiian birds to become more endangered. These feral cats kill many native Hawaiian bird species and is a huge problem to Hawaii wildlife. We should be killing these cats or sending them off islands not feeding them and giving money to these corporations to profit and make the cat problem worse.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:59:12 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alison Martin-Blevins	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill does not do enough, TNR does not protect native bird populations. This bill fails to address the issue of pollution and destruction caused by cat colonies on our environment and native bird populations.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 8:59:23 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leah Miller	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to state my opposition to SB 998. Trap, neuter, release (TNR) leaves feral cats on the landscape and allows them to wreak havoc on native ecosystems and the endangered species that make Hawaii so special.

I am a conservation professional working to protect endangered and endemic native Hawaiian birds. These birds are found nowhere else in the world and in some cases, such as the ‘alae ‘ula (Hawaiian Common Gallinule), there are less than 1000 individuals left in the world. They evolved without mammalian predators and have no defenses against them. Allowing cats to roam free on the landscape is a disaster for these birds.

In addition, there is a serious human health risk to allowing cats to roam our islands. Cats are carriers of diseases such as toxoplasmosis, which spreads through only through cat feces to Hawaiian Monk Seals, dolphins and humans, where it causes miscarriage, birth defects and can be fatal.

‘Trap-Neuter-Release’ (TNR) is not an answer. Spayed/neutered cats which remain outside are still a threat to human health, endangered birds and marine mammals. Cats belong indoors to protect the delicate balance of our ecosystem in the Hawaiian Islands. It is safer for the cats, and essential for the birds.

A comprehensive study of Hawaii residents by Lohr and Lepczyk in 2014 revealed that the vast majority of Hawaii residents agreed with this stance. We should not allow our native Hawaiian birds to be pushed to extinction by a minority of people who do not understand the drastic impact that cats have on an isolated island ecosystem.

As a State, we invest millions of dollars in the conservation of endangered species. I am very tired of finding literally hundreds of carcasses of endangered or native birds ripped apart by feral

cats every year. If this bill passes, it will perpetuate that slaughter, undermining efforts to protect endangered species and wasting our conservation dollars and resources.

I urge you to oppose this bill.

Many thanks,

Leah Miller

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 9:00:53 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Arianna Feinberg	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please oppose this bill and do not give state money to TNR. This is a waste of money and will NOT reduce the number of cats or their harm to native birds. Give money for cat owners to spay and neuter their actual pet cats but not to feral cats. Feral cats should systematically culled. Thank you for protecting native birds from predation from feral cats.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 9:01:09 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Meredith Miller	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB220. This bill would establish public funding to keep stray and feral cats roaming the landscape, resulting in devastating losses to Hawaii's Threatened and Endangered birds and contributing to significant public health risks.

Purposely keeping stray and feral cats roaming Hawaii, whether sterilized or not, kills Hawaii's birds and other wildlife and puts everyone's health at risk.

Thank you for your consideration.

Meredith Miller, M.A.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 9:05:36 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Karl Magnacca	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly urge you to vote no on this bill. The explosion of feral cats has been devastating for Hawaii's native birds and seals, and state funding for failed TNR campaigns will do nothing but waste time and money. We need to have real cat control in Hawaii before it's too late.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 9:13:32 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laameaomaunaala Burgess	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

These cats are a menace to native birds, and the people of Hawaii. They are an invasive species and need to be euthanized, not trapped and released. Just a few cats in an area will completely decimate the population of birds and small animals in an area, and the feral populations continue to grow in our communities. Please, vote no on this bill and submit a bill for euthanizing these predators from our islands.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 9:13:47 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sarah Howard	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The State of Hawaii desperately needs a comprehensive wild and feral cat management plan. Feral and wild cats predate native wildlife (including critically endangered bird species) and carry toxoplasmosis that threatens the health of ESA-listed marine species. Any program that enables the persistence of feral and wild cat colonies is poor stewardship over what limited and rare native species are left on these islands. Funds would be more effectively spent in the eradication of feral and wild cat colonies as TNR programs are not an effective management strategy in Hawaii. If the state values its native species it should vehemently come out against the continuation of cat colonies on the islands.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 9:14:21 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Will Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB220.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 9:26:50 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Adrian Burke	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB 220 would provide for the trap, neuter, & and release of feral cats in Hawai‘i. The release of these cats back into the landscape will allow them to continue to devastate native bird populations and spread toxoplasmosis that kills Hawaiian Monk Seals. These animals were here on these islands before even the first humans arrived here, and they are threatened with extinction today, in large part because of cats. These species are found only in Hawai‘i, so if they are lost here, like more than half of Hawai‘i's native endemic bird species already have been, they will be gone forever. Waterbirds like the koloa maoli (Hawaiian Duck), ‘alae ‘ula (Hawaiian Gallinule), and ae‘o (Hawaiian Stilt), as well as endangered endemic seabirds like the ‘ua‘u (Hawaiian Petrel) and ‘a‘o (Newell's Shearwater) all routinely get brutally killed by feral cats, which have no place in the Hawaiian landscape. It would be insane to spend so much of the state's money on the many conservation programs that we have dedicated to protecting these native birds and then to throw away so much of that effort to let huge numbers of birds die at the claws and jaws of cats rereleased into the wild by the state.

As someone who works in wildlife conservation on Kaua‘i, I am all too familiar with the horrendous effects feral cats have on any landscape, especially on islands. i assure you that opposing this bill is the obvious, clear choice to anyone who works in wildlife conservation in Hawai‘i. Please protect Hawaiian Monk Seals and our native bird species by refusing to carelessly release feral cats back into the wild. Trap neuter release programs do not reduce cat populations, and neutered and released cats still go on killing for up to years after being rereleased. One cat can wipe out an entire colony of nesting endangered seabirds in a season. Hawai‘i's birds play an integral role in Hawaiian culture and ecosystems. Please do the right thing, and keep cats out of the wild on these beautiful but fragile islands!

Mahalo

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 9:27:07 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Adam Scott Wayson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

How about we develop a fund to eradicate predatory, invasive species like cats and mongoose. Too much is spent yearly to try to protect our native avian species; only to allow feral cats to roam free. Seems to be quite contradictory and a waste of money.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 9:29:16 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tyler Bogardus	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB220 because it will put Hawaiian endangered species at risk of extinction in greater harm.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 9:31:16 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Wasser	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Mai,

I would like to convey my strong opposition of HB220 to Trap, Neuter, and Release (TNR) feral cats.

I am a concerned citizen who values our unique biodiversity and supports the protection of endangered and endemic native Hawaiian birds. Most of these birds are found nowhere else in the world and , and face declining numbers and imminent extinction in the face of a host of threats, including feral cats. These birds evolved without mammalian predators and have no defenses against them. Allowing cats to roam free on the landscape is a disaster for these already often critically imperiled birds.

In addition, there is a serious human health risk to allowing cats to roam our islands. Cats are carriers of diseases such as toxoplasmosis, which spreads through only through cat feces to Hawaiian Monk Seals, dolphins and humans, where it causes miscarriage, birth defects and can be fatal.

‘Trap-Neuter-Release’ (TNR) is not an answer. Spayed/neutered cats that remain outside continue to pose a threat to human health, endangered birds, and marine mammals (in addition to the terrible quality of life experienced by a feral animal). The most human solution for all lives (birds and otherwise) involved is to euthanize feral cats.

A comprehensive study of Hawaii residents by Lohr and Lepczyk in 2014 revealed that the vast majority of Hawaii residents agreed with this stance. We should not allow our native Hawaiian birds to be pushed to extinction by a minority of people who do not understand the drastic impact that cats have on an isolated island ecosystem.

As a State, we invest millions of dollars in the conservation of endangered species. I am tired of seeing this work undermined by the support for the continued existence of feral cats, which kill hundreds if not thousands of native birds annually. This bill will perpetuate that slaughter and exasperbate the problem, undermining efforts to protected endangered species and wasting our conservation dollars and resources.

I urge you to oppose this bill.

Mahalo,

Mark Wasser

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 9:38:37 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Navarra	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Committee members,

As a biologist who has witnessed the devastating impacts of feral cats on native bird populations, I'm writing in opposition to this proposed legislation.

I know that this is a very sensitive issues as there are many cat lovers that don't want to see these animals exterminated. I also love cats, and in my life have taken in several feral cats as pets. They are living creatures and not to blame for the devastating impacts they have on native species around the world.

However the rights and priority must be given to our native bird populations, the majority of whom are endangered or threatened with extinction. I spent one field season in 2021 monitoring the Nene at Hakalau National Wildlife Refuge during the nesting season. It was during this time I witnessed feral cats wipe out five of our nests that season (caught on camera) and an untold number of hatchling that disappeared but we could not directly attribute to cats versus other predators.

It's also extremely upsetting to me to see a cat colony feed by citizens in one of the few areas in Hilo where Nenes reside (Lili'uokalani Gardens). This simply should just not be allowed.

I understand the complexity and difficulty of this issue but I think we must prioritize our all right you can play your music species over the cute feral cats. Maintaining cat colonies is not the right decision for our native species and we should not endorse this practice by creating a special fund to spay and neuter cats.

Respectfully,

Jennifer Navarra

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 9:40:04 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sandra Loomis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB220. We must stop supporting those people and organizations that feed and prop up these feral colonies. Please put our native species first.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 9:41:54 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sharon Ziegler-Chong	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill. That the state would be accepting funds and working closely federal and community partners to try to keep Hawai'i's native birds in our world, and at the same time paying for maintaining feral cat colonies is ridiculous. Feral cats do not belong on our landscape.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 9:46:49 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
jesse white	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Studies have shown this type of program has made things worse. I love cats, but can't stand to see them continue to kill native birds and their chicks from ground nesting sea birds to the forests. We need to manage the feral cat population. And by manage it means more than just spaying and neutering. Eliminate the feral cat population down to a manageable number.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 9:51:03 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Phillip Howard	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The state should reallocate these funds toward programs that more effectively and directly eradicate feral cat colonies. Feral cats are an invasive species and management should be treated in the same ways we manage for feral pigs, rats, and other species that have wreaked havoc on native wildlife. TNR programs are ineffective in Hawaii and would create incentives and subsidies for those caring for feral cats colonies.

A first step would be to make it illegal to feed wild/feral cats or be involved in the maintenance of cat colonies, post more signs, provide funding for enforcement, establish a penalties schedule for those violating and an online database citizens can report cat colonies to enforcement officers.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 9:51:25 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JarraeTehani Manasas	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha

I strongly oppose HB220 because our **native birds** are in great danger due to feral cats. Please do not advance this bill and help our **native birds** thrive.

Mahalo,

JarraeTehani Manasas, Kailua Kona Hawai'i

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 10:01:19 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kassandra Talamantez	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to state my opposition to SB 998.

I am a conservation professional working to protect endangered and endemic native Hawaiian birds. These birds are found nowhere else in the world and in some cases, such as the palila, there are less than 1000 individuals left in the world. They evolved without mammalian predators and have no defenses against them. Allowing cats to roam free on the landscape is a disaster for these birds.

‘Trap-Neuter-Release’ (TNR) is not an answer. Spayed/neutered cats which remain outside are still a threat to human health, endangered birds and marine mammals. Cats belong indoors to protect the delicate balance of our ecosystem in the Hawaiian Islands. It is safer for the cats, and essential for the birds.

We cannot continue to ignore the effects feral cats place on the ‘āina and on our native birds. TNR is not the answer and that is why I urge you to oppose this bill.

Many thanks

Kassandra Talamantez

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 10:06:46 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Korina Leong	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I don't think it's right to use our tax dollars to further hurt the native Hawaiian birds. I 100% oppose

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 10:11:38 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Soren Velice	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill. While in the long term, it may reduce the feral cat population, spayed and neutered cats still must eat. It won't eliminate or significantly reduce the threat to native bird species soon enough to save those species currently on the brink of disappearing forever. As much as it pains me as an animal lover, I cannot support any program that releases feral cats back into the wild to hunt and kill more endangered birds. As is evident in the testimony submitted in opposition of the senate version (SB998), every single piece of testimony submitted by individuals and organizations directly involved with conservation firmly opposed that bill, and will oppose this one as well.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 10:14:07 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeremy pauli	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am fervently stating my opposition to SB998. TNR is ineffective, will continue the damage of Hawaii's fragile ecosystem and only seeks to sooth the temper of a small minority of citizens who seem to care more about cats than native Hawaiian birds like 'a'o, 'ua'u, ae'o, 'alae ke'oke'o and 'alae 'ula. Cats have devastated these birds and will continue to do so if they are strengthened from being fed by humans.

Anyone who has owned a cat knows that even when full cats will hunt and kill. Who hasn't had a well fed cat bring home a dead animal? Furthermore, feral cats spread diseases making them a hazard to people and other animals. Trapping, neutering and spaying cats won't stop them from spreading disease and continuing to decimate native birds. Why is a live feral house cat more important than native threatened species? The 'ua'u is endangered and the 'a'o is critically endangered. They are both an important part of the Hawaiian ecosystem bringing nutrients from the sea to the land, which in turn gives back to the sea. Feral cats do not contribute to the native ecosystem of Hawaii. If this bill passes it will be a deathknell for native Hawaiian birds.

please oppose this bill for the sake of Hawaii

Thank you,

Jeremy Pauli

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 10:14:10 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelly Culliney	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB220 as a humane way to control the feral cat population. The quicker this bill can get passed, the quicker we can work on sterilizing stray animals and reducing their burden on the ecosystem--which is ultimately beneficial for all parties involved.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 10:18:06 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kiana Espinosa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to state my opposition to SB 998. Trap, neuter, release (TNR) leaves feral cats

I am a conservation professional working to protect endangered and endemic native Hawaiian birds. These birds are found nowhere else in the world and in some cases, such as the ‘alaie ‘ula (Hawaiian Common Gallinule), there are less than 1000 individuals left in the world. They evolved without mammalian predators and have no defenses against them. Allowing cats to roam free on the landscape is a disaster for these birds.

In addition, there is a serious human health risk to allowing cats to roam our islands. Cats are carriers of diseases such as toxoplasmosis, which spreads through only through cat feces to Hawaiian Monk Seals, dolphins and humans, where it causes miscarriage, birth defects and can be fatal.

‘Trap-Neuter-Release’ (TNR) is not an answer. Spayed/neutered cats which remain outside are still a threat to human health, endangered birds and marine mammals. Cats belong indoors to protect the delicate balance of our ecosystem in the Hawaiian Islands. It is safer for the cats, and essential for the birds.

A comprehensive study of Hawaii residents by Lohr and Lepczyk in 2014 revealed that the vast majority of Hawaii residents agreed with this stance. We should not allow our native Hawaiian birds to be pushed to extinction by a minority of people who do not understand the drastic impact that cats have on an isolated island ecosystem.

As a State, we invest millions of dollars in the conservation of endangered species. I am very tired of finding literally hundreds of carcasses of endangered or native birds ripped apart by feral

cats every year. If this bill passes, it will perpetuate that slaughter, undermining efforts to protect endangered species and wasting our conservation dollars and resources.

I urge you to oppose this bill.

Many thanks

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 10:19:25 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jaime Cunnane	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha- native bird lover here to oppose this bill.

I believe there are other ways we can tackle this issue- and this may not be the answer. Instead of funding this we should be funding more ways to help our native bird populations stabilize and get back on track.

‘Trap-Neuter-Release’ (TNR) is not an answer. Spayed/neutered cats which remain outside are still a threat to human health, endangered birds and marine mammals. Cats belong indoors to protect the delicate balance of our ecosystem in the Hawaiian Islands. It is safer for the cats, and essential for the birds.

A comprehensive study of Hawaii residents by Lohr and Lepczyk in 2014 revealed that the vast majority of Hawaii residents agreed with this stance. We should not allow our native Hawaiian birds to be pushed to extinction by a minority of people who do not understand the drastic impact that cats have on an isolated island ecosystem.

Please take a look at the native birds we have left and the populations they are currently left with because we have not helped them enough. Get out there and go to the few places where our native birds exist and see for yourself. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 10:21:14 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Koryn Beamer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose bill HB220 so that we can protect our native birds.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 10:23:41 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shayla	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose bill HB220. To trap, spay, neuter and release is not the answer. Cats should not be released to roam free for their feces pose harm are to our people and land. It is known to cause miscarriages, cause birth defects, cause harm to other wildlife, as well as prey on our endangered birds that live on our island. Please do not support this bill.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 10:39:27 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jenny Marion	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill. While I know that spay/neuter is essential to reducing the cat overpopulation in Hawaii, this bill needs to include wording such that feeding colonies of cats (and other invasive species animals like mongoose) in public spaces is not allowed. TNR is only one part of the solution. The feeding of cat colonies in public parks and beaches needs to be illegal for the following reasons: 1) It creates unsanitary conditions for the public who use these spaces, and also for other endangered wildlife like Hawaiian Monk Seals. 2) It encourages people to abandon their pets at these places because they think that someone feeding the colony will take care of their pet. This causes a proliferation of abandoned cats in parks and beaches. 3) The proliferation of abandoned cats in parks and beaches causes the destruction of other endangered native wildlife in the area like native sea birds and forest birds. 4) Cat colonies in public spaces are often subject to cruelty inflicted by sick individuals. In the long run, banning the care of cat colonies in public spaces is a win for both native wildlife and for cats. Those who support TNR should care for cats properly on private property for the cats' health and safety. Please vote against this bill. A new bill should be written that would both allocate funds for spay/neuter and also clarify that feeding colonies of invasive species (cats, mongoose, etc.) be illegal in public spaces like parks and beaches.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 10:44:30 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kimeona Kane	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha nui kākou,

As much as it sounds great to spay and neuter cats, it does not remove their threat to the environment, to our native environment. Cats should not be released back into the environment after being spayed or neutered. No other animal is allowed that pathway. All are considered feral and should be addressed in such a manner that is humane and responsible to the larger environment and people. This bill should not progress as it is currently written. I offer a re evaluation of the outcome, and put the work of the Advisory Committee should focus on addressing the issue of feral animals, cats, dogs, chickens etc. redefining and including the definition of feral, determine the most humane response to addressing the feral animals, and make recommendations to the Legislature to fund those types of outcomes, not focus on finances. Lets really work on the issue. Mahalo for your consideration in rejecting this bill as it is written.

Kimeona Kane

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 10:46:43 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Britni	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I oppose this bill of releasing feral cats back into the wild. They are ruining our Aina and native bird population. I no longer take my son to beaches in the area because of all the cat feces in the sand. Cats do not belong outside nor do we need wild ones. They are even harming the marine life with toxoplasmosis. But you know all of this already. We the natives are not for it.

Mahalo,

Britni

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 10:50:44 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Juan Carlos Guerra DVM	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I agree that spay and neutering are critical to control overpopulation of pets and that there can always be more support for organizations that work towards this endeavor. This bill focuses on creating a special fund for trap neuter and release programs for feral cats in Hawaii and this is not the appropriate direction for this state.

We have unique fauna found nowhere else on the planet and a significant number of these species are endangered. Endangered Hawaiian Petrels have been predated miles away from population centers by feral cats and the maintenance of feral cat populations threatens the survival of these species and directly harms the efforts of the state in their conservation.

In addition TNR is not an effective method of population reduction and populations will continue to persist in real world scenarios or at best it will take decades of intensive TNR for populations to decrease (Lohr 2013). TNR programs also do not consider the quality of life of the cats. Feral cats are exposed to diseases and dangers such as vehicle collisions that negatively impact their wellbeing. While a few examples of well taken care of and long lived feral cats have been cited in previous testimonies, these are outliers and feral cats have shorter and tougher lives than cats that live indoors.

I urge the legislation to decline the bill as is written and instead pursue a solution that supports veterinary clinics and humane organizations to spay, neuter and adopt out pets. Cats are wonderful domestic animals that deserve to live happy long lives with people and are best kept indoors. They deserve as much attention as dogs do and since we would not consider talking about a feral dog TNR program we should do the same effort for cats. By doing this we would also be supporting conservation efforts in preserving what few native Hawaiian species we have left before it is too late.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 10:54:59 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaylin Van Waus	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The survival of native wildlife that cannot be found anywhere else on the entire planet should take precedence over common domesticated species that can be found and kept happily indoors in your own home.

I have personally seen feral cats/cat colonies decimate the native wildlife in the area I lived, and they were all fixed. Within less than a year there were NO birds or small animals of any kind in a two to three mile radius surrounding this one outdoor cat colony of less than 8 cats. Spay/neuter funds are also allocated to feed cats re-released. This condenses the number of cats in an area and studies show this feeding encourages cats to continue hunting more, not less. Fixing them does absolutely nothing to preserve wildlife. Just one single cat that is allowed outdoors can and does destroy entire bird populations. A cat generally lives for more than ten years. Most small native Hawaiian birds live less than five. In the cat's lifetime it can kill off two generations of a given native bird species.

Emotions aside, just look at the numbers.

One single feral cat kills on average, between 23 to 46 birds per year. How many eggs does a Palila (native Hawaiian bird) lay a year? Two. And that is on a good year when they do manage to find enough resources to reproduce. On the lower end of the scale, let's say a single outdoor cat kills 10 birds a year and lives for ten years. There are 452 to 940 Palila left on Earth (referring to most recent studies). Even less breeding pairs.

You would only need ten spayed/neutered cats... killing 10 birds a year... allowed outdoors during their lifetime, to make an entire species of birds go extinct.

Fixing cats is NOT an answer to the problem. Finding them homes, fostering, keep them indoors, banning feeding feral/outdoor cats... There are options that would make cat owners, policymakers, and conservationists happy.

There are plenty of better alternatives than this, do the right thing and choose a real solution. Plenty of scientists and educated, empathetic people have the answers.

Listen to them.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 10:55:20 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Hall	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We must control feral cats and protect native bird species

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 11:11:26 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tiloi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB 220 due to the negative impact on our native bird populations. Many native bird species have gone extinct. We need to take immediate action to stop further extinction and decreasing cat populations will help.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 11:11:50 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cherilyn Inouye	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB220 because it allows feral cat colonies to continue thriving and destroying our native wildlife, specifically native birds. Our tax dollars should not be used to maintain these feral cat colonies.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 11:16:39 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Remy Hirai	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Remy Hirai, I am a Native Hawaiian residing in O‘ahu, HI. I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB 220 due to the negative and detrimental impact on our native bird populations. Far too many native Hawaiian bird species have gone extinct in recent years. We need to take swift and immediate action to stop further extinction and decreasing stray/feral cat populations throughout Hawaii will help. Trap and release is NOT a solution. It does not help protect native species. It is not "kinder" or "humane".

this is why I OPPOSE Hb220.

Thank you.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 11:30:03 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sarah Puhr	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB220. Already, 32 precious manu have gone extinct in Hawai'i, the extinction capitol of the world. We must protect the remaining species. Cats don't belong on the islands and TNR/feral cat colonies don't work. If we don't choose to protect the birds over the cats, there will be no birds left. The endemic animals are the land, and the land is the people.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 11:42:15 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy Davlantes	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

First off, I do love cats and have had them as INDOOR pets. So this will not make me popular: One of the world's most harmful invasive species is the domestic cat. It's not its fault because it has been introduced just about everywhere it exists today. Where domestic cats – whether owned or unowned – have been permitted to roam the landscape (i.e., free-ranging) the consequences of these introductions have been detrimental to wildlife and the environment.

As consummate predators, in the United States, domestic cats kill an estimated 2.4 billion birds and 12.3 billion mammals each year. Cats also contaminate the landscape with *Toxoplasma gondii*, which is a serious public and wildlife health risk. Not only do the much-hyped trap, neuter, release programs not successfully reduce cat populations, sterilized cats still kill wildlife and contribute to irectious parasite and disease risks.

A better solution would be mandatory enclosures of cat colonies and using allocated funds to exclusively sterilize owned cats.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 11:53:07 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Oyama	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill is a clever trick that purports to "solve" the problem of the devastation wrought by feral cats on our native ecosystems but in reality does no such thing. Releasing these invasive predators only ensures that their rapacious killing of our native species continues unabated. Other jurisdictions (e.g. Australia) have realized this and have declared them as pests, going so far as to place a bounty on feral cats. The "Trap" in TNR is that we enter into it thinking we are doing good, but in reality are making a choice to continue the extirpation of native fauna and flora. This bill is a clear policy statement that native ecosystems and native species are worth less than warm and fuzzy feelings about ourselves. I strongly oppose HB220.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 12:17:16 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dana Keawe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 1:16:14 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lee Miller	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please oppose this bill. Cats are invasive predators and even when they're fed, they still hunt our birds. TNR programs do not successfully reduce cat populations. Sterilized cats can still kill wildlife and contribute to infectious diseases. The Hawaii Invasive Species Council opposes TNR.

This will only accelerate the extinction of our Endangered and Threatened native and Hawaiian birds.

Thank you for your consideration,

Lee Miller

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 2:13:14 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ella Copp	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Save the native birds.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 2:18:21 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alecia Smith	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Alecia Smith, and I currently work in Ventura California helping protect endangered shorebirds and seabirds. I love all animals, including cats (I care for an beautiful cat named Jake inside my home), and I have also witnessed the devastation of TNR as a system that does not serve car or bird populations but rather harms cats and bird populations and inhumanely abandons cats back into sensitive ecosystems, adding to the public health risk of disease transmission and predation of native wildlife (especially the bird populations) as outdoor cats are the #1, human-caused risk to bird populations, responsible for 2.4 billion bird deaths in North America each year.

When I visited my dear friend in Honolulu in 2019, we saw more feral cats than birds. I love cats and I love birds, but loving cats indoors and/or through outdoor supervision/catio/harnessing is the only way to protect birds on the brink of extinction (already 63 bird species are extinct due to the human-caused introduction of outdoor cats). To fund TNR will inevitably lead to more extinction, and future generations deserve to know these irreplaceable bird species and special habitats for themselves.

I oppose HB220.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 2:48:27 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lorraine Waianuhea	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kakou,

I am writing in strong opposition to HB220.

I am opposed to HB220 because it would appropriate taxpayer dollars to pay for Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) which has been proven with scientific research to NOT eliminate feral cat colonies. This is mainly due to the fact that fertile cats are continually abandoned at feral cat colonies where cats are being fed and not all animals can be trapped to be spayed or neutered. The study, *Costs and Benefits of Trap-Neuter-Release and Euthanasia for Removal of Urban Cats in Oahu, Hawaii* (Lohr et al., 2012) found that when there was the addition of fertile cats to a colony at a rate of 10% of the initial population size per year,

*"...the colony returned to carrying capacity within 6 years and the trap and euthanize program had to be repeated, whereas **trap-neuter-release never reduced the number of cats to near zero within the 30-year time frame of the model.** The abandonment of domestic cats reduced the cost effectiveness of both trap-neuter-release and trap and euthanize. **Trap-neuter-release was approximately twice as expensive to implement as a trap and euthanize program...**"*

Food at TNR cat colonies also feed other invasive species like mongooses, rats and mice. Additionally, TNR does not stop cats from killing state and federally protected birds, or from killing endangered hawaiian monk seals with the toxoplasmosis that is shed into our waterways in the feces of feral cats. Toxoplasmosis can also cause miscarriage and birthdefects in pregnant women. We should be eliminating feral cat colonies to protect native wildlife and human health.

It would extremely irresponsible to appropriate funds for this TNR method that does not work. Additionally, the title of the bill is misleading because it sounds like it advocates for the spaying and neutering of domestic animals, when really it advocates for the taxpayer funded maintenance of feral cat colonies through TNR. Feral cats are not pets. If they were pets, they would be living safely and lovingly cared for inside someone's home. The living conditions for feral cats outdoors and in colonies is not humane - they are exposed to the elements, face the dangers of traffic, are more likely to catch diseases, and live much shorter lives than pet cats who live indoors.

Please do not pass HB220.

Mahalo for your time,

Lorraine Waiianuhea

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 3:30:40 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Spencer Conner	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this method of feral cat control, since it does not address the destruction these cats cause over their lifetime to native and endemic species. Unfortunately the feral cats need to be removed from the environment, either by placing them into shelter and adoption, or destroying them. We also need laws against feeding feral cats, and laws against allowing cats to roam freely. Cats should be in leashes when outside, just like dogs. Cats spread diseases that may kill people and other animals (toxoplasmosis). More aggressive solutions need implemented, and this law may make matters worse instead of better.

One of the most important things on earth are the birds. They are essential as pollinators and for seed dispersal. They feed on a variety of insects, rodents and other small animals keeping those populations in check. Releasing more and more feral cats is putting the Hawaii ecosystem at risk. We need to think about the future before it's extinct!

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 5:10:49 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alex Wang	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this because it will lead to more predation on our native birds. TNR has been proven to be ineffective in cat control many times over. The feeding of feral cats should be made illegal as well as allowing cats outdoors.our endemic birds come first not the invasive feline menace.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 6:00:15 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tina Taniguchi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB 220 because as good as spay and neutering sounds it does not remove cats the current number of cats in the wild. We need to immediately catch and relocate or yes put down some feral cats. When the state says we have a problem with feral goats, pigs, sheep they eradicate and go in and shoot. We currently have a problem with feral cats and the course needs to be taken. I recently met a women who actually works for a group that cares for these cat colonies. She goes around the neighborhood feeding feral cats, caring for them. Nice of her, but it is enabling such a large problem! She also told me about large colonies that they have near nounou and further up wailua. This is disheartening because when I am up the mountains and in the valleys I see large, and large numbers of feral cats. It's sad to think what is happening to our native birds and other wildlife as the cat population takes over.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 6:47:25 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryanne Pritchard-Bee	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to state my opposition to HB220. Trap, neuter, release (TNR) leaves feral cats

I am a conservation professional working to protect endangered and endemic avian species around the world. The endemic birds of Hawaii are found nowhere else in the world and in some cases, such as the 'alae 'ula (Hawaiian Common Gallinule), there are less than 1000 individuals left in the world. They evolved without mammalian predators and have no defenses against them. Allowing cats to roam free on the landscape is a disaster for these birds.

In addition, there is a serious human health risk to allowing cats to roam our islands. Cats are carriers of diseases such as toxoplasmosis, which spreads through only through cat feces to Hawaiian Monk Seals, dolphins and humans, where it causes miscarriage, birth defects and can be fatal.

'Trap-Neuter-Release' (TNR) is not an answer. Spayed/neutered cats which remain outside are still a threat to human health, endangered birds and marine mammals. Cats belong indoors to protect the delicate balance of our ecosystem in the Hawaiian Islands. It is safer for the cats, and essential for the birds.

A comprehensive study of Hawaii residents by Lohr and Lepczyk in 2014 revealed that the vast majority of Hawaii residents agreed with this stance. We should not allow our native Hawaiian birds to be pushed to extinction by a minority of people who do not understand the drastic impact that cats have on an isolated island ecosystem.

As a State, Hawaii invests millions of dollars in the conservation of endangered species. I am very tired of reading reports from conversation colleagues finding literally hundreds of carcasses

of endangered or native birds ripped apart by feral cats every year. If this bill passes, it will perpetuate that slaughter, undermining efforts to protect endangered species and wasting our conservation dollars and resources.

I urge you to oppose this bill.

Thank you

Ryanne Pritchard-Bee

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 6:14:22 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jill Lippert	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Bad bill for native birds! Seriously?? No no no! Cat colonies should be reduced and removed.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 6:51:15 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sherman Wing	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Respectfully, Why ??

So should we also provide these services for rats, mongoose and pigs All of these are endangering the native Hawaiian environment.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 7:05:01 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melissa Miller	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Not in support of allocating funds to feral cat populations.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 7:25:26 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lee Cuccia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill as it helps on multiple levels. A humane and proven way to keep the cat population in check is extremely important to me. Mahalo!

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 8:06:02 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jean Campbell	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support efforts to curb our pet populations by providing funding for spay and neuter services. Trap neuter release programs, however, lead to the degradation of our natural environments and have terrible impacts on our native species, especially our native birds and monk seals. TNR colonies do not work to eliminate the scourge of domestic cats. Cats continue to hunt and kill our native birds, from our shorelines to our high mountain environments and their feces is frequently infected with disease such as toxoplasmosis and other diseases which kill our endangered monk seals. Please do not use state funds to support the continued killing of our native species.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 8:18:49 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JOHNNY KELLY	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill **MUST** be passed! Any person or group opposing this bill is living in their own distorted reality.

We have a tremendous overpopulation of animals in our State because owners without a clue will not have them spayed/neutered! These people "dump" their pets or say they want to sell their litters. Both ways are completely irresponsible. Go out at night in your own neighborhood and see mainly dogs and cats scrounging for food and water. These poor things die from starvation and dehydration, or some type of disease and maybe are hit by a car!

The horrible non-caring people these pets used to belong to are the cause of this!

Pass this bill now!

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 8:25:31 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pippa Swannell	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Wild populations of invasive predators like cats and dogs need be controlled by culling just like other damaging invasive animals such as mongoose, pigs and goats. In many ways these "domestics gone wild" are doing **more** damage.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 8:27:22 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cassandra Park	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a Master of Public Health student at the UH Manoa Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work. I am also a cat mom who had my cat neutered. While Trap Neuter Release (TNR) tactics sound great, they have not been rigorously tested to conclude their effectiveness in restoring native bird populations therefore I oppose this measure. As long as cats are out and roaming the streets they are a threat. I only let my cat out in the yard when I am home and able to monitor her activity. On a typical day she'll catch numerous geckos and roaches. Occasionally she'll catch a pigeon. Needless to say, cats are predators. Cats should be in a controlled environment like the Cat Sanctuary in Lana'i. Lets appropriate funds towards that instead rather than have them roaming the streets. Additionally a sanctuary could be a place for people to visit who want to be around cats.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 8:36:11 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Chiwa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairperson Asuega Gates and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems.

I am Jennifer Chiwa, have lived on Oahu my whole life and currently reside in Makiki.

Please support HB 220 which would provide taxpayers with an easy way to support spaying and neutering of pet animals and free roaming cats. This bill would help to decrease the overpopulation of these animals. Decreasing the number of free roaming cats would, I think, be beneficial to these cats and to wildlife. This bill would also help both (1) groups who work to decrease the overpopulation of pet animals and free roaming cats to have funding for spaying and neutering and (2) low income people who have difficulty paying for spaying or neutering of their pets.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify and for your consideration in supporting HB 220.

Jennifer Chiwa

Makiki

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 8:39:25 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephen R Henderson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to state my opposition to SB 998. Trap, neuter, release (TNR) leaves feral cats allowed to continue to roam free after already spending efforts to trap them.

I am a conservation volunteer working to protect endangered and endemic native Hawaiian birds. These birds are found nowhere else in the world and in some cases, such as the 'alae 'ula (Hawaiian Common Gallinule), there are less than 1000 individuals left in the world. They evolved without mammalian predators and have no defenses against them. Allowing cats to roam free on the landscape is a disaster for these birds.

In addition, there is a serious human health risk to allowing cats to roam our islands. Cats are carriers of diseases such as toxoplasmosis, which spreads through only through cat feces to Hawaiian Monk Seals, dolphins and humans, where it causes miscarriage, birth defects and can be fatal.

'Trap-Neuter-Release' (TNR) is not an answer. Spayed/neutered cats which remain outside are still a threat to human health, endangered birds and marine mammals. Cats belong indoors to protect the delicate balance of our ecosystem in the Hawaiian Islands. It is safer for the cats, and essential for the birds.

A comprehensive study of Hawaii residents by Lohr and Lepczyk in 2014 revealed that the vast majority of Hawaii residents agreed with this stance. We should not allow our native Hawaiian birds to be pushed to extinction by a minority of people who do not understand the drastic impact that cats have on an isolated island ecosystem.

As a State, we invest millions of dollars in the conservation of endangered species. If this bill passes, it will perpetuate that slaughter, undermining efforts to protected endangered species and wasting our conservation dollars and resources.

I urge you to oppose this bill until modified to exclude the re-release of these animals into the wild.

Mahalo

Stephen Henderson

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 8:42:53 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Wood	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

Please support HB220 in support of the spay/neuter bill. As feral cats have been increasing in numbers on the streets of Oahu, this bill will help to manage the numbers so they don't continue to grow. There are too many instances of kittens trying to survive on the streets, and cat colonies in need of food.

Thank you,
Jennifer Wood

Nuuanu, HI 96817

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 9:07:36 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jane E Arnold	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB220, which would go a long way toward reducing the number of unwanted animals in Hawaii. Thank you.

Jane E Arnold

1763 Iwi Way, Apt D

Honolulu, HI 96816

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 9:18:27 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Helene Navaro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I strongly support HB220. It is vital to our island to reduce dogs and cats overpopulation. This bill HB220 will not add more dogs and cats on the street but in the opposite it will reduce the number of dogs and cats on our landscape.

Funding would make Spay Neuter more accessible and more affordable.

HB220 also allow tax payers to support Spay Neuter.

Please support HB220. Thank you!

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 9:39:22 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Luka Ohana	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To who needs to hear this,

We cannot continue down this passive approach of feral cat population control, especially at the continued extreme detriment to our local fauna, far mauka and far off makai. Our native fauna that has every right to exist en citu is combatting to no prevail. The negative impacts from this population is seen world wide and yet we move passively due to bleeding hearts? I spend a lot of my personal time in the outdoors, from high up in the mountains to far out in the ocean and see evidence of the ever growing feral cat population. Every single one of my trail cameras, no matter how many miles I trek in, no matter how secluded the environment, has footage of cats. We cannot continue to be so blind to the reality of the situation. Considering that this passive approach has seen the feral cat population continue to grow and our native fauna population decrease, to extinction in most cases. While at the same time, the feral cat population is facing extreme suffering with conspecific fighting and injuries, interactions with automobiles, hunger and disease. How many times have I personally seen horrific injuries on my local feral cat population. Injuries that range from dying and diseased kittens to geriatric cats, severely malnourished, to compound fractures that have festered and are maggot ridden, to blood trails that criss cross my yard from conspecific fighting. We have dealt with aggressive cats and my young children, to the point that fear of injury was causing us to change how my children play in their own yard. We have two cats ourselves that we rescued from the terribly oversaturated Humane Society and we keep them inside, responsibly. Speaking of the Humane Society, they and any other agency are unable to assist with the feral cat population, whether it's a severely injured or dying individual or an aggressive animal. We hear it all the time that calls are made and the answer is they are unable to do anything. They suggest that we trap the cats ourselves, but then what? There has to be a control of the population, that's the only answer going forward that provides relief to the suffering for the local fauna and the feral cat population. We have too many checks and not enough balance, we need to act now to significantly reduce the feral cat population. How is it fair to weigh the non native feral cat population to the ever growing list of native fauna that faces extinction?!

Mahalo,

Luka Ohana

HB220 Relating to the Spaying and Neutering of Animals
Representative Cedric Gates, Chair
Representative Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

Friday, February 10, 10:00 am
Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Aloha Representative Gates, Representative Kahaloa and committee members,

Please pass HB220.

Pet animal and Free-Roaming cat overpopulation lead to animal suffering across our state. We've heard from lawmakers concerned about Free-Roaming cats. I share those concerns. Unchecked breeding by this population degrades the quality of life for innocent animals, increases threats to wildlife and creates nuisance issues for human beings.

I hope lawmakers who are interested in reducing the population of Free-Roaming cats will support this measure. This will benefit the groups who are engaged in this work for the benefit of cats and dogs.

TNR really works well.

I urge you to support this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.
Ran Morimoto
96825

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS
Representative Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair
Representative Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair

NOTICE OF HEARING
February 10, 2023
10:00 AM
Conference Room 325

Dear Chair Gates, Vice-chair Kahaloa and members of the committee,

I strongly support HB220.

Pets can be at true lifeline for people in crisis. Low-income families struggling to make ends meet, kupuna on fixed incomes, and our homeless residents often have incredibly strong bonds with their pets. But if these pet owners cannot access affordable spay/neuter for their pets, they can become overwhelmed with too many animals.

Hawaii has good-hearted nonprofit groups that want to help these pet owners and animals in need, but sufficient funding is always an obstacle. I think this bill is a reasonable attempt to help these groups at no significant cost to the state. I urge you to give it your support.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Melody Borboa
96826

HB220 Relating to the Spaying and Neutering of Animals
Representative Cedric Gates, Chair
Representative Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

Friday, February 10, 10:00 am
Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Aloha Representative Gates, Representative Kahaloa and committee members,

Please pass HB220.

Pet animal and Free-Roaming cat overpopulation lead to animal suffering across our state. We've heard from lawmakers concerned about Free-Roaming cats. I share those concerns. Unchecked breeding by this population degrades the quality of life for innocent animals, increases threats to wildlife and creates nuisance issues for human beings.

I hope lawmakers who are interested in reducing the population of Free-Roaming cats will support this measure. This will benefit the groups who are engaged in this work for the benefit of cats and wildlife.

I urge you to support this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.
Peggy Fern

Support for HB220
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS
Representative Cedric Gates, Chair
Representative Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair

DATE: Friday, February 10, 2023
TIME: 10:00 a.m.
PLACE: VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Conference Room 325
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

I would like to see state funding for spay/neuter, but allowing taxpayers an easy way to help is a good first step. I support Hb220.

Lack of access to free or affordable spay/neuter is an obstacle to the humane reduction of Hawaii's Free-Roaming cat population, and also perpetuates the uncontrolled breeding of pet dogs and cats.

This leads to more animals in shelters than families looking for pets, which can have tragic consequences.

With additional funding for spay/neuter, we can do better for the people and animals in our community.

Our family dog has received this free service, and we are grateful for it. We also continued to see Kalihi Pet Clinic for several more years :).

Please pass this bill.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.
Doreen Dold
96821

HB220 Relating to the Spaying and Neutering of Animals
Representative Cedric Gates, Chair
Representative Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

Friday, February 10, 10:00 am
Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Aloha Representative Gates, Representative Kahaloa and committee members,

Please pass HB220!

Pet animal and Free-Roaming cat overpopulation lead to animal suffering across our state. We've heard from lawmakers concerned about Free-Roaming cats. I share those concerns. Unchecked breeding by this population degrades the quality of life for innocent animals, increases threats to wildlife and creates nuisance issues for human beings.

I hope lawmakers who are interested in reducing the population of Free-Roaming cats will support this measure. This will benefit the groups who are engaged in this work for the benefit of cats and wildlife.

I urge you to support this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.
Jennifer Wood
Nuuanu, HI 96817

Support for HB220
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS
Representative Cedric Gates, Chair
Representative Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair

DATE: Friday, February 10, 2023
TIME: 10:00 a.m.
PLACE: VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Conference Room 325
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

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This leads to more animals in shelters than families looking for pets, which can have tragic consequences.

With additional funding for spay/neuter, we can do better for the people and animals in our community.

Please pass this bill.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.
Jane E Arnold
(96816)

HB220 Relating to the Spaying and Neutering of Animals
Representative Cedric Gates, Chair
Representative Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems
Friday, February 10, 10:00 am
Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Aloha Representative Gates, Representative Kahaloa and committee members,

Please pass HB220.

Pet animal and Free-Roaming cat overpopulation lead to animal suffering across our state. We've heard from lawmakers concerned about Free-Roaming cats. I share those concerns. Unchecked breeding by this population degrades the quality of life for innocent animals, increases threats to wildlife and creates nuisance issues for human beings. I hope lawmakers who are interested in reducing the population of Free-Roaming cats will support this measure. This will benefit the groups who are engaged in this work for the benefit of cats and wildlife.

Please pass this bill and mahalo for the chance to submit testimony.

Lee Cuccia
96734

HB220 Relating to the Spaying and Neutering of Animals

I would like to see state funding for spay/neuter, but allowing taxpayers an easy way to help is a good first step. I support Hb220. Lack of access to free or affordable spay/neuter is an obstacle to the humane reduction of Hawaii's Free-Roaming cat population, and also perpetuates the uncontrolled breeding of pet dogs and cats. This leads to more animals in shelters than families looking for pets, which can have tragic consequences. With additional funding for spay/neuter, we can do better for the people and animals in our community.

Please pass this bill.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Mahalo,

John Brislin

96744

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

Rep. Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair

Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair

Friday, February 10, 2023

10:00 AM

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa and members of the committee,

I strongly support HB220 Relating to the Spaying and Neutering of Animals. This bill will save lives and help with overpopulation.

States on the mainland that have invested in subsidizing spay/neuter for pet animals have seen a drastic drop in pet overpopulation. That has not happened in Hawaii. Insufficient access to free or affordable spay/neuter services means there are more animals in need of homes than families looking to adopt across our state.

I believe Hawaii taxpayers are compassionate and will support this kind of a fund. Please pass HB220 and give this a chance.

Mahalo!

Stacey Noelani Spirz

96826

Support for HB220

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

Representative Cedric Gates, Chair Representative Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair

DATE: Friday, February 10, 2023

TIME: 10:00 a.m.

PLACE: VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Conference Room 325 State Capitol 415

South Beretania Street

I would like to see state funding for spay/neuter, but allowing taxpayers an easy way to help is a good first step. I support Hb220. Lack of access to free or affordable spay/neuter is an obstacle to the humane reduction of Hawaii's Free-Roaming cat population, and also perpetuates the uncontrolled breeding of pet dogs and cats. This leads to more animals in shelters than families looking for pets, which can have tragic consequences. With additional funding for spay/neuter, we can do better for the people and animals in our community.

The issue of the overpopulation of animals is one that impacts environmental safety, residential experience, and animal welfare. The overpopulation of animals our islands are experiencing require legislative action to be resolved. Please pass this bill.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Mahalo,

Hannah Mizuno
Honolulu, Hawaii 96816

HB220 Relating to the Spaying and Neutering of Animals
Representative Cedric Gates, Chair
Representative Kirstin Kahaloe, Vice Chair
House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

Friday, February 10, 10:00 am
Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Aloha Representative Gates, Representative Kahaloe and committee members,

Please pass HB220.

Pet animal and Free-Roaming cat overpopulation lead to animal suffering across our state. We've heard from lawmakers concerned about Free-Roaming cats. I share those concerns. Unchecked breeding by this population degrades the quality of life for innocent animals, increases threats to wildlife and creates nuisance issues for human beings.

I hope lawmakers who are interested in reducing the population of Free-Roaming cats will support this measure. This will benefit the groups who are engaged in this work for the benefit of cats and wildlife.

Aloha Ladies and Gents,

I urge you to support this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Gabriele Schmidt-Stelljes
96792

Support for HB220
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS
Representative Cedric Gates, Chair
Representative Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair

DATE: Friday, February 10, 2023
TIME: 10:00 a.m.
PLACE: VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Conference Room 325
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

I would like to see state funding for spay/neuter, but allowing taxpayers an easy way to help is a good first step. I support Hb220.

Lack of access to free or affordable spay/neuter is an obstacle to the humane reduction of Hawaii's Free-Roaming cat population, and also perpetuates the uncontrolled breeding of pet dogs and cats.

This leads to more animals in shelters than families looking for pets, which can have tragic consequences.

With additional funding for spay/neuter, we can do better for the people and animals in our community.

Please pass this bill.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Lori Endo
96816

HB220 Relating to the Spaying and Neutering of Animals
Representative Cedric Gates, Chair
Representative Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

Friday, February 10, 10:00 am
Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 325

Aloha Representative Gates, Representative Kahaloa and committee members,

Please pass HB220.

Pet animal and Free-Roaming cat overpopulation lead to animal suffering across our state. We've heard from lawmakers concerned about Free-Roaming cats. I share those concerns. Unchecked breeding by this population degrades the quality of life for innocent animals, increases threats to wildlife and creates nuisance issues for human beings.

I hope lawmakers who are interested in reducing the population of Free-Roaming cats will support this measure. This will benefit the groups who are engaged in this work for the benefit of cats and wildlife

I urge you to support this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ms. Torun Almer
96704-8418

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 10:07:56 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ilana Nimz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose the use of TNR to control cat populations. This method releases feral cats into the wild to perpetuate the spread of toxoplasmosis, and to predate on native and endangered species. This is not a viable solution to the feral cat problem.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 10:08:17 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sen	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is CRUCIAL to protect our native endangered avian population. There is not enough effort being put towards controlling this threat. More needs to be done to control the feral population other than spaying and neutering. Put them down if need be. Sad but necessary. As far as I understand, their reproductive organs may be out of commission, but the hormones and behavior remains which can be territorial and aggressive. Again, which isn't good for other wildlife. Feral cats are a huge nuisance outside of killing our native wildlife. They affect the farms and their fields, they disturb and potentially injure trained house pets that we (the private citizens/owners) have to cover the cost of such incidents, they leave messes everywhere and no one cleans them up, etc. The list goes on. Simply spaying and neutering them is not the answer. It isn't enough! Do more!

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 10:16:02 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aloha	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TNR for feral cat populations doesn't decrease the population and will instead impact our native animal population including our birds and ocean wildlife.

In addition, there is a serious human health risk to allowing cats to roam our islands. Cats are carriers of diseases such as toxoplasmosis, which spreads through only through cat feces to Hawaiian Monk Seals, dolphins and humans, where it causes miscarriage, birth defects and can be fatal.

'Trap-Neuter-Release' (TNR) is not an answer. Spayed/neutered cats which remain outside are still a threat to human health, endangered birds and marine mammals. Cats belong indoors to protect the delicate balance of our ecosystem in the Hawaiian Islands. It is safer for the cats, and essential for the birds.

A comprehensive study of Hawaii residents by Lohr and Lepczyk in 2014 revealed that the vast majority of Hawaii residents agreed with this stance. We should not allow our native Hawaiian birds to be pushed to extinction by a minority of people who do not understand the drastic impact that cats have on an isolated island ecosystem.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/8/2023 4:25:21 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maria Virginia M Lopez	Hawaiian Humane Society	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Maria Virginia Lopez support this bill on behalf of the Hawaiian Humane Society.

As a resident of Oahu of 14 years, I've seen an influx of cats on the streets.

This bill will help:

- 1.)control and slow down free roaming cat overpopulation
- 2.)give cat owners or possible cat adoptees a better opportunity to spay/neuter their cats, reducing chances of them being abandoned on the streets or surrendered to humane societies, which then causes overcrowding.
- 3.) Lastly, if wildlife is concerned, this bill will help their cause as well, because it will significantly reduce the free roaming cat population.



Hawaiian Humane Society

People for animals. Animals for people.

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

Date: Feb. 8, 2023

To: Chair Rep. Cedric Asuega Gates
Vice Chair Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa,
and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems

Submitted By: Stephanie Kendrick, Director of Community Engagement
Hawaiian Humane Society, 808-356-2217

RE: Testimony in strong support of HB 220:
Relating to the Spaying and Neutering of Animals
Friday, Feb. 10, 2023, 10:00 a.m., Room 325 & Videoconference

Aloha Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa and Committee Members,

On behalf of the Hawaiian Humane Society, thank you for considering our enthusiastic support for House Bill 220, which establishes a spay and neuter special fund and allows funds from an income tax check-off to be deposited into the special fund.

Pet animal and Free-Roaming cat overpopulation are persistent issues in Hawaii and efforts to reduce the resulting suffering through low- and no-fee spay/neuter receive no state funding. Rather than competing for general fund resources, this measure would allow compassionate state taxpayers to support a dedicated Spay/Neuter Fund by reducing the size of any income tax refund due. This low-barrier way to contribute to an unmet need could make a world of difference for the nonprofit groups and veterinarians on the frontlines of animal welfare in our state.

The Hawaiian Humane Society welcomed nearly 13,000 animals to our Mō'ili'ili campus in FY2022, including entire litters of puppies and kittens in need of homes. Compounding the pet overpopulation issue, mainland shelters that in past years have had capacity to place Hawai'i animals up for adoption also have been full. This struggle to find homes for animals in need is repeated in every county in our state and has inspired a community of nonprofits to spring up to help, but they need resources to do their work.



The Hawaiian Humane Society offers discounted spay/neuter surgery to rescue partners, but more funding sources are needed to support this work.

- Houseless pet owners who need to have their animals spayed/neutered to qualify for transitional or supported permanent housing
- 501c3 animal rescues who want to spay/neuter pets prior to adoption so they are not contributing to pet overpopulation
- 501c3 Free-Roaming cat management groups who aim to trap and spay/neuter hundreds or even thousands of cats annually to prevent continued breeding

Spay/neuter improves animal health and wellbeing, reduces pet and Free-Roaming cat overpopulation, and saves lives.

We urge you to pass HB 220 and allow Hawai'i taxpayers to help people and animals in need. Mahalo for you time and I would be happy to answer any questions.

We are a member of the Hawaii Animal Welfare Association, which includes the largest animal welfare organizations in each county, and the Oahu Animal Welfare Alliance, which is a broad consortium of entities devoted to animal welfare on the island including businesses, nonprofits and veterinary professionals. Both groups have identified increased access to no-fee or low-fee spay/neuter as one of the greatest unmet needs to better care for our state's animals and to assist struggling pet owners.

If established, this fund would provide help for:

- Low-income pet owners who want to prevent unplanned breeding

PŌPOKI PLACE O'AHU CAT SANCTUARY



Testimony to the COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

Rep. Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair
Rep. Kirstin Kahaloa, Vice Chair
Friday, February 10, 2023, 10:00 AM
Conference Room 325 & Videoconference

HB220 and SB998, Relating to Spay/Neutering of Animals

Dear Chair Gates, Vice Chair Kahaloa and members of the Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems,

We are in **strong support** of **HB220** and companion bill **SB998**, which would allow residents to participate in paying for the spay/neuter of the thousands of free-roaming cats on the islands in the state through the TNR program by clicking a box on their tax returns donating a portion of their return to go to help pay for the TNR program. This is a perfect use of crowdfunding.

Popoki Place O'ahu Cat Sanctuary is a new 501c(3) nonprofit organization. We are dedicated to the mission of creating a safe, loving, healthy sanctuary for homeless free-roaming feral cats on the island of Oahu. **We envision a world where all cats have a safe place to live their best possible lives while helping to protect our endangered monk seals and ground-nesting birds.** Popoki Place is the missing link in the efforts to manage the thousands of cats roaming the streets, beaches, and mountains. In addition to rescue groups, shelters, adoption sites, and Trap-Neuter-Release efforts, Popoki Place O'ahu Cat Sanctuary will serve a critical role in helping solve the crisis of cat overpopulation and protect our wildlife.

We **support** the passage of this bill because we know that TNR works to dramatically reduce the population of feral cats. People who oppose this bill do so because they are missing the point. What they are actually opposed to is the Release portion of TNR. They don't want the cats released back where they found them because they believe those cats will continue to kill birds or cause other problems. We understand their concerns but what they are missing is **if we don't fix them, a single female can turn into 100 cats in just a few months and an unneutered male can impregnate hundreds of females.** Therefore, it is to their benefit to get as many cats fixed as possible which will reduce the number of cats preying on birds.

There are thousands of people who manage the colonies of cats all over the island of Oahu, using their own money. That is the part that is missing in our dialogue. The actual phrase is not TNR (Trap-Neuter-Release) but TNRM (**Trap-Neuter-Release-Manage**.) Colony caregivers manage the population of cats in their care through feeding them. **Ferals that are well fed will not need to hunt endangered birds as they are full.** When a caregiver is

Popoki Place O'ahu Cat Sanctuary
P.O. Box 732 Kailua, HI 96734
<https://popokiplace.org/>

correctly managing the colony, they will notice when new cats come into their colony who are not fixed and can make every effort to trap and neuter those cats as soon as possible. The more vigilant we are at managing the colonies, the more cats we will catch. Each time we do, we are lowering the population.

What this bill does is support us financially to be able to fix **even more cats which will ultimately reduce the population.**

At Popoki Place O'ahu Cat Sanctuary, we are trying to find land so we can build our sanctuary as soon as possible. **Our primary focus is to take in the cats who live in the areas that are the highest risk to endangered wildlife – i.e., the forests, beaches and harbors so we can be part of the solution to protecting our beautiful beloved birds and sea mammals.**

We strongly urge you to pass this legislation. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony.

Mahalo for your consideration,
Holly Holowach
Founder and President
Kailua HI 96734

JOSH GREEN M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION

Ka 'Oihana 'Auhau
P.O. BOX 259

HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809
PHONE NO: (808) 587-1540
FAX NO: (808) 587-1560

GARY S. SUGANUMA
DIRECTOR

KRISTEN M.R. SAKAMOTO
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**TESTIMONY OF
GARY S. SUGANUMA, DIRECTOR OF TAXATION**

TESTIMONY ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. No. 220, Relating to the Spaying and Neutering of Animals

BEFORE THE:

House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems

DATE: Friday, February 10, 2023

TIME: 10:00 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 325

Chair Gates, Vice-Chair Kahaloa, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Taxation ("Department") offers the following comments regarding H.B. 220 for your consideration.

H.B. 220 amends section 235-102.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), to add a new check-off box on individual tax returns authorizing taxpayers whose state income tax refund is \$5 or more, to designate \$5 of that refund to be deposited into a new spay and neuter special fund. In the case of a joint return of a married couple having a state income tax refund of \$10 or more, each spouse would be allowed to designate that \$5 be deposited into the special fund. As with other existing check-off boxes, if no designation was made on the original tax return when filed, a designation may be made by the individual on an amended return filed within twenty months and ten days after the due date for the original return for the taxable year. A designation once made, whether by an original or amended return, may not be revoked. The bill also amends to replace references in the check-off box statutes from "husband and wife" to "married couple" with respect to joint return income tax filings. The bill becomes effective July 1, 2023, with the section pertinent to the tax check-off box being applicable to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2022.

The Department notes that due to the number of bills with tax law changes that have been introduced this year, the Department may not have the resources to

Department of Taxation Testimony
H.B. 220
February 10, 2023
Page 2 of 2

implement all measures passed this session in time for tax year 2023. The Department will continue to monitor the status of proposed legislation and will advise whether some changes will require a later effective date.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 2:39:51 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marian Hussenbux	Animal Interfaith Alliance in Britain	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Animal Interfaith Alliance has previously given testimony to **SB998**. The Bill would help the cats, their guardians who are often in financial difficulties – especially these days – and is a humane way to limit Free-Roaming cat populations.

We are pleased to be informed that it passed its first committee hearing on Monday with testimony more than three-to-one in favour of the measure.

We would like again to endorse Hawaiian Humane Society’s important point that this bill also **protects wildlife**.

The alternative to the spay/neuter of Free-Roaming cats - a proven and humane method used in many countries - is more cats, not fewer cats. This Bill prevents the cats who are already there from breeding, so there will be fewer predators to take small wildlife.

We reiterate our strong support of this Bill.



Bringing back the birds

**Testimony of American Bird Conservancy
In Opposition to HB 220 Relating to the Spaying and Neutering of Animals
House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems | February 10, 2023**

On behalf of American Bird Conservancy and our members throughout Hawai'i, we are writing to express our **opposition to HB 220 as written and to suggest amendments.**

Although American Bird Conservancy supports the sterilization of domestic cats, the use of funds collected as part of this bill for programs that would trap, sterilize, *and then release* unowned cats to the landscape is cause for great concern. The use of public funds for such programs would cause tremendous harm for Hawai'i's people and wildlife. **Cats, whether sterilized or not, continue to attack and kill Threatened and Endangered birds, spread infectious parasites and diseases, and contribute to public nuisances.**

Cats are among the world's most harmful invasive species and instinctive predators that have contributed to the extinction of two endemic Hawaiian species, the Lāna'i Hookbill and Moho (Hawaiian Rail), and the decline of countless others. Sadly, Hawai'i is already the bird extinction capital of the world, and **the continued presence of cats on the landscape only increases the likelihood of future extinctions.** Research has repeatedly shown that cats are a [major threat to Hawai'i's unique birds](#), such as 'A'o (Newell's Shearwater) and 'U'au (Hawaiian Petrel), two species which have experienced [94% and 78% population declines](#), respectively.

Cats can also carry a large number of infectious parasites and diseases. Toxoplasmosis, caused by infection with the parasite *Toxoplasma gondii*, is a cat-transmitted disease of significant concern. The parasite **can only complete its life cycle in a cat**, and a single cat can excrete up to hundreds of millions of *T. gondii* eggs (called "oocysts") into the environment via its feces. These oocysts remain infectious for months to years and can infect any bird or mammal. Infection in people can cause miscarriages, fetal deformities, blindness, organ failure, and death and has also been linked to neurodegenerative diseases, such as schizophrenia. This parasite is the reason women are told to avoid changing cat litter while pregnant, but **cats roaming the landscape, whether sterilized or not, turn the entire environment, including beach parks, gardens, neighborhoods, and natural areas, into one giant, contaminated litterbox.**

Scientific studies in Hawai'i have shown that **feral cats contribute to widespread environmental *T. gondii* contamination**, and this contamination is dangerous for people and wildlife. For example, researchers found that [three of every four feral cat colonies on O'ahu were actively excreting *T. gondii* oocysts](#). On Kaua'i, scientists found the cat-excreted parasite "at nearly every sampled site" and observed [higher coastal contamination at beach parks and harbors](#), which has serious implications for public health because of the increased likelihood of human exposure. Infections in wildlife are not only harmful for the wildlife but also indicative of the widespread and dangerous consequences of human exposures. *T. gondii* infections have



Bringing back the birds

been identified [in Nēnē \(Hawaiian Goose\) from Kauaʻi, Maui, and Molokaʻi](#), and *T. gondii* infections in ʻAlalā (Hawaiian Crow) pose a [significant risk to this species' conservation](#). The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reports that toxoplasmosis is also a [leading threat to the recovery of Endangered Hawaiian monk seals](#). **Supporting programs that purposely release cats, regardless of their sterilization status, to roam the landscape contributes to environmental *T. gondii* contamination and puts people and wildlife at risk.**

Consequently, we ask that you please consider the following **two amendment options** to protect Hawaiʻi's people and wildlife:

Option #1 | Support Cat Sanctuaries

1. Change the purpose of the fund to exclusively support the **establishment and management of cat-proof enclosures (i.e., cat sanctuaries)**, in which stray and feral cats can be safely sheltered, cared for, and monitored. This strategy eliminates harms to Hawaiʻi's native wildlife, protects communities from nuisances and disease risks, keeps cats safe, and is based on the proven success of the Lanaʻi Cat Sanctuary.
2. Should an advisory committee continue to be needed, **include a representative from the Hawaiʻi Department of Health, Hawaiʻi Department of Land and Natural Resources Division of Forestry and Wildlife, and the Lanaʻi Cat Sanctuary** to ensure that actions will follow best practices and not inadvertently put Hawaiʻi's residents or vulnerable wildlife at risk.

Option #2 | Restrict Sterilization Funds to Owned Cats

1. To prevent the release of unowned cats to the landscape, **limit the use of funds exclusively to sterilizations for owned cats**.
2. Should an advisory committee continue to be needed, **include a representative from the Hawaiʻi Department of Health and Hawaiʻi Department of Land and Natural Resources Division of Forestry and Wildlife** to ensure that actions will not inadvertently put Hawaiʻi's residents and vulnerable wildlife at risk.

With these amendments, American Bird Conservancy would be happy to support HB 220. As it is, however, this bill will filter precious public resources toward a program that will only contribute to ongoing harms to Hawaiʻi's people and wildlife.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Grant Sizemore, M.S., CWB®
Director of Invasive Species Programs

Chris Farmer, Ph.D.
Hawaiʻi Program Director



improving the quality of lives of pets and their people.

Testimony by Alicia Maluafiti
Volunteer Board President, Poi Dogs & Popoki

In Support of HB 220 – Relating to the Spaying and Neutering of Animals
WITH AMENDMENTS
House Committee on Agriculture
Friday, Feb. 10, 10 am, rm. 325

Aloha Chair Gates 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 are in support of HB 220 with amendments.

There is an incredible NEED to sterilize more feral cats to reduce overpopulation. It's the only long term humane solution to the failed strategy promoted by the DLNR: Trap-and-Kill.

The **greatest NEED for these funds is on the neighbor islands and the organizations that need these funds the most are the small nonprofits – not the large animal control contractors.**

Oahu has a variety of options for affordable services including the City's Feline Fix program. If this legislature is committed to providing a fund to help with spay and neuter, then this bill needs to focus on NEED. If you do not require any eligibility criteria then this fund will be depleted by the large nonprofits that do NOT demonstrate NEED because of their ease of access to fundraising dollars. We are proposing an amendment that would ensure the long term sustainability of the program and ensure that funding remains available by the people that need it the most.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT 1

Section 143 (b) – pg. 2: There is established an advisory committee to assist the department of budget and finance in establishing the eligibility criteria and procedures for disbursements from the special fund; provided that, in establishing the eligibility criteria, the advisory committee shall prioritize funding to organizations that specialize in trap-neuter—release practices **and are able to demonstrate annual gross receipts of less than \$500,000 confirmed by their previous year's IRS 990 tax form.**

This financial threshold encompasses the majority of small nonprofits on all islands – and the majority of which do not have paid staff. We rescue animals for love and volunteer our time and resources to do it. So be assured that these dollars will go directly to the spay and neuter of animals.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT 2

The Department of Budget and Finance has indicated in Senate testimony a lack of desire to take any responsibility for managing this program because they lack the subject matter expertise. And we agree.

The Office of Community Services (OCS) within the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations currently manages State grants in aid and they have experience in managing GIAs for spay and neuter. They have a thorough and fair reimbursement process for awarding funds to grant recipients. They require copies of invoices for spay and neuter services as well as copies of payments made for those invoices. This process again ensures that the funds are being used for its intended purpose. It can sometimes be a burden on a small nonprofit because they have to expend funds first. But we are doing that already...paying out of pocket for spay and neuter. And the OCS option for monthly reimbursement should not deter organizations from participating in the program. We highly recommend that OCS be designated as the state entity charged with managing the program AND to allow the office to utilize a percentage of the funds to cover administrative costs thereby ensuring that it remains cost neutral to government.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 10:59:39 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Ferracane	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Sterilizing feral cats and returning them to the wild is not how to protect our beleaguered and disappearing native birds. Feral cats should be captured and humanely euthanized so toxoplasmosis and other diseases don't spread, and so they can't prey upon native species.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 11:24:37 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Renee Rabb	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB220 Spay and neuter

I am strongly in support of HB 220 by Representative Nishimoto, which creates a spay and neuter fund and allows for an income tax check-off so that people who wish to support this vital work can do so.

I volunteer with Action 4 Animals to foster cats on Big Island. We trap cats at the Keauu Transfer Station and attempt to find them homes. We tame down often terrified cats, treat them for ailments and parasites, get them spayed or neutered, test them for feline leukemia and feline AIDS, get them vaccinated, have them microchipped, and find them their forever homes. Many of the cats and kittens we rescue are or were someone's pets. They do not understand how they went from being loved to abandoned.

Sadly, a primary cause of pet abandonment is a lack of low cost spay and neuter availability. Many pet owners would get their pets spayed or neutered if they could afford it. Then they would have one beloved pet kitty instead of six unwanted kittens that become street cats in a neighborhood. Low cost spay and neuter definitely works to reduce unplanned companion animal populations. This in turn benefits neighborhoods, indigenous wildlife populations, and quality of life for the animals.

I became alarmed when reading some of the misinformation in the opposition testimony presented at the Senate hearing last week. This bill actually helps protect native wildlife. If more free-roaming cats are spayed or neutered, there will be fewer free-roaming cats, not more. The goal is to reduce the population of uncared for cats on the islands. Spay and neuter programs do exactly that.

Please show aloha for the animals. This is a true win-win situation. It's voluntary for the taxpayer. It's a cost effective and compassionate solution to help solve a serious environmental and humane issue.

Mahalo for your favorable consideration.

Renee Rabb

Keaau, HI 96749

District 4, Pct. 2

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 11:27:58 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ashley Wilcox	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB220.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 11:33:33 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Linnea Heu	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing today in stern opposition to HB220. The funding, and essentially sanctioning, of trap neuter release (TNR) programs in Hawai‘i is wildly irresponsible. The existing impacts of feral and free-roaming cats on our native bird and endangered marine mammal populations should be more than enough evidence to discourage any notion that this is a feasible path forward.

I live in Hilo and there are several cat feeding areas, with large colonies of cats (Wailoa Park, Lili‘uokalani Park, UH Hilo campus). Some of these locations are the same areas where we see native Nēnē and other native waterbirds. In fact, Nēnē nest, and rear their young in these spaces. Cultivating feral predators in their habitat runs counter to any efforts, on the part of our State, to protect these species.

Additionally, it is inconceivable to me that we expect dog owners to pick up their dogs feces (as they should!) while allowing large colonies of cats to freely roam and defecate in our public areas, which are utilized by local families and visitors alike. This also brings up the negative human health impacts of cat colonies. Feral cats can carry toxoplasmosis (passed on through contact with their feces) which is of special concern for those with weakened immune systems, infants and fetuses, and those who are pregnant.

I urge you vote in opposition to HB220, for the future generations of our families and our native birds.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Linnea Heu

Feb. 9, 2023

The Honorable Cedric Asuega Gates, Chair
House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee
Hawaii State Capitol
415 S. Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Gates and Members:

On behalf of Alley Cat Allies and our thousands of supporters in Hawaii, I am writing to urge your support of **HB220, "Relating to the Spaying and Neutering of Animals,"** with clarifications to promote humane policy decisions for community cats who live outdoors in the state. If enacted into law, **HB 220** would establish a spay and neuter special fund, allow funds from an income tax check-off to be deposited into the fund, and establish an advisory committee to help establish eligibility criteria and procedures for disbursements from the special fund, prioritizing funding to organizations that specialize in Trap-Neuter-Release (AKA Trap-Neuter-Return or TNR). **HB 220** was introduced by Representative Scott Nishimoto and is currently assigned to the House Agriculture & Food Systems Committee.

Alley Cat Allies is the leading global advocacy organization dedicated to protecting and improving the lives of all cats. We have promoted sound and compassionate programs for cats since our founding in 1990. We work with lawmakers, shelters, and the public to change attitudes, launch new programs, and advance lifesaving laws and policies that serve the best interests of cats and the communities where they live.

Preventing new births of domestic cats and dogs is proven to be the effective and humane way to manage animal populations. Therefore, sterilization is the linchpin that makes possible the bigger goals of public health, animal protection, and effective population management. The availability of a spaying and neutering fund will save lives and reduce the intake, housing and killing of animals, thereby saving Hawaiian taxpayers millions of dollars.

Low-cost spay and neuter programs are very effective at increasing the sterilization rate among pet cats in lower-income households. These programs also benefit community cats, also called stray or feral cats, as part of TNR, whereby unowned, free-roaming cats are trapped, sterilized, vaccinated, eartipped, and returned to their outdoor homes to live and thrive.

HB 220 will significantly reduce one of the greatest barriers low-income owners face to neutering their pet: cost. A peer-reviewed scientific study published in the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* found that while most pet cats are already neutered, the neuter rate is significantly lower for pet cats living in households earning \$35,000 or less annually.¹ The lower-income owners who were interviewed primarily cited high cost as the reason for not neutering their cats. Providing low-cost or free spay and neuter services benefits both cats and shelters as research has shown that spaying and neutering reduces the risk that adopted animals will be returned or relinquished to shelters.

There are also a substantial number of stray and community cats who benefit from spay and neuter programs. Sterilizing these cats prevents unchecked breeding, eliminates nuisance behaviors associated with mating, and improves their health.

¹ Chu K, Anderson WM, Rieser MY, Population Characteristics and Neuter Status of Cats Living in Households in the United States, J Am Vet Med Assoc, 2009; 234: 1023-1030.

However, because humane management of community cats who live outdoors is a specific priority of this bill, the language of the bill must be adjusted to better promote humane policy decisions in the oversight of the fund to be created. Section 2, §143 (B) should therefore be changed to add a second mention of “**humanely**,” to read as follows:

“All members shall have an active interest in humanely reducing pet overpopulation and **humanely** reducing the number of free-roaming cats in the State.”

Furthermore, because a critical component of Trap-Neuter-Return involves **returning** cats to their outdoor homes to live healthy lives outdoors, it is important to use the term accurately. Section 2, §143 (b), should also be changed to omit the word “release” and to instead read as follows:

“...provided that, in establishing the eligibility criteria, the advisory committee shall prioritize funding to organizations that specialize in trap-neuter-**return** practices.”

Increased accessibility of spay and neuter services is a win for citizens, a win for animal shelters, and a win for cats. **For these reasons, we urge you to support HB 220.**

Sincerely,
Calley Gerber
Alley Cat Allies

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 2:40:10 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
michael willinsky	Save Maui Cats	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We are in favor of a government supported TNR program throughout Hawaii. This strategy has been proven to be the only effective solution in over 500 major cities worldwide. As an all-volunteer nonprofit we have helped fix over 2,000 cats throughout Lahaina over the past decade which has lowered outdoor cat populations and reduced birth rates. Our efforts will have a long lasting impact but we need a more robust government supported TNR program to continue.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 3:05:19 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julia Young	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Keeping the population of cats on island down will benefit many animals, people, and ecosystems. Humanely trapping, neutering, and returning the cats will be a humane example to future generations of how to treat animals on the aina and responsibly care about others. Aloha in practice.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 3:15:25 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
sarah haynes	Kitty charm farm	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of TNR which is the most successful method of controlling animal populations, especially feral cats. Thank you.



February 9, 2023,

House of Representatives
Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems
Rep Cedric Gates, Chair.
Rep Kirstin Kahaloa, Chair,
And Committee Members,

RE: Oppose HB220 Relating to the spaying and neutering of animals

Dear Reps Gates, Kahaloa, and Committee Members,

Aloha mai kākou! Conservation Council for Hawai'i is the state's oldest environmental nonprofit organization and the Hawai'i affiliate of The National Wildlife Federation. **We oppose the funding from an individual income tax check-off to be deposited into the Spay and Neuter Special Fund as written in HB220.**

As an advocate for the endangered Hawaiian Monk Seal, we oppose the bill. Trap Neuter Return Manage (TNRM) programs do not address the parasite *Toxoplasma gondii*. A cat can produce hundreds of millions of infectious eggs through its feces. Harming endangered endemic species, other wildlife and humans. Pregnant women and people with weakened immune systems are especially vulnerable to Toxoplasmosis gondii. Although this program has been used in the past, the feral cat population still persists.

Funds would be better used for education to prevent abandonment and feeding of feral cats, spay and neuter services, cat sanctuaries and adoption services, but not to re-abandon cats. **For these reasons we oppose HB220.**

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Jonnetta Peters
Executive Director

Telephone/Fax: [224.338.6511](tel:224.338.6511) | email: info@conservehi.org
web: www.conservehawaii.org | P.O. Box 2923, Honolulu, HI 96802

President: Colleen Heyer | Vice President: Sunshine Woodford | Secretary: Karl Magnacca
Treasurer: Sunshine Woodford | Directors: Randall Bartlett, Steven Lee Montgomery, Bret Nainoa Mossman,
Michael Nakachi, Lisa Hinano Rey | National Wildlife Federation Region 12 Director: Rachel Sprague
National Wildlife Federation Pacific Region Associate Director: Les Welsh
Executive Director: Jonnetta "Jonee" Peters

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 4:52:29 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Donna Willinsky	Save Maui Cats Inc.	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Greetings,

I would like to tell you how thrilled we are that this bill is being considered. Our small, all volunteer based nonprofit has been working to reduce cat overpopulation on Maui for the past 15 years. When Michael Willinsky, founder of *Save Maui Cats*, first came to the island, he witnessed dead cats strewn all over the highway, tossed into dumpsters, and even lit on fire. As residents of Maui, we all want the same thing - less unwanted cats. But as proven time and again, we can't kill our way out of this situation. TNRM is the only solution. Here's why: Because Hawaii feral cats are Apex predators, they breed beyond their resources, which means many cats live only long enough to breed, then die of malnutrition or starvation. Their offspring are doomed to the same sad fate. The cat numbers continue to increase and it's miserable for everyone. TNRM (Trap / Neuter / Return / Manage) has been an effective solution to cat overpopulation in over 500 major cities worldwide. When cats are fixed and looked after, they form a colony, keeping unfixed cats out, ultimately **reducing** the number of breeding cats. Since *Save Maui Cats* began, there has been a significant reduction in feral cats on the west side. But currently, we can only fix as many cats as the Humane Society will allow, and sometimes there just aren't enough appointments. We are completely volunteer based and rely solely on donations. We could do so much more, including educating the public through community outreach - if we had support from the state. We strive every day to make the island better for all of us and we sure could use some help.

Please visit us at SaveMauiCats.org to learn more about us, what we do, and how we stopped 1,210,000 future feral kittens from being born - in just one week!

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Donna Willinsky

Vice President

Save Maui Cats

SaveMauiCats.org

808-344-6999

323-828-2280

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 6:36:52 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Steven Lee Montgomery	Ahahui Malama I Ka Lokahi	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Ahahui Malama I Ka Lokahi opposes HB 122 for the use of public funds to release and maintain feral cats in the landscape, where they will continue to defecate daily to breed flies and contaminate the habitats of humans and wildlife with *Toxoplasma propagules*. These tiny parasites bred only in cats survive in soil long after feces have decomposed, contaminating paws, fingers, feedstuffs and water, trying to be swallowed by animals or people.

Even well-fed cats hunt and kill wildlife instinctively, with prey including endangered birds such as 'Ua'u (Hawaiian petrel) and Ae'o (Hawaiian stilt). Local seals and dolphins die from cat-feces-contaminated surface water going into the ocean. Cats are listed among the most harmful invasive species globally by the [International Union for the Conservation of Nature](#), since feral cats on islands have contributed to the [extinction of 33 species](#).

Consider these 2 experts on solutions in the public interest:

"Cats should be confined for the sake of the cat, the environment, other animals, and the public. If a fraction of the dollars being expended to neuter, re-abandon, and feed cats was directed toward enhancing education and supporting more effective animal control ordinances and their enforcement, we would be much farther down the road toward effectively reducing the problem." Paul [Barrows 2004: Professional, ethical, and legal dilemmas of trap-neuter-release](#).

JAVMA, V.225, 2004

Dr. Milton McAllister, professor of pathology in the U. of Illinois College of Medicine wrote in the Journal of Veterinary Parasitology: "Our profession needs to come to grips with the accumulating body of evidence about the tremendous burden wrought on society by toxoplasmosis." He noted a long list of maladies made worse by *Toxoplasma* infection in people with suppressed immunity,... weakness and debilitation, damaged vision, or multi-systemic infections: "Evidence is mounting to link toxoplasmosis with psychiatric disorders" ... "Recent studies from three countries found that schizophrenic patients had higher antibody levels to *T. gondii* than did matched control subjects."

Toxoplasma exposure in the womb is considered "one of the most common infectious causes of birth defects, mental retardation and visual problems worldwide, Studies have estimated that

toxoplasma has infected 25 percent of adult Americans. “Simply put,” McAllister said, “domestic cats should not be allowed to roam outdoors. The feeding of stray cats by cat protectionist groups ...that wish to spare homeless cats from euthanasia, unfortunately increases the spread of toxoplasmosis to wildlife, domestic animals and people.”

Please hold this bill on the table to protect the health of people and wildlife. Mahalo,

Steven Lee Montgomery, Ph. D., Board Member

Ahahui Malama I Ka Lokahi /Hawaiians for the Conservation of Native Ecosystems
P.O. Box 720, Kailua, HI 96734 www.ahahui.net

To practice, promote and perpetuate a modern native Hawaiian conservation ethic that provides for a healthy Hawaiian ecosystem nurtured by human communities and serving as a model for local and global resource management.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 6:23:18 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jason Lee	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 9:11:29 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christine Rosewood	Save Maui Cats	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I'm a volunteer with the Save Maui Cats non-profit organization, located on the west side of Maui. My daughter and I currently feed two community feral cat colonies, twice a week. We have come to know many of the cats quite well, and have observed the colonies numbers closely. While our organization makes great efforts to manage the enormous amount of feral cats on the island through TNR, the problem continues to grow as more pets are abandoned continuously, most often not spayed or neutered. Additionally, the number of cats being born into coloinies is also great, as it only takes one cat having one litter to create many.

Additional funding to spay and neuter these cats is absolutely necessary if we are ever going to get control of the overpopulation situation. The TNR program is a vital solution to this very troubling probelm. If the funding, and additional resources were available to help, the numbers of feral cats would greatly decrease. We are also greatly in need of community outreach spay/neuter clinics to provide low cost services to current cat owners. This is a community, and state wide issue that needs additional funding and help to manage. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Christine Rosewood



Cat People of Oahu

95-1059 Hoalia Street • Mililani, HI 96789

www.catpeopleofohu.org

catpeopleofohu@gmail.com

EIN: 83-2888194

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB220

February 9, 2023

Dear House Committee on Agriculture & Food Systems:

Cat People of Oahu is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to helping people help cats. We are writing to strongly support HB220 relating to the spaying and neutering of animals. It is absolutely critical that the state of Hawaii find as many ways as possible to financially support the low-cost spay and neuter of pet animals and free-roaming cats.

On a daily basis, we see pet owners struggle with affording the costs of spaying and neutering their animals, which often leads to unintended litters. This leads to unfixed kittens and puppies ending up on the street, in our already overcrowded shelters, or being rehomed without first being fixed, which further contributes to the overpopulation problem. All of these put an undue burden on the animal rescue organizations in our communities.

As a foster-based non-profit organization, it can be a struggle for us and the independent fosters we support to afford spaying or neutering the cats and kittens in our care. We rely on generation donations from the public to ensure that all cats and kittens are fixed prior to their adoption. However, grants that are created from the passage of this bill would free up those much needed monetary resources to be used for other critical expenses.

Finally, we believe that free spay and neuter for free-roaming cats is critical to controlling their population humanely. Currently, only two organizations on Oahu offer free spay/neuter for free-roaming cats and it can be extremely difficult to get appointments when they are needed. We hope that grants funding free-roaming cat sterilization allow these organizations to continue to offer free sterilization for free-roaming cats, and allow additional organizations to offer these services to the public.

With additional funding for spay and neuter, we can do better for the people and animals in our community.

Mahalo nui loa for your consideration,

Alexis E. Jamison
President, Cat People of Oahu



**Testimony in Support of HB 220
Relating to the spaying and neutering of animals
House Committee on Agriculture and Food Systems
February 10, 2023**

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), the nation's largest animal protection organization, supports passage of SB 2837.

This legislation is good for the people and animals of Hawaii. There is broad interest in helping companion animals and, by extension, the people who care for them. This legislation would create an opportunity for Hawaii taxpayers to do just that, voluntarily contributing funds to provide needed sterilization and veterinary care to cats and dogs in need. Access to veterinary care, for both owned pets and free-roaming cats, is one of the most pressing challenges in animal welfare today, with cost of services being one of the main barriers.

When such veterinary services are made accessible and costs are subsidized, sterilization rates will increase. The truth is that most people want to do the right thing and are not ideologically opposed to sterilization but simply lack the resources to do so. This is particularly true for those who find themselves caring for a large number of free-roaming cats. Unable to get enough of the cats sterilized in a timely manner, the cats continue to reproduce, making the goal of reducing the population even more of a challenge. When funding is made available to cover the cost of sterilization, organizations which deliver these services to communities can be more effective in their outreach efforts. Not only will this prevent many surplus animal births and deaths but also lowers the cost of animal care and control in the future, reduce public health concerns and decrease threats to wildlife and the environment.

There is an urgent need for practical and effective solutions to the challenges associated with the presence of cats outdoors. There is no one-size-fits-all solution to managing cats in the environment, but with determination, innovation, and collaboration, we can implement and sustain effective programs to humanely resolve human-cat-wildlife conflicts.

This bill creates an opportunity to help many people and animals across the state. The HSUS encourages a favorable report on HB 220.

Danielle Bays
Senior Analyst, Cat Protection and Policy
The Humane Society of the United States



Hawai'i Wildlife Fund

*Post Office Box 1801, Kealahou, Hawai'i, HI 96750 &
Post Office Box 790637, Paia, Maui, HI 96779*

Celebrating 27 years of protecting
Hawai'i's native wildlife through research,
education and conservation.

10 February 2023

Re: RELATING TO THE SPAYING AND NEUTERING OF ANIMALS

Aloha Chair Rep. Asuega Gates, Vice Chair Rep Kahaloua, and Representatives on the Agriculture and Food Systems (AGR) Committee,

Hawai'i Wildlife Fund (HWF) adamantly OPPOSES the proposed House Bill 220 that "Establishes a Spay and Neuter Special Fund. Allows funds from an income tax check-off to be deposited into the Spay and Neuter Special Fund. Appropriates funds"

While at the surface this bill may seem supportive of decreasing feral cat populations across the island, and providing funding for spay and neuter services. We oppose any trap-neuter-release program (which is prioritized in the language of this particular bill) that will lead to the continued degradation of our natural environments and simply do not work to eliminate cats in our native ecosystems. Feral (and domestic) cats impact our native wildlife directly through predation (of birds, chicks, eggs) and indirectly through the spread of the diseases, including and especially the parasite, *Toxoplasma gondii*, that has already taken the lives of countless endangered and protected marine mammal species through "toxoplasmosis", including the Hawaiian monk seal and various dolphin species.

Cats that are released after spay-neuter treatments will continue to hunt and kill our native birds, from our shores up to the high elevation mauka habitats, and their feces can spread diseases such as toxoplasmosis to our marine wildlife (as it travels and survives through our oceans and streams). While other warm-blooded animals may be impacted by "toxo", felines are the only host of this parasite that allows for it to breed and spread. Additionally, cat colony caretakers will continue to feed not only feral cats, but oftentimes also pigs, mongoose, and rats, at their stations ... each of these non-native predators having their own set of impacts to our native wildlife. **Please do not use state funds to support the continued killing of our native species.**

Mahalo for your time and consideration in killing this bill, and / or eliminating all reference / preferences for spay-neuter-release programs and only allowing for funding for programs that will adopt cats out into private households where felines are not exposed to the outdoors. Hawai'i nei is home to thousands of native species living from the depths of the pelagic environment and coral reefs to the very peak of Mauna Kea. Like

www.wildhawaii.org

many island ecosystems, a large percentage of the native wildlife living in the Hawaiian archipelago are endemic to this region – or only found here. Invasive species, including feral (and domestic) cats, present threats to the livelihood of these species that evolved for generations without this particular predator.

Hawai'i Wildlife Fund (HWF) is a small nonprofit organization that has been working to conserve native species in Hawai'i since 1996. During that time, we have been actively involved in research, education, restoration and advocacy projects related to the protection of coastal and nearshore ecosystems around the pae 'āina.

Please oppose this initiative! We urge you to kill this bill (HB220) before it has the chance to be scheduled for any more hearings. Mahalo for your time, consideration, and support of Hawaii's native wildlife / habitats, cultural landscape and community connectivity. Thank you for not supporting this bill.

Me ke aloha pumehana,



Megan R. Lamson, M.S.
President & Hawai'i Program Director
megan@wildhawaii.org
(808) 217-5777



Hannah J. Bernard
Co-founder & Executive Director
hannah@wildhawaii.org
(808) 280-8124

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 11:38:49 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephanie Olson-Moore	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly OPPOSE HB220 which would implement TNR (Trap-Neuter-Release) practices for feral cat populations. This might seem like a humane way to address the feral issue, but even PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) has come out to OPPOSE TNR practices. The following quotes were taken from the [PETA website](#): "Cats are the leading cause of human-related bird deaths, [killing as many as 3.7 billion birds in the U.S. every year](#). In fact, cats are considered [the most deadly invasive species in the world](#), responsible or partly responsible for the extinction of more than 60 species." "Feeding them doesn't stop them from hunting... and **TNR doesn't even work**. On the contrary, it actually encourages *more* people to abandon their cats because they think the animals will be cared for." Veterinarian and syndicated animal-advice columnist Dr. Michael W. Fox... says that it's "unconscionable" to abandon cats and calls TNR a "blight" on the animal-sheltering community [resulting in] terrible outcomes for cats and wildlife."The bottom line is that TNR makes *humans*—not cats and certainly not wildlife—feel better. " Please keep our native birds in mind and OPPOSE HB220! Mahalo!

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 11:39:20 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kimberly De Souza	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I Oppose HB220.

Allocating funds to spay and neuter feral cats **does not** reduce the population of cats which are affecting the health and population of our native birds who are already in decline due to avian malaria and habitat loss. This bill would only allow these existing cats to continue to live outdoors and prey upon vulnerable native birds. Instead we need to allocate funds to reduce the number of feral cats instead of keeping them around so that the native birds have a chance.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 12:06:42 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Cigainero	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Committee Chair and Members:

Aloha. I am writing in support of HB 220 that allows individual taxpayers to opt to have a portion of their state income tax dedicated for the purpose of spaying and neutering animals. I live in the Puna Region of the Big Island of Hawaii and we have a large number of cats that are without current owners. I put it that way because so many of the cats we tend at colonies were clearly someone's pet.

I have a great deal of experience working with cat colonies. I lived in Austin, TX prior to moving to Hawaii and cared for a cat colony for over 10 years in Austin. I practiced catch, fix and return and saw the colony population dwindle from 30 plus cats to one cat by the time I moved. So I know that the practice of catch, fix and return does work to reduce the cat population in a humane way.

I belong to an organization called Action 4 Animals-Hawaii. We catch cats that can be prepared for homes, primarily kittens, and we socialize them, test them for diseases, treat them for ringworms or other parasites, vacinate them, microchip them and a variety of other measures that prepare the cats for adoption at public events;. We do all of this as volunteers at no cost to the public. But the number of cats in need of spaying/neutering far exceeds the ability of volunteers to meet the need. Many of the "dumped" kittens are from households that could not afford the cost of spay/neuter from our local vets. The cost for such procedures usually is in the hundreds of dollars. Most families would voluntarily spay/neuter their pet if they could afford it. This legislation would help make those services available to a larger part of our populaion.

Please support this reasonable and humane approach to dealing with the large populaion of cats in our state. Thank you for your consideration.

Barbara Cigainero, Keaau

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 12:08:18 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angela Huntemer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I drive injured native birds to Feather and Fur and they are sent on to the Hawaii Wildlife Center for rehabilitation. On the North Shore of Oahu (as in other places around the islands) cats and dogs routinely destroy nests and attack and kill our native seabirds. Tax payer money cannot be used to prolong the presence of cat predators in our habitats.

We must do better in protecting our birds. Cats also excrete toxoplasmosis. Toxoplasmosis has caused the death of critically endangered Hawaiian Monk seals and dolphins.

Thank you for supporting our unique native creatures and habitats.

Angela Huntemer

Kahuku, Oahu

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 12:35:54 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vivian S. Toellner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Unfortunately, some conservation interests are rallying against the bill. It is important to point out that this bill **protects** wildlife. The alternative to the spay/neuter of Free-Roaming cats is more cats, not fewer cats. This bill does not add cats to the landscape, it prevents the cats who are already there from breeding.

```
<html><head></head><body style="overflow-wrap: break-word; -webkit-  
mode: space; line-break: after-white-space;">Aloha<div>Please vote to  
OPPOSE HB220, the feral cat population is critical on our island and  
devastating for our native species, especially native birds and sea life.  
This bill will only be giving away money to those individuals who want to  
see massive feral cat colonies roaming free throughout the islands, with  
no regard to the ecological destruction they cause. We need to STOP  
feeding feral cats, incentivize homeowners to spay/neuter their personal  
pets through a voucher system that is specific to that pet, and increase  
educational outreach so the cat-loving community understands the full  
complexity of the feral cat crisis.&nbsp;</div><div>I, and most 'āina-  
minded people I know, are not anti-cat, we are anti-FERAL cat and the  
resulting ecological devastation they cause.&nbsp;</div></body></html>
```

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 1:17:18 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristina Chyn	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a conservation biologist with a PhD in ecology. I oppose this bill as trap-neuter-release is not an effective or humane strategy, especially for Hawaii's wildlife. Feral cats are an invasive species. They need to be kept indoors or humanely euthanized. TNR does not protect the cats well-being either - they can contact diseases, become injured, and are easily killed by vehicles.

TNR should not be state funded as it is terrible for wildlife.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 1:28:44 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kim Meyer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai'i ecosystem is very crucial to its natural biodiversity being isolated on a tropical island. It's environment depends on its native species both birds and plants. Feral cats have mass populated on our islands and have become a very big threat to our native birds and other species including monk seals (cat fecal matters omits poison that affect the seals). threat to our native species is a threat to our entire ecosystem as they all depend on each other, we need a more assertive plan of action against the mass population of feral cats. thank you

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 1:29:51 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Frazer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB220.

The spaying and neutering of feral cats is an uphill battle and will **not** reduce the existing population of cats. These feral cats are desiminating our native bird population and their ability to reproduce. In order to help our native birds we need to reduce invasive feral cat populations. Our native bird populations are already in decline due to avian malaria and habitat loss. This bill would only allow these existing cats to continue to live outdoors and prey upon vulnerable native birds. Instead we need to allocate funds to reduce the number of feral cats instead of allowing their existing populations to thrive.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 1:59:17 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sarah Ruiz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello. I am writing to oppose HB220. While Trap, Neuter, Release (TNR) is a well-meaning program, it ultimately leads to harm for both native wildlife and released cats. The program abandons cats back into sensitive ecosystems, adding to the risk of disease transmission, predation, and the extinction of wildlife.

[]

According to the American Bird Conservancy (ABC), outdoor cats are the largest human-caused risk to bird populations, killing 2.4 billion birds in North America every year and contributing "to the extinction of 63 species of birds, mammals, and reptiles in the wild." (Source: <https://abcbirds.org/program/cats-indoors/cats-and-birds/>) In addition, ABC reports that "95 of 142 bird species found nowhere else have become extinct on Hawai'i." (Source: <https://abcbirds.org/program/hawaii/>)

Hawaii needs to support conservation more to prevent the extinction of additional native species. I oppose HB220 and hope the state will direct the funds toward conserving native wildlife species instead. Thank you.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 2:42:33 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Timon Skinner	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Spay and neuter programs have not been shown by peer-reviewed studies to effectively reduce cat populations, and do nothing to mitigate the damaging effect that these cats can still have on the fragile native ecosystem. Eradication is the only acceptable option to reducing population numbers and the funds allocated to a spay and neuter program should instead go towards eradication efforts.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 2:53:08 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Carion	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need to do everything possible to eliminate cats from the feral population.. they are having a devastating affect on our birds.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 3:00:57 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lynley Dows	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The state of Hawaii was in crises mode with regards to control of the feral cat population prior to COVID. Following COVID we are now in a downward spiral. Exorbitantly high rent and nearly non-existent rentals that allow pets is resulting in more abandoned cats and fewer adoptions. The suspension of spay and neuter services for community cats and the ongoing restricted availability has further compounded the issue of increased population.

Funding TNR, and more importantly TNRM (Trap, Neuter, Release, and Manage), is the only way out of this tragic situation. It will not be a speedy recovery but communities have proven it is the only humane solution that is tried and true. Why not give the community a way to participate in the solution that is readily available and simple.

Please pass this HB220.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 3:25:38 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judith Hougaz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

TNR has been proven to be successful at reducing the larger populations of community cats. It is the most humane way to reduce the cat communities

Mahalo

Judith Hougaz

HB220

Written Testimony

2/9/2023

I am writing as a concerned citizen who volunteers with a non-profit organization called Save Maui Cats practicing TNR in West Maui. We work tirelessly to trap, spay/neuter and return feral cats to their colonies. We manage the colony watching for newcomers who arrive needing TNR.

We are in dire need of state financial support to help us continue this work. It is challenging volunteer work made all the more difficult from lack of funding. We work continuously to find donations from the community to continue our efforts. We work to secure grants, a time consuming and complicated process.

Our group of volunteers struggle to keep up with the work involved in TNR within the feral cat population on Maui.

Having funding from the state allocated to our non-profit would benefit our work tremendously. State funding could help cover the cost of a Mobile Veterinary Van, salary for a veterinarian and assist with the rental of a space for the veterinarian to perform spay/neutering services in West Maui.

I believe TNR is the only humane approach to solving the overpopulation of feral cats in Hawaii.

Sincerely,

Nancy Altenburg

3959 Lower Honoapiilani Rd. #203

Lahaina, HI 96761

Naltenburg@gmail.com

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 3:27:34 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lauren Barclay	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

I am writing in opposition to HB 220. I (and many others who appreciate Hawai'i's native birdlife) am concerned that continued funding of Trap-Neuter-Release for feral cats is an incredible misuse of resources in the so-called "Extinction Capital of the World." The Hawaiian Islands cannot afford to sustain for much longer massive, free-roaming populations of one of the world's most destructively-efficient and invasive mammalian predators. Many of our native birds, which did not evolve alongside cats, are not equipped to evade them. While well-intentioned, TNR fails to address the tendency of feral cats to roam and hunt (both for food and sport), which puts ground-nesting shore and waterbirds in immediate danger in the presence of these animals. Cats are also carriers of the parasite *Toxoplasma gondii*, which has subject numerous Hawaiian Monk Seals and Spinner Dolphins to excruciating deaths as a result of water run-off.

As the majority of outdoor cat colonies do not operate in controlled environments, efforts to manage populations through TNR are often negated by further dumping and attraction of additional strays to food sources (results of two long-term studies conducted in Florida and California). Additionally, neutering does not spare feral cats from the dangers of a life outdoors; cars, toxins, and diseases bring the average lifespan of a free-roaming cat down to around 2-5 years.

To be blunt, TNR is socially acceptable (and state-subsidized) animal abandonment; neither Hawai'i's native birds nor outdoor cats are better off for it. We cannot afford to continue to cross our fingers and hope that TNR brings down the feral population in due time. The world's Extinction Capital needs its cats neutered and indoors, not neutered while outside and continuing to harm native birds and marine mammals. Let's put more funding towards Hawai'i's fragile biodiversity rather than its antithesis.

Thank you,

Lauren Barclay

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 3:30:13 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Keller	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill to trap and neuter feral cats. A society is only as civilized as their treatment of their animals.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 3:45:53 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ANDREW ISODA	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

1. Cats are an invasive predator in Hawai‘i and have already contributed to the extinction of 2 Hawaiian birds
2. Cats contaminate the landscape with *Toxoplasma gondii*, which is a serious public and wildlife health risk
3. TNR programs do not successfully reduce cat populations
4. Sterilized cats still kill wildlife and contribute to infectious parasite and disease risks
5. Sterilized cats still cause nuisances in communities – who wants a cat colony in their backyard?
6. [The Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council opposes TNR](#)
7. A [2014 study](#) found that 78% of Hawai‘i residents want feral cats *REMOVED* from the environment permanently, not re-abandoned via TNR
8. Alternatives to TNR exist and include, among other things, (a) mandatory enclosure of cat colonies and (b) using allocated funds to exclusively sterilize owned cats

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 3:54:47 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
elizabeth keller	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the effort to trap spay neuter and release feral cats as the only humane and acceptable way to deal with the problem. Killing them is not the answer. Reports on high rates of disease are exaggerated and are often misinformation. I spent 7 years doing trap spay neuter and release to deal with ferals on Cape Cod, Mass. before moving here 14 years ago. It is an effective means of limiting their populations

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 4:04:24 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaitlin DeMello	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support this bill. TNR is the most effective way to help the thousands of feral cats in the state. It's hard for individuals like me to TNR on my own because of a lack of open appointments and cost. This will dramatically help efforts with individuals and established nonprofits. So many more cats can be helped and saved with this bill in place. Please pass it!!

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 4:17:49 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelli Medeiros	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. TNR is the only proven effective way to reduce cat populations humanely. Many people currently participate in TNR and we would appreciate help In working to get as many cats fixed as possible.

Thank you, Kelli Medeiros

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 4:30:20 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tessa Broholm	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Lines 3 and 4 of HB220 are presented falsely and as such should immediately render this bill inadequate. TNR is INEFFECTIVE for controlling feral cat populations because TNR does not operate in a closed system. This means that TNR only works if the majority of the population can be successfully neutered or spayed without new additions. This would require the majority of the population of feral cats on every single island to undergo extensive TNR efforts. The creation of a TNR fund would be wholly inadequate to address the scale of TNR needed to be an effective and humane measure to curb the feral cat populations in the state. FURTHERMORE, feral cats (whether or not they are spayed/neutered) will continue to depredate native birds and species because it is within their nature; this is was they are listed as a top 100 invasive species in the world. Funds should be redirected to organizations removing feral cats from the landscape and/or to legislature that requires the spay/neutering of all domestic pets with requirements to keep them inside. This bill is an embarrassment to the stewardship of this land, but provides an opportunity for local government to actually take action and protect native Hawaiian species.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 4:52:18 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lynn Reedell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 5:04:15 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dr. Rachel Sprague	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Our islands and our native species deserve better than ill-advised and ineffective actions that will waste resources and cause more death and suffering.

Cats can make wonderful pets, but they are also **introduced predators that have contributed to the extinction of two Hawaiian bird species**, and are a serious threat to remaining Threatened and Endangered birds.

Cats in Hawai‘i have also been identified as a major source of environmental *Toxoplasma gondii* contamination, which poses severe risks to pregnant women and those with compromised immune systems, as well as birds and marine mammals. By releasing cats into the environment, HB 220 and SB 998 would only exacerbate these and other harms.

The science is clear - TNR does NOT successfully reduce cat populations. It is not wanted by the general public in Hawaii - a [2014 study](#) found that 78% of Hawai‘i residents want feral cats **REMOVED** from the environment permanently, not re-abandoned via TNR, and the experts at the [The Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council oppose TNR](#).

There ARE alternatives, including, among other things, (a) mandatory enclosure of cat colonies and (b) using allocated funds to exclusively sterilize owned cats.

Please stand up for these islands as the last and only home of so many species. They are the living embodiment of Hawaii and its culture, and their continued existence in this world is literally relying on us. Mahalo.

Dr. Rachel Sprague

(professional wildlife biologist)

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 5:08:21 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Peyton Flint	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill so we can help save the few remaining native birds.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 5:23:39 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pamela Polland	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for SUPPORTING HB220... a much more humane way to deal with feral cats. It will help GREATLY to curb the problem without needing to KILL anyone or anything. Thank you.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 5:27:00 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melissa Simon	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Native Hawaiian birds bear the brunt of feral cat populations and allowing cats to continue to roam free in any capacity is a direct contradiction of any and all conservation efforts working to protect native wildlife. TNR does not work, and the only viable solution is to eradicate cats entirely. They do not belong on the landscape and they do not belong in Hawaii.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 5:25:59 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Marshall	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Jennifer Marshall and my family and I have been vacationing in Hawaii for my entire life. We have visited every island except for Niihau and Kahoolawe. We love our vacations but are always sad for the starving & dying cats we see. In fact there have been a few years that my daughter and I didn't go because we were too sad for the cats. I think it's awesome that you're moving forward with a TNR program. We saw how effective it was when we lived in New York and Chicago. And my friend in Panama says the cat numbers are way down due to the success of TNR.

It's wonderful that Hawaii is joining in the efforts to make the world a better place. I can't wait to share the good news with my friends!

Sincerely,

Jen Marshall

REPRESENTATIVE CEDRIC ASUEGA GATES, CHAIR
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

Kiane Mahinamalamalama Kanaha Prietto
64-5240 Nohomalu Place
Kamuela, HI 96743

Friday, February 10, 2023, 10:00 am

Opposition to Measure No. HB220

Dear Representative Gates and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. My name is Kiane (key*aw*nay) and I am a kumu at both Kanu o ka 'Āina and Purple Mai'a Foundation. Please note that I am an avid lover of felines. In fact all of my cats were found abandoned on my doorstep. I believe in spaying and neutering cats as there are more than enough to go around.

Cats do not belong outside in open spaces because they carry diseases in their fecal matter and pee. During pregnancy I was not allowed to clean the cat litter box as it would lead to a miscarriage or other serious health concerns for my child. Giving money to cat sanctuaries where cats are allowed to use the bathroom anywhere can cause a lot of problems for overall human health. Not to mention our native wildlife such as monk seals who can also contract diseases from cat waste.

Please do not support HB220 as it would lead to more serious health concerns for our people, land, and the animals that live on it. If not for our native species, think of your own family's health.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kiane Prietto', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Kiane Prietto
kianek@kalo.org

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 6:27:15 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laura Mobley	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to state my opposition to HB220. Trap, neuter, release (TNR) leaves feral cats

I care deeply about the endangered and endemic native Hawaiian birds. These birds are found nowhere else in the world and in some cases, such as the 'alaie 'ula (Hawaiian Common Gallinule), there are less than 1000 individuals left in the world. They evolved without mammalian predators and have no defenses against them. Allowing cats to roam free on the landscape is a disaster for these birds.

In addition, there is a serious human health risk to allowing cats to roam our islands. Cats are carriers of diseases such as toxoplasmosis, which spreads through only through cat feces to Hawaiian Monk Seals, dolphins and humans, where it causes miscarriage, birth defects and can be fatal.

'Trap-Neuter-Release' (TNR) is not an answer. Spayed/neutered cats which remain outside are still a threat to human health, endangered birds and marine mammals. Cats belong indoors to protect the delicate balance of our ecosystem in the Hawaiian Islands. It is safer for the cats, and essential for the birds.

A comprehensive study of Hawaii residents by Lohr and Lepczyk in 2014 revealed that the vast majority of Hawaii residents agreed with this stance. We should not allow our native Hawaiian birds to be pushed to extinction by a minority of people who do not understand the drastic impact that cats have on an isolated island ecosystem.

I urge you to oppose this bill.

Many thanks,

Laura Mobley

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 6:48:47 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lila Fried	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a conservation scientist who has worked with some of Hawaii's most critically endangered flora and fauna, I strongly oppose this measure for the following reasons:

1. Cats are an invasive predator in Hawai'i and have already contributed to the extinction of 2 Hawaiian birds.
2. Cats contaminate the landscape with *Toxoplasma gondii*, which is a serious public and wildlife health risk.
3. TNR programs DO NOT successfully reduce cat populations. This has been proven time and time again.
4. Sterilized cats still kill wildlife and contribute to infectious parasites and disease risks.
5. Sterilized cats still cause nuisances in communities – who wants a cat colony in their backyard?
6. [The Hawai'i Invasive Species Council opposes TNR.](#)
7. A [2014 study](#) found that 78% of Hawai'i residents want feral cats *REMOVED* from the environment permanently, not re-abandoned via TNR.
8. Alternatives to TNR exist and include, among other things, (a) mandatory enclosure of cat colonies and (b) using allocated funds to exclusively sterilize owned cats.

Free-roaming cats threaten the health and safety of all animals and humans. Please do not enact what has been repeatedly proven as bad science that will have lasting and devastating consequences, especially for those species for whom time is running out.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 7:41:08 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jonathan Shepherd	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I need to submit my testimony in opposition of HB220 because TNR has no place in the control measure of feral cats in hawaii. I have worked in conservation in Hawaii and other islands for over 8 years and can guarantee that TNR is not the answer. Cats have no place in the outdoors on an island where the native animal populations have no evolved the means by which to defend themselves from a top predator. TNR encourages people to dump unwanted animals because they believe they are doing the best thing by giving that animal a "home" in a feral colony. Cats in feral colony lead miserable lives and have much shorter lifespans and quality of life than cats kept indoors. We cannot continue to spend money to encourage this behavior and should instead focus on educating people about the importance of keeping pets indoors and to appreciate the natural wildlife that is suppose to be here.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 8:08:00 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kapulei Flores	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I would like to state my opposition to HB220. Hawai'i is known as the hub for extinction, especially of our native birds. Feral cats pose a big threat to our native and endangered birds. Although i think getting wild cats nutured could be a step towards helping, i dont think it actually addresses the problem because those cats will still be in the wild where they can hunt and kill our native birds, as they already do. Spayed/neutered cats which remain outside are still a threat to human health, endangered birds and marine mammals. Cats belong indoors to protect the delicate balance of our ecosystem in the Hawaiian Islands. It is safer for the cats, and essential for the birds.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 8:12:26 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Travis Tanaka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 8:28:54 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deborah Nichols	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly oppose this bill.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 8:29:02 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Neal Uno	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to state my opposition to HB220. Trap, neuter, release (TNR) feral cats

I am a Hawaii resident extremely concerned with the protection of endangered and endemic native Hawaiian birds and our unique Hawaiian ecosystems. The native birds of Hawaii are found nowhere else in the world and in some cases, such as the ‘alaie ‘ula (Hawaiian Common Gallinule), there are less than 1000 individuals left in the world. They evolved without mammalian predators and have no defenses against them. Allowing cats to roam free on the landscape is a disaster for these birds.

In addition, there is a serious human health risk to allowing cats to roam our islands. Cats are carriers of diseases such as toxoplasmosis, which spreads through only through cat feces to Hawaiian Monk Seals, dolphins and humans, where it causes miscarriage, birth defects and can be fatal.

‘Trap-Neuter-Release’ (TNR) is not an answer. Spayed/neutered cats which remain outside are still a threat to human health, endangered birds and marine mammals. Cats belong indoors to protect the delicate balance of our ecosystem in the Hawaiian Islands. It is safer for the cats, and essential for the birds.

A comprehensive study of Hawaii residents by Lohr and Lepczyk in 2014 revealed that the vast majority of Hawaii residents agreed with this stance. We should not allow our native Hawaiian birds to be pushed to extinction by a minority of people who do not understand the drastic impact that cats have on an isolated island ecosystem.

As a State, we invest millions of dollars in the conservation of endangered species. I am very tired of seeing the reports of literally hundreds of carcasses of endangered or native birds falling victim to feral cat kills every year. If this bill passes, it will perpetuate that slaughter, undermining efforts to protected endangered species and wasting our conservation dollars and resources.

I urge you to oppose this bill.

Mahalo,

Neal Uno

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 8:42:56 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Bryant	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to state my opposition to HB220: Trap, neuter, release (TNR) leaves feral cats

I am a conservation professional working to protect endangered and endemic native Hawaiian plants. These plants are the cornerstone of our ecosystems and communities in Hawai'i. Native plants both support and rely on endemic birds for survival—both locked in a reciprocal relationship that if undone, will result in dire consequences for all. Hawai'i's endemic birds are found nowhere else in the world and many are critically threatened. Native birds evolved without mammalian predators and have no defenses against them. Allowing cats to roam free on the landscape is a disaster for these birds and all of the relationships that rely on them—including ours.

There is also a serious human health risk to allowing cats to roam our islands. Cats are carriers of diseases such as toxoplasmosis, which spreads through cat feces to Hawaiian monk seals, dolphins and humans, where it causes miscarriage, birth defects, and even fatalities.

'Trap-Neuter-Release' (TNR) is not an answer. Spayed/neutered cats which remain outside are still a threat to human health, endangered birds, and marine mammals. Cats belong indoors to protect the delicate balance of our ecosystem in the Hawaiian Islands. It is safer for the cats, and essential for the birds.

A comprehensive study of Hawaii residents by Lohr and Lepczyk in 2014 revealed that the vast majority of Hawaii residents agreed with this stance. We should not allow our native Hawaiian birds to be pushed to extinction by a minority of people who do not understand the drastic impact that cats have on an isolated island ecosystem.

Future generations will rely on a healthy 'āina, one that supports an abundance of life and flourishing relationships. Feral cats threaten this future. They continue to decimate our native avifauna, causing traumatic impacts to cascade throughout our shared environment. If this bill passes, it will perpetuate that slaughter, undermining efforts to protect endangered species and wasting our conservation dollars and resources.

I urge you to oppose this bill.

David Bryant

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 9:11:00 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jo Anne J Winer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in full support of creating a fund that will help our TNR programs. The costs we have to pay for full price veterinary care for feral animals is prohibitive. Eventually the spay and neuter program will produce positive results.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 9:42:45 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laura Gleason	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Spay/neuter has been proven, over and over again, to be the best way to control the cat population. In over 500 major cities worldwide this has become the most effective strategy. Having been involved with colony cat feeding for the last 10 years I have seen the results of TNR. (Trap, Neuter & Return). Managed colonies thrive, cats are healthy and the numbers stay stable. Cats were originally brought here by humans. It is our job to care for them in the most humane way possible, while keeping their populations under control. We have the most perfect option for doing that. Government funds are needed to step up TNR efforts. We individuals who give so much of our time, and our own financial resources are dedicated to doing what we can. But we desperately need government supported TNR throughout Hawaii for this program to be as successful as it can be. Mahalo

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 9:53:23 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leslie Hutchinson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is vitally important that TNR of the islands' feral cat populations continue and expand as much as possible. As a closed system we could theoretically end the problem of feral cats if we were able to stop the cycle of reproduction. It's money very well spent.

Thank you.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/9/2023 11:56:52 PM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Grace Himenes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill will definitely help reduce the cat population for pets and free roaming cats. Many caretakers pay for spay/neuter out of their pockets which can be quite costly depending on how many cats they have done. Many pet owners cannot afford the expense of getting their cats done, this bill would enable them to do so.

As a caretaker I can say it works, in the last 2 years I have spay/neutered 53 cats, my colony is now down to 20-25, which includes a few adoptions and natural attrition.

Grace Himenes

96734

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/10/2023 12:03:06 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cory Kawabata	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB220.

The second and third sentences of the bill states: "Spaying and neutering pets are proven ways to reduce pet overpopulation and euthanasia rates. The legislature also finds that the humane reduction of the free-roaming cat population is in the interest of cats, wildlife, the environment, and humans."

These statements together are disingenuous and misleading. Pet cats vs free-roaming cats are distinctly different and should be treated as separate entities. This is supported by current definitions within Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR). Pet owners (any person owning, harboring or keeping a dog, cat, or other domestic pet, or having custody thereof) are responsible for their pet cats and have legal requirements to fulfill. Free-roaming cats do not have owners and in the HAR are synonymous with abandoned (means to leave an animal at any location, whether intentionally, recklessly, or negligently, without the owner intending to return for the animal and without permission of the public or private property owner), feral (having escaped or been released from domestication and reverted to a wild state and any offspring resulting therefrom), and stray (animal without microchip or other registered owner-identifier or is living or roaming off its owner's property without permission to be on other public property or private property) (see HAR 13-232-57 and 13-230-8).

Spaying and neutering (TNR) **pet** cats reduces **pet** overpopulation and **pet** euthanasia rates. Not feral cat overpopulation and feral cat euthanasia rates. TNR on feral cat populations have been shown in a number of studies to be ineffective at reducing feral populations, including but not limited to "Critical assessment of claims regarding management of feral cats by trap-neuter-return" by Longcore et al..

Everyone is interested in the humane reduction of feral cat populations in Hawaii. However, proponents of this bill have only put forth TNR as a solution. Humane is defined as showing kindness, care, and sympathy toward others, especially those who are suffering. I do not believe TNR is humane for the following reasons:

1. Typical healing periods for a spay/neuter procedure is about 10-14 days. Pet cat owners are instructed to closely monitor their pets and prevent them from running or jumping to prevent injury or reopening of the incision. Feral cats are typically not afforded this

luxury and released without being fully healed, leaving them open to increased risk of injury and infection.

2. Feral cats live dangerous, short, hard lives and never die from old age.
 - Simply feeding cats is not sufficient. They are constantly exposed to the outside elements and must suffer through the rain, wind, heat, and other inclement weather.
 - They are territorial and must fight other animals (including other feral cats) for food, water, and shelter.
 - Intentional or accidental poisoning.
 - Contagious diseases are common including herpes virial conjunctivitis, feline AIDS, leukemia, infectious peritonitis.
 - Easily treatable conditions go unnoticed because they are not handled and examined, and become deadly to feral cats not regularly seen by a veterinarian.
 - Minor cuts or puncture wounds turn into painful infections and abscesses.
 - Untreated upper respiratory infections can cause feral cat's eyes and noses to become caked in mucous that they can barely see or breathe.
 - Blood loss because or anemia because of worms, fleas, ticks, or other untreated parasite infestations.
 - Negative human interactions: cruelty (as seen here locally by attacks with blow darts, BB guns, etc).
 - Fatalities and injuries from vehicles, if a feral cat is not killed outright, it can be condemned to a slow painful death.

Those are only the issues directly affecting the feral cats themselves. Beyond that are many other issues:

1. Residents subjected to feral cat urine and feces on their property, and nuisance noises from the cats. How is this showing kindness, care, and sympathy for your neighbors? If it was a dog causing these problems, the owner would be held responsible, but here an aggrieved resident has no recourse. They cannot legally move the feral cats to another location, no local shelters take feral cats anymore, there are no real options unless the person pays out of pocket and finds a professional that can (and will) humanely euthanize.
2. Feral cats have contributed to the extinction of at least 63 species of birds, mammals, and reptiles. Extinction is not humane. (<https://abcbirds.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Doherty-et-al.-2016-Invasive-predators-and-global-biodiversity-loss.pdf>)
3. Feral cats are the single greatest source of anthropogenic mortality for US birds and mammals and kill billions every year. Why do these wild animals not deserve humane treatment instead of death at the paws and teeth of a non-native predator? (<https://www.nature.com/articles/ncomms2380>)
4. As an island environment, Hawaii is extremely susceptible to the negative impacts of feral cats on native wildlife:
 - Hawaii has the terrible distinction of being known as the endangered species capital of the world. Due to our extreme isolation, native species have evolved here without any

natural mammalian predators and do not possess many of the habits and behaviors necessary for evading feral cats.

- Feral cats have been videoed or documented directly killing numerous endangered and protected Hawaiian species: palila, 'ua'u (Hawaiian petrel), 'a'o (Newell's shearwater), koloa (Hawaiian duck), 'alae 'ula (Hawaiian gallinule), 'alae ke'oke'o (Hawaiian coot), ae'o (Hawaiian stilt), uau kani (wedge-tailed shearwater), moli (Laysan albatross), and the list goes on. Most of these animals occur nowhere else on the planet. What kindness, care, and sympathy are being shown to our dwindling and suffering native species? Our native species belong here. Feral cats do not. (<https://www.sacbee.com/news/nation-world/national/article245354315.html>)
- Toxoplasmosis has also caused the deaths of a number of Hawaiian species, our Hawaiian monk seals, 'alala, nene, and spinner dolphins. The parasite that spreads this disease ONLY reproduces in the intestinal tract of cats and is shed into the environment in cat fecal matter. How can it be showing kindness and care to allow cat feces to endlessly accumulate everywhere? Can you imagine the amount of cat feces that must be around our islands in order to permeate and contaminate our neighborhoods, beaches, parks, and waterways to such a level that it's affecting wildlife? It cannot be too much of a stretch that it also must be affecting people. This should also be considered a public health crisis.

Ultimately human activity is to blame for all of this. Humans abandoned their cats. Humans feed the feral cats and cause the overpopulation. The cats are not to blame, they are just trying to survive. Humans are responsible for keeping pet cats fed, watered, sheltered in homes, and safe from harm. Humans should be taking the steps necessary to end this problem we caused.

The humane solution is adoption. Outdoors is no place for a cat. Feral cats must be removed from the environment and placed in responsible and caring homes. If the proponents of this bill wish to humanely care for these animals it cannot stop at TNR and feeding. If an individual or group wishes to provide food for these animals they must also take full responsibility for them and be their owners, meaning adhere to all the laws and regulations other pet owners are responsible for. The cats must be microchipped/tagged and their waste prohibited from washing down streams, drainage channels, gutters, and streets. Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) also specify that pet animals be provided "necessary sustenance" to include the requirement of an **area of confinement in a primary pet enclosure** and veterinary care when needed to prevent suffering (see HRS § 711-1100). These cats must be confined and protected. Their quality of life should be taken into consideration, but legally feral cats do not even meet the standard of being provided "necessary sustenance". If proponents cannot adhere to these laws like every other pet owner, then as a last resort humane euthanasia should be an option.

Who is going to be held responsible for the deaths of all the endangered species? If a person had done these deeds (or even their dog had and if the owner knowingly let it rampage!), they could be found guilty as a felon with years of prison time and hundreds of thousands of dollars in fines for each death. Our native species are suffering because of policies like TNR. How is it humane to cats, wildlife, the environment, and humans to allow this to continue? With so many imperiled endemic species, we should be the world leaders in legislation and demonstrating policies based in science that aim to defend the environment and wildlife that make Hawaii so unique. The

focus should be on the source of the problems of irresponsible pet ownership. TNR is not a humane solution, it provides insufficient care for feral cats and allows proponents to ignore the more difficult aspects of caring for an animal. Yes, keeping an animal is a huge responsibility! The general public, wildlife, the environment, and the cats themselves should not be forced to bear the burden of subsidizing programs that encourage the release of feral cats. If proponents do not have the space in their homes to care for all these cats, then Hawaii does not either.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/10/2023 6:17:49 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Chang	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Trap neuter and RELEASE will not help our native birds. Please do not pass this bill as releasing cats back into the wild will and still will have a detrimental effects on our native wildlife.

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/10/2023 8:47:15 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Karim Hanna	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Cats are an invasive predator in Hawai‘i and have already contributed to the extinction of 2 Hawaiian birds. Sterilized cats still kill wildlife and contribute to infectious parasite and disease risks. Please do not pass HB220

HB-220

Submitted on: 2/10/2023 9:38:09 AM

Testimony for AGR on 2/10/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sidney Stiefel	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to state my opposition to HB220. Trap, neuter, release (TNR) leaves feral cats

I am a conservation professional working to protect endangered native species. Hawaii's native birds are found nowhere else in the world and in some cases, such as the 'alae 'ula (Hawaiian Common Gallinule), there are less than 1000 individuals left in the world. They evolved without mammalian predators and have no defenses against them. Allowing cats to roam free on the landscape is a disaster for these birds.

In addition, there is a serious human health risk to allowing cats to roam our islands. Cats are carriers of diseases such as toxoplasmosis, which spreads through only through cat feces to Hawaiian Monk Seals, dolphins and humans, where it causes miscarriage, birth defects and can be fatal.

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A comprehensive study of Hawaii residents by Lohr and Lepczyk in 2014 revealed that the vast majority of Hawaii residents agreed with this stance. We should not allow our native Hawaiian birds to be pushed to extinction by a minority of people who do not understand the drastic impact that cats have on an isolated island ecosystem.

As a State, we invest millions of dollars in the conservation of endangered species. We are very tired of finding literally hundreds of carcasses of endangered or native birds ripped apart by feral

cats every year. If this bill passes, it will perpetuate that slaughter, undermining efforts to protect endangered species and wasting our conservation dollars and resources.

I urge you to oppose this bill.

Many thanks

Sidney Stiefel