

HFC Committee

From: Alice L. Lee
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2020 12:34 PM
To: HFC Committee
Subject: FW: I do not support bill 6.04.041

From: Cristine McConnell <cristinemcconnell@me.com>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2020 9:24 AM
To: Alice L. Lee <Alice.Lee@mauicounty.us>
Subject: I do not support bill 6.04.041

Dear Council Chairwoman Alice Lee,

As a member of the maui community, I have been part of a team feeding a feral cat colony on the North Shore. I hold a Master's degree in ecology, evolution, and marine biology from UC Santa Barbara so, among other things, I have some training in population dynamics. These cats, like most of the other colonies, have all been spayed and neutered. This, of course, removes the threat for population growth. In addition, with regular food and daily visits, we keep our eye on them, see if they are sick and need treatment. We are stopping the spread of any illnesses by getting them immunized and treated by vets. Not to mention, with regular feedings they are less likely to become ill. Most importantly, you must understand, we do not see the colony increase in numbers, only decrease on average as they get old and die, or hit by cars. They are all friendly and pet-able and some of the older ones are wholly reliant on the food we bring them. In my opinion, with the trust bonds that have developed, it would be

absolutely inhumane to stop feeding them and you would be fining or jailing some of the most caring and soft hearted people on the island. Please, take it from those of us who are trying to make this a win-win for everyone; We are keeping a large number of souls happy and healthy while not allowing them to reproduce. It is the only solution. No studies have been able to prove that starving reduces population sizes. Sterilization is the only way. When cats are young, they are able to procure their own food more easily from the wild and thereby have enough nutrition to have litters; hence the population grows. As they age, they become more dependent on hand outs but by then it is too late. We need to spay and neuter any new members of these colonies and in this way, stop the cycle. This will only happen by attracting them with food and gaining their trust. If you make this illegal you will be creating a population boom which is the opposite of what Maui needs and what you are trying to achieve with this bill. Please think this through. Let's listen to the science, have some common sense and most importantly some much needed compassion. In the poignant words of Mahatma Gandhi: "The true measure of any society can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable members."

Thank you for considering my opinion.

Sincerely,

Cristine McConnell

Sent from my iPad