

HFC Committee

From: Duvall, Fern P <fern.p.duvall@hawaii.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, March 04, 2020 1:36 PM
To: HFC Committee
Subject: State Department Chair Suzanne Case testimony for the March 10th Committee meeting
Attachments: Cat Testimony 031020 MCC_final.pdf

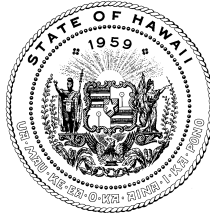
Lesley:

Please find the testimony for the committee that I will also read into the record on 10th march. MAHALO
Me ke aloha mai Maui Nui

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**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

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**Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson**

**BEFORE THE MAUI COUNTY COUNCIL COMMITTEE FOR HEALTHY FAMILIES
AND COMMUNITIES**

**Tuesday, March 10, 2020
1:30 PM
Maui County Council Chamber**

**In consideration of
At-large Cat Impacts**

Cats at-large can impact wildlife by preying on them, and by transmitting diseases including toxoplasmosis, roundworms, hookworms, or ringworm that can infect other cats, humans, and wildlife. A reduction of at-large cats on the landscape would help reduce the predation and disease impacts on Hawaii's wildlife.

The Department of Land and Natural Resources encourages Maui County in its efforts to address at-large cat issues. We urge the Council to support ordinances that require cats to be managed the same as dogs. This includes requiring cat owners to have their cats licensed and microchipped for identification as their cats. Having a required, reliable form of identification increases the likelihood of owned cats being reunited with their owners through required microchip identification. The Department also supports requirements, incentives, or educational efforts for pet owners regarding keeping cats indoors or otherwise contained in a fenced or screened enclosure (such as a catio) that prevents their escape and their access to native wildlife. Options for cats that need to travel outside of their home enclosures could include secure carriers or leashes, except in areas that might be set aside for pet socialization (like currently designated dog parks). The Department recommends that cats (both existing and newly imported) should be required to be sterilized unless the owner is otherwise a licensed and registered cat breeder in the county.

The Department also encourages the County to support ordinances and the enforcement of existing policies that would reduce at-large cats being kept on the landscape. These could include ordinances that would prohibit the feeding or watering of all animals on public lands and other lands within the county on which such feeders do not have permission from the landowners. Certain limited exceptions could be made for instances when the animal will be attended to by the

owner and the animal is not a resident on the landscape outside the owner's immediate attention (for example an owner feeding/watering or treating a dog while temporarily visiting a park). The Department also encourages ordinances that would require that owners to pick up, contain, and properly dispose of any feces that their animals produce when on lands that they do not own. Feces, especially cat feces, can contain several pathogens and organisms that can be transmitted and sicken other pet animals, wildlife and humans.

The Department notes that the Hawaii Invasive Species Council adopted Resolution 19-2 in January 2019, supporting the keeping of cats indoors and the use of peer-reviewed science in mitigating the impacts of cats. In particular this resolution suggests *not* using a tool known as Trap, Neuter, Return (or sometimes Trap, Neuter, Return, Manage). Studies have demonstrated that this tool does not result in the reduction of the number of cats on the landscape, and in practice it often involves the maintenance of cat colonies, including on public lands, without permission of the landowner. This resolution can be found at <http://hisc.hawaii.gov>.

The Department thanks the Committee for the opportunity to comment on the important topic of reducing cats at-large in Hawaii.