February 7, 2012

Hawaii State Legislature
The Senate Committee on
Commerce and Consumer Protection

RE: Senate Bill 2504 RELATING TO THE SALE OF DOGS AND CATS **OPPOSITION**

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of The Cat Fanciers’ Association, Inc.\(^1\) to **oppose** Senate Bill 2504 which requires, *inter alia*, mandatory spay or neuter (MSN) of cats and dogs prior to sale as well as mandatory microchipping. This bill is being considered by the Committee at a public hearing on February 7, 2012. We believe this proposal does nothing to solve the real problems of homeless animals and ask the Committee to reject the proposal.

Spay or neuter of a kitten is a surgical procedure that should be performed at a time decided by owners with veterinary advice and not be determined by the government. Puppies and kittens should not have their welfare compromised by legal mandates which do not take into account the health and well-being of the animal. Many veterinary experts oppose government mandated sterilization of pets. Risks of MSN laws include decreased veterinary care for pets with

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\(^1\) The Cat Fanciers' Association, Inc. (CFA) is a non-profit organization founded in 1906. Part of CFA’s mission is to enhance the well-being of all cats. CFA participants, who breed and show pedigreed cats, are active in cat health promotion, cat breed rescue, shelter support and other animal related programs throughout the world. CFA is a positive force that has helped to educate the public about proper cat care, spay/neuter and responsible pet ownership. CFA is proud of its self-regulation programs to encourage high standards of care for cats in multi-cat breeding environments. A voluntary "Cattery of Excellence" program and breeder mentoring program are part of ongoing efforts to ensure responsible breeding and good cattery environments.
increases in rabies and other zoonotic diseases. The American College of Theriogenologists (ACT) and the Society for Theriogenology (SFT) issued a formal position against MSN laws\(^2\). The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) has also adopted a formal policy that they do not support MSN laws targeting non shelter cats and dogs\(^3\).

A growing number of prominent animal welfare organizations have issued statements in opposition to mandatory spay and neuter laws. The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals ASPCA states: "... the ASPCA is not aware of any credible evidence demonstrating a statistically significant enhancement in the reduction of shelter intake or euthanasia as a result of the implementation of a mandatory spay/neuter law\(^4\)." The American Humane Association in their position paper on MSN states that: "While American Humane supports mandatory spay/neuter of all shelter and rescue animals prior to adoption, we believe in general that expenses associated with mandatory spay/neuter legislation would be better spent on low- or no-cost spay/neuter programs\(^5\)." Alley Cat Allies opposes MSN and states that it is: "... counterproductive; it spends limited public resources on administrative expenses instead of on spay/neuter programs\(^6\)."

Microchipping should be voluntary with owner's enrollment in a tracking service of their choice. Mandatory microchipping decreases the owner's involvement and decreases likelihood that they will keep information current. It adds unnecessary expense to each pet adopted. Microchipping of indoor-only cats is unnecessary. Microchipping of outdoor cats duplicates local laws already in effect. For example, Honolulu already has an ordinance requiring all cats allowed outdoors to be identified by collar/tag, microchip, tattoo or ear tag. Visible tags have many advantages over microchipping, such as fewer health risks. Visible tags also allow people who find lost pets to return them to their owner without a costly scanner.

This bill would also end the breeding of fine pedigreed cats after years of attempting to import, with quarantine burdens, in order to keep valuable bloodlines viable. Pedigreed cats with predictable characteristics are desired by pet owners. Cats must be sold intact to plan for genetic diversity and good health in the breeds.


\(^3\) [http://www.avma.org/issues/policy/animal_welfare/population_control.asp](http://www.avma.org/issues/policy/animal_welfare/population_control.asp)


\(^5\) [http://www.americanhumane.org/assets/docs/protecting-animals/PA-PA-spay-neuter-article.pdf](http://www.americanhumane.org/assets/docs/protecting-animals/PA-PA-spay-neuter-article.pdf)

Mandatory sterilization programs have proven to be costly failures elsewhere, such as San Mateo, CA and the City of Los Angeles, CA. The Los Angeles program was to have included low cost spay and neuter in addition to legislation. Instead the result has been a suspension of the low cost vouchers due to costs and administrative expense that have soared. In Santa Cruz County, CA animal control costs skyrocketed after a MSN law was passed in 1995.

Current economic conditions have made it more difficult for many people to keep their pets. Reasons include owners being unable to afford their pets or keep their pets when relocating or divorcing, pets having behavior or medical problems that owners are not able to deal with, etc. These are real problems that should be addressed. Forced sterilization merely adds more costs, does not result in reduction of shelter populations and increases the numbers of free roaming/feral cats. We respectfully urge you to investigate solutions and programs that are positive and will not unjustly harm individuals who contribute to the well-being of animals.

Please oppose this costly and ineffective proposal.

Very truly yours,

George J. Eigenhauser, Jr.
CFA Legislative Coordinator