

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 10 2023

RE: S.B. No. 998

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2023
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Agriculture and Environment, to which was referred S.B. No. 998 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE SPAYING AND NEUTERING OF ANIMALS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to:

- (1) Establish a Spay and Neuter Special Fund;
- (2) Allow funds from an income tax check-off to be deposited into the Spay and Neuter Special Fund; and
- (3) 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.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Alley Cat Allies, Animal Rights Hawaii, Cat People of Oahu, Hawai'i Reef and Ocean Coalition, PETFIX Spay and Neuter, Hawaiian Humane Society, CAT-CARE, Pono Advocacy, Poi Dogs and Popoki, Cat Friends, Hawaii Cat Foundation, Animal Interfaith Alliance in Britain, Aloha Kitty TNR, Kaua'i Humane Society, Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i, and one hundred forty-three individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Department of



Budget and Finance, American Bird Conservancy, Kauai Albatross Network, Friends of Kaua'i Wildlife Refuges, and twenty-four individuals. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Department of Taxation.

Your Committee finds that free-roaming-cat overpopulation is a persistent issue in the State. The greatest cause for concern is that these cats hunt and kill native and endangered bird populations, and it is estimated that three out of four stray cats carry a disease called toxoplasmosis, which is caused by a parasite called *Toxoplasma gondii* that can spread to humans and other animals. Toxoplasmosis spores survive as they are excreted through cat feces and wash into the ocean with runoff, spreading the disease to endangered Hawaiian monk seals and other marine life. Your Committee additionally finds that spaying and neutering can help to manage and reduce the overpopulation of feral cats in the State, thereby reducing the consequences related to these cats. Thus, this measure establishes and appropriates funds for a Spay and Neuter Special Fund, and establishes an advisory committee to establish eligibility criteria and procedures to prioritize funding to organizations that specialize in Trap-Neuter-Release practices.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Agriculture and Environment that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 998 and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be referred to your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Agriculture and
Environment,




MIKE GABBARD, Chair



The Senate
 Thirty-Second Legislature
 State of Hawai'i

Record of Votes
Committee on Agriculture and Environment
AEN

Bill / Resolution No.:*	Committee Referral:	Date:		
SB998	AEN, WAM	02-06-23		
<input type="checkbox"/> The Committee is reconsidering its previous decision on this measure. If so, then the previous decision was to: _____				
The Recommendation is:				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pass, unamended 2312 <input type="checkbox"/> Pass, with amendments 2311 <input type="checkbox"/> Hold 2310 <input type="checkbox"/> Recommit 2313				
Members	Aye	Aye (WR)	Nay	Excused
GABBARD, Mike (C)	X			
RICHARDS, III, Herbert M. "Tim" (VC)		X		
DECOITE, Lynn				X
RHOADS, Karl	X			
AWA, Brenton	X			
TOTAL	3	1		1
Recommendation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted <input type="checkbox"/> Not Adopted				
Chair's or Designee's Signature:				
				
Distribution: Original Yellow Pink Goldenrod File with Committee Report Clerk's Office Drafting Agency Committee File Copy				

*Only one measure per Record of Votes