

HFC Committee

From: robin <rkh@ihmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 21, 2020 11:35 AM
To: HFC Committee
Subject: Bill 6.04.041 Feral Cat Feeding Ban

To: Healthy Families and Communities Committee
From: Robin Hagen
RE: bill 6.04.041 Banning the feeding of feral cats

I am opposed to this bill. It is apparent that there is a cat overpopulation on Maui, but making feeding feral cats a crime is not the answer. Refusing food to neighborhood/feral/community cats is ineffective and inhumane and in many cases, unenforceable.

I have trapped and returned several cats in my own neighborhood. They have been fed, are healthy, non-disruptive, rodent deterrents and no new cats have come into the area in over 8 years, either adult cats to replace a cat removed or kittens, due to the fact the cats have been sterilized.

I have also worked as a volunteer with the Maui Humane Society trapping at businesses in central Maui. Businesses that request assistance from MHS to control their colonies, NOT remove them. Colonies that they welcome and fed, but that they do not want to grow in numbers. They are happy to have the cats, but want to be responsible animal caregivers and have them spayed and neutered to maintain and gradually reduce numbers through natural attrition, by stopping further breeding. If a cat is removed from an area it has been proven that there is a vacuum effect and a different cat will take its place. This does nothing to reduce the overall cat population. Maui Humane Society has an extensive and successful TNR program to help cat overpopulation on Maui and provides sterilization at no cost. Rather than the cost of this bill and its enforcement, I suggest that the county use those funds to support the existing TNR program that is run by the Maui Humane Society. It is gradually reducing the cat population, reducing the number of surrenders to the shelter, and reduces the number of nuisance complaints. This should be handled with our Maui spirit of aloha and compassion.

Thank you for your consideration,
Robin