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**From:** shomette <shomette@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 23, 2024 3:00 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** CB13 community cats

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

I'm writing to express my support for a Howard County program for community cat trap-neuter-release. There are so many individuals who care about homeless cats but are reluctant to take action for fear that feral cats will be routinely euthanized at shelters. If we all work together to do what we can to limit the population growth, we will all benefit. We definitely need more County sources for low cost spay and neuter for community cats. As someone who is involved in cat rescue, I'm very excited about this possibility.

Sharon Shomette

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**From:** Cathy Hurley <redcat72@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 24, 2024 8:58 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Support Bill 13-2024

**Follow Up Flag:** Flag for follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

As a resident of Howard County (N. Laurel) I just wanted to write to express my strong support of Bill 13-2024 introduced by Deb Jung. The establishment of the Trap Neuter Return program. This will help keep our stray cat population in check and vaccinated against rabies and disease. It will also allow the humane care of feral cats in community colonies who are unable to be socialized.

Thank you for supporting this bill.

Regards  
Cathy Hurley

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**From:** Jennifer Roby <jen.robby13@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 25, 2024 11:10 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Community / TNR Cats

**Follow Up Flag:** Flag for follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council,

I'm writing to share my support for community cat care and Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) and vaccination efforts in Howard County Maryland. These efforts are humane for outdoor cats and effective for communities.

I previously lived in Anne Arundel County and my husband and I were the care takers for 2 TNR cats. I ensured that the cats were trapped neutered/spayed. I caught them as required by Anne Arundel county to ensure their vaccinations were always up to date. I provided water, food, and a climate controlled water proof outdoor home for them. The cats were happy, the neighbors were happy that the cats were no longer able to reproduce and increase the stray cat population, and I was happy to be able to personally take care of and financially support the cats. It didn't cost the tax payers any money for my efforts and Anne Arundel County made money through my registration fees I paid to ensure the 2 cats were legally part of the counties TNR program.

When I got divorced, I moved out of Anne Arundel County to Howard county. At that time I transferred care of the TNR cats to a neighbor who was happy to pick up where I left off with their care. I would love to be able to have TNR cats again at my new home if my community has cats that need a caregiver and ensure they have the same level of care I provided to my 2 prior TNR cats.

Hundreds of communities have community cat programs, and research supports that they are effective at shrinking outdoor cat populations over time, while minimizing euthanasia. Studies also show the cats in community cat programs typically have low rates of disease and enjoy healthy life spans.

By trapping, spaying/neutering and vaccinating healthy community cats, and returning them to their outdoor colonies where volunteers support them with food, water and monitoring, communities reduce shelter overpopulation. They also stop wasting time and money trying to catch or control cats that thrive outside. Some cats can live happy, healthy lives outdoors. Ignoring community cats only causes their population to grow. Trying to round them up and kill them isn't cost-effective, doesn't solve the problem and is not representative of the caring, pet-friendly community that Howard County wants to be.

I am proud of the committed people in Maryland who offer their time to care for our community's free-roaming cats. With legislation passed in Howard County this is one more way we can be a leading city that does what's right for people and pets.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer Roby  
4588 Roundhill Rd  
Ellicott City, MD 21043  
443-472-5103



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**From:** Shannon Franks <shannonkayfranks@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 2, 2024 8:59 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Cc:** CouncilDistrict3@howardcountymd.gov  
**Subject:** I support CB13

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hello,

I am a resident of District 3 and am writing to urge the County Council to support CB13. We need to end the inhumane, ineffective, and short sighted trap-and-kill program and replace it with a trap-neuter-vaccinate-return program to manage free roaming cats. As someone who is actively involved in rescue by fostering and volunteering over many years, I feel strongly it is important that we value all animal life. That means cats and birds, for example. They are both equally important.

Please support CB13.

Thank you,  
Shannon Franks  
Owen Brown  
District 3

**From:** [bteav](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** Support for CB13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 3, 2024 4:41:53 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hello,

I wanted to voice my support for CB13. I suppose this because it:

- Allows animal care organizations, including individuals, to care for community cats without being classified as the owner.
- Defines a community cat as a free-roaming cat that is sterilized, vaccinated, and ear-tipped.
- Defines Trap-Neuter-Return program and states that Howard County supports this program as a humane practice for reducing the population of community cats.

Thank you,  
Bunna Teav  
Laurel, Howard County, zip code 20723  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Schantz Basir](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** CB13-2024  
**Date:** Monday, March 4, 2024 7:52:51 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

*Dear Councilmember,*

*I am writing to urge you to vote to adopt CB13-2024 into law. This proposed ordinance will be critical in helping save the lives of cats in Howard County, while also providing a humane and sustainable method of managing cats living within the community. TNR is the only method of managing community cats recognized and endorsed by national animal welfare organizations such as [Best Friends Animal Society](#), and is implemented with success within thousands of counties, cities, and towns across the United States. Howard County Animal Control & Adoption Center killed nearly half of the cats received in 2022, well below the 90% standard for no-kill shelters. This new law will be an incredible step in supporting them to save more lives and in creating a more humane county overall.*

*Sincerely,  
Schantz Basir*

**From:** [yahne](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** Please adopt CB13-2024 into law  
**Date:** Monday, March 4, 2024 7:31:11 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Councilmember,

*I am writing to urge you to vote to adopt CB13-2024 into law. This proposed ordinance will be critical in helping save the lives of cats in Howard County, while also providing a humane and sustainable method of managing cats living within the community. TNR is the only method of managing community cats recognized and endorsed by national animal welfare organizations such as [Best Friends Animal Society](#), and is implemented with success within thousands of counties, cities, and towns across the United States. Howard County Animal Control & Adoption Center killed nearly half of the cats received in 2022, well below the 90% standard for no-kill shelters. This new law will be an incredible step in supporting them to save more lives and in creating a more humane county overall.*

Sincerely,  
Yahne Terrell  
Columbia, MD 21045

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

**From:** [Alice Tsai](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** Please vote to adopt cb13-2024 into law  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 5, 2024 9:38:35 AM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Councilmember,

*I am writing to urge you to vote to adopt CB13-2024 into law. This proposed ordinance will be critical in helping save the lives of cats in Howard County, while also providing a humane and sustainable method of managing cats living within the community. TNR is the only method of managing community cats recognized and endorsed by national animal welfare organizations such as [Best Friends Animal Society](#), and is implemented with success within thousands of counties, cities, and towns across the United States. Howard County Animal Control & Adoption Center killed nearly half of the cats received in 2022, well below the 90% standard for no-kill shelters. This new law will be an incredible step in supporting them to save more lives and in creating a more humane county overall.*

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Alice Tsai

3670 Cragmoor Rd  
Ellicott City, MD 21042

410-461-0921  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [ftobler@verizon.net](mailto:ftobler@verizon.net)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Cc:** [always4tucker@yahoo.com](mailto:always4tucker@yahoo.com)  
**Subject:** Support for CB13-2024  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 5, 2024 8:09:11 AM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

*Dear Councilmember,*

*I am writing to urge you to vote to adopt CB13-2024 into law. This proposed ordinance will be critical in helping save the lives of cats in Howard County, while also providing a humane and sustainable method of managing cats living within the community. TNR is the only method of managing community cats recognized and endorsed by national animal welfare organizations such as [Best Friends Animal Society](#), and is implemented with success within thousands of counties, cities, and towns across the United States. Howard County Animal Control & Adoption Center killed nearly half of the cats received in 2022, well below the 90% standard for no-kill shelters. This new law will be an incredible step in supporting them to save more lives and in creating a more humane county overall.*

*Sincerely,*

**Fiona T. Tobler**  
**7392 Kindler Road**  
**Columbia, MD 21046**

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**From:** Jerry Lutskus <gjlcercrt@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 5, 2024 6:18 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** CB 13

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

I support this bill!  
Gerald Lutskus

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [miawyatt](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** CB13-2024  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 5, 2024 3:49:45 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

*Dear Councilmember,*

*I am writing to urge you to vote to adopt CB13-2024 into law. This proposed ordinance will be critical in helping save the lives of cats in Howard County, while also providing a humane and sustainable method of managing cats living within the community. TNR is the only method of managing community cats recognized and endorsed by national animal welfare organizations such as [Best Friends Animal Society](#), and is implemented with success within thousands of counties, cities, and towns across the United States. Howard County Animal Control & Adoption Center killed nearly half of the cats received in 2022, well below the 90% standard for no-kill shelters. This new law will be an incredible step in supporting them to save more lives and in creating a more humane county overall.*

*Sincerely,  
Mia Wyatt*



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**From:** Stacy Snyder <ycatsnnyl@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 5, 2024 7:57 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** Support for CB13 from District 3 Constituant

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Good evening.

My name is Stacy Snyder and I am a resident in N Laurel, District 3. I live on Hitching Post Lane, Laurel 20723. I understand that the Council will be voting on CB13 which is to create a TNR for stray and feral cats and I wholeheartedly support this bill. Currently trapping and killing healthy cats is cruel and a more humane way of handling the large stray and feral cat population would be to trap, neuter, and release. Cats help control the rodent population and when they are unable to breed, the population itself will naturally reduce itself over time.

I strongly urge my Councilwoman, Christiana Rigby, to vote in favor of this bill. I would be happy to discuss this further if needed.

Thank you,  
Stacy Snyder  
301-775-6855

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**From:** Anna Gavin <agavin@fireline.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 6, 2024 9:46 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** CB13

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Good morning,

I would like to send in my support of the bill CB14 for trap-neuter-vaccinate-return in Howard county for free roaming cats. I own a business in Baltimore County where we have 20 feral cats that we feed. The county actually came out all in one day, caught all the cats and used this method - releasing them back to where they are most comfortable. This has greatly helped with a feral cat population issue we had, with no new kittens for 5 years now. Even though they are feral they bring a lot of joy to my warehouse workers that feed them!

Please consider endorsing CB13.

Thank you,

Anna Gavin | President

**Fireline Corporation**

4506 Hollins Ferry Road Baltimore, MD 21227

O: 410-247-1422 Ext. 244 | M: 443-956-3230

[www.fireline.com](http://www.fireline.com)



**From:** [Kristine Barbieri](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** I support CB13  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 6, 2024 9:24:04 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

I live in District 2 in Columbia, but I volunteer with Laurel Cats. I support CB13 which would end the county's inhumane trap-and-kill program and officially endorse trap-neuter-vaccinate-return as Howard County's preferred method of managing free roaming cats. Howard County is the last county that makes up part of Laurel that still operates a trap-and-kill program for feral cats. CB13 would replacing killing outdoor cats with vaccinating them for rabies and neutering them so feral populations don't grow. This is way more effective at reducing outdoor cat populations than indiscriminately killing them. Reduced outdoor cat populations will reduce attacks on birds and other wildlife.

Thank you.  
Kristine Barbieri  
9616 Rocksparkle Row  
Columbia, MD 21045

**From:** [Rachel Cesca Hall](#)  
**To:** [Jung, Debra](#); [Walsh, Elizabeth](#); [Rigby, Christiana](#); [Jones, Opel](#); [Yungmann, David](#)  
**Cc:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** CB13-2024 TNR Testimony  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 6, 2024 5:37:57 PM  
**Attachments:** [Parker .jpg](#)  
[Charlie .jpg](#)  
[Larry .JPG](#)

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Council Chair Jung and Esteemed Members of the Howard County Council:

I am writing to express my full support of CB13, which establishes the Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) Program for community cats in Howard County.

TNR is a proven and humane method that saves the lives of community cats and reduces the community cat population by preventing unwanted births.

TNR improves the physical health of the cat and reduces the spread of disease as cats receive all veterinary recommended vaccinations (Rabies, FIV and Distemper) and are regularly monitored by their caregivers. If a caregiver notices that a cat has become ill, they swiftly take the cat to the vet for treatment.

The main pillar of TNR is the spay and neuter program. All TNR'd cats are spayed or neutered which eliminates the breeding cycle. Continuous breeding not only takes a toll on the health of the cat but can have a negative impact on the community and local rescues who are already at capacity and inundated with requests to provide expensive medical care and shelter.

According to the global leader in TNR, Alley Cat Allies, *“When cats are free from the burdens of mating and reproducing, their relationships improve with the people who live near them (Think: no more kittens outdoors or yowling, roaming, fighting, or spraying). Additionally, many diseases associated with reproduction, like certain cancers, are prevented”*.

In fact, the relationship between community cats and people can be so greatly improved that the cats become socialized and can be adopted into homes or relocated to farms to become barn cats.

My family and I have lived in Howard County since 1983. We have been the caretakers of multiple community cats in Howard County for the past two decades. The cats were so friendly that we ended up bringing four of our community cats home to be pets after months of care and socialization. Often, these cats just need a chance and a caring person to help them feel safe so they can learn to trust humans. I hope that each of you will vote to give them a chance too.

Opposers of this bill may cite that cats do not belong outside and endanger wildlife, when in fact, the number one threat to wildlife is humans through the destruction of habitats and bird strikes (cars and buildings).

Opposers may cite that euthanasia is the humane thing for community cats because they lead short lives anyway. This could not be more false or insensitive. A cat's life is no less valuable

than a bird, or any other creature. With proper care like TNR, they can live long, healthy, happy lives in their communities.

As a supporter of local rescues such as Small Miracles Cat and Dog Rescue and Frisky's Wildlife and Primate Sanctuary, I believe that all creatures great and small deserve a chance.

I implore the Council to join our neighboring jurisdiction, Montgomery County (and so many others) and vote in favor of CB13 and the Community Cat Movement.

I have included TNR sources for reference as well as photos of some of the TNR cats we adopted.

Sources:

[www.alleycat.org](http://www.alleycat.org)

<https://tipmefrederick.org/>

[Alley Cat Rescue](#)

<http://www.lifelineanimal.org>

Sincerely,  
Rachel Hall  
Mt. Airy, MD.  
District 5













**From:** [k c](#)  
**To:** [Jung, Debra](#); [Walsh, Elizabeth](#); [Rigby, Christiana](#); [Jones, Opel](#); [Yungmann, David](#); [CouncilMail](#)  
**Cc:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** Re: CB13-2024 TNR Testimony PLEASE VOTE YES for this bill.  
**Date:** Thursday, March 7, 2024 5:42:24 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Council Chair Jung and Esteemed Members of the Howard County Council:

I am writing to express my full support of CB13, which establishes the Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) Program for community cats in Howard County.

TNR is a proven and humane method that saves the lives of community cats and reduces the community cat population by preventing unwanted births. It also provides a humane alternative to controlling the cat population, giving these homeless cats a fighting chance at rehabilitation by caretakers that often work months on end socializing cats for adoption and finding them suitable homes or farms to live out their lives vs euthanasia.

TNR improves the physical health of the cat and reduces the spread of disease as cats receive all veterinary recommended vaccinations (Rabies, FIV and Distemper) and are regularly monitored by their caregivers. If a caregiver notices that a cat has become ill, they swiftly take the cat to the vet for treatment.

The main pillar of TNR is the spay and neuter program. All TNR'd cats are spayed or neutered which eliminates the breeding cycle. Continuous breeding not only takes a toll on the health of the cat but can have a negative impact on the community and local rescues who are already at capacity and inundated with requests to provide expensive medical care and shelter.

According to the global leader in TNR, Alley Cat Allies, *“When cats are free from the burdens of mating and reproducing, their relationships improve with the people who live near them (Think: no more kittens outdoors or yowling, roaming, fighting, or spraying). Additionally, many diseases associated with reproduction, like certain cancers, are prevented”*.

In fact, the relationship between community cats and people can be so greatly improved that the cats become socialized and can be adopted into homes or relocated to farms to become barn cats.

I have lived in Howard County since 1967. My family and I have been the caretakers of multiple community cats in Howard County for the past two decades. The cats were so friendly that we ended up bringing four of our community cats home to be personal pets after months of care and socialization. Often, these cats just need a chance and a caring person to help them feel safe so they can learn to trust humans. The shelters are not equipped to try to socialize them, so often their stories do not end well. A TNR program will give them hope.

I hope that each of you will vote to give them a chance too.

Opposers of this bill may cite that cats do not belong outside and endanger wildlife, when in fact, the number one threat to wildlife is humans through the destruction of habitats and bird strikes (cars and buildings).

Opposers may cite that euthanasia is the humane thing for community cats because they lead short lives anyway. This could not be more false or insensitive. A cat's life is no less valuable than a bird, or any other creature. With proper care like TNR, they can live long, healthy, happy lives in their communities.

As a supporter of local rescues such as Small Miracles Cat and Dog Rescue and Frisky's Wildlife and Primate Sanctuary, I believe that all creatures great and small deserve a chance.

I implore the Council to join our neighboring jurisdiction, Montgomery County (and so many others) and vote in favor of CB13 and the Community Cat Movement.

I have included TNR sources for reference as well as photos of some of the TNR cats we adopted.

Sources:

[www.alleycat.org](http://www.alleycat.org)

<https://tipmefrederick.org/>

[Alley Cat Rescue](#)

<http://www.lifelineanimal.org>

Sincerely,  
Kathy Cesca  
Woodbine, MD.  
District 5

**From:** [Karen Blush](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** County bill #13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 10, 2024 4:23:28 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

To whom it may concern,

It has been brought to my attention that there is a bill coming up about Feral and Outdoor Cats. I am a Howard County resident and voter for over 20 years now. I have worked with Laurel Cats here in Laurel since 2006! I found 3 kittens under my house that August. I took them in and raised them. Afterwards my Nephew who lived with me started feeding another cat and kitten out our back door. When I found out on Christmas Day, I took over and started feeding her. I named her Midnight and her kitten, Sadie. Since that time I have fed and taken care of a Colony with the help of Laurel Cats and Spay Now and their TNR-Trap, Neuter and Release program. I have gotten in all of the 40 odd cats into the Vet to be Spayed/Neutered and their shots over the years. The cats were turned out of their homes due to lousy owners. Left to fend for themselves or die. This is a cycle that needs to be broken!

The way to break this Cycle is through educating renters and home owners about the responsibility of having a pet. Not through trapping and KILLING cats. If you help offset costs for Vets to Spay/Neuter the cats and put them back with their caretakers you would find a much better way of reducing the population. Since I first started feeding the cats there have been less rodents in the area, less trash being dumped and scattered and more healthy animals. When you go to the expense and time wasted to take these Cats in and KILL them, you are creating a vacuum in that area that will soon fill with more cats that have been dumped! They will have not been taken care of, can in fact become pregnant and have more kittens that will grow up to be wary of humans and get themselves into trouble. For each female cat that shows they can have 2-3 litters each year with litters of 1-7 kittens. The Cycle will continue!!

Break the Cycle humanely and TNR. It will in the long run save the government and your Voters money and time. Please don't punish defenseless cats for the Actions of irresponsible people. Let them live their lives Safe, Happy, and Healthy! Regime some to farms and Barns in the area. Help keep the rodent population under control not KILL cats.

Thank you for listening.

Karen Blush

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

**From:** [Karen Russo](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** In Support of CB13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 10, 2024 8:59:24 AM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Good Morning Councilwoman Jung,

I am writing to indicate my support of bill #CB13. I'm the Foster Coordinator for Laurel Cats, Inc., a non-profit cat rescue located in Laurel, Maryland, Prince George's county. We manage a successful TNVR program that has significantly reduced the numbers of community cats and kittens in the shelters and in and around Laurel.

In my role as the Foster Coordinator, my responsibility includes finding temporary homes for those friendly cats and kittens that many times have been abandoned or lost until we can get them adopted. More often than not, a friendly cat or kitten is found in a feral colony or dumped in the street and we, in coordination with the corresponding agencies, are able to rescue, foster, and successfully adopt out into a loving home. That leaves the free roaming community (feral and semi-feral) cats to be dealt with.

Our experience at Laurel Cats has proven that a successful TNVR program stabilizes the feral cat population (fewer to no births), results in lower animal control costs and taxpayer dollars, reduces nuisance complaints by residents, addresses neighbors' concerns, alleviates public health concerns, improves the cats' lives, saves and helps the entire community reach a solution that benefits everyone.

We at Laurel Cats are in strong support of CB13 and are optimistic that this bill will get passed. We look forward to working with Howard County in assisting however we can to make sure that if passed, the TNVR program becomes as successful as those in PG and AA County.

Please feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss anything further in the way of our support.

*Karen  
Foster Coordinator-Laurel Cats*

Join our Foster Team: <https://tinyurl.com/2p8kpty4>  
Adoption Application: <https://www.shelterluv.com/matchme/adopt/LCI/Cat>

**From:** [Kim Osterhout](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** CB13  
**Date:** Monday, March 11, 2024 12:42:00 AM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

I write as a citizen of Howard County to voice my approval of the CB13 bill. Trap, Neuter, Return is a humane way to control the community cat population; new cats are also less likely to move into an area where there are already established cats. Thank you for considering this bill and please help to pass this bill.

Sincerely,  
Kim Osterhout

**From:** [murky\\_j](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** My commitment to support CB 13  
**Date:** Monday, March 11, 2024 8:51:06 AM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Council Members,

I want to categorically express my support for the bill (CB13) that will effectively end county's ineffective trap-and-kill program and strongly endorse trap-neuter-vaccinate-return as Howard County's preferred method of managing free roaming cats. I have lived my entire life, since 1951, with cats as my dear companions and the thought of killing a cat just for being born in the wild greatly distresses me, saddens me enormously. Over my life, I and my various live-in partners (spouses) have rescued and lived with over 30 wonderful feline companions. People who have cats are bonded not only to their pet but also form very positive bonds with each other. Laurel Cats, for one, has gone to great measures to rescue and safely return feral cats to their environment, eliminating any need for their extermination.

However, I realize talk is cheap. I have made contributions to multiple animal rescue organizations over the years in excess of \$300,000. Having worked (and I still am working) for the federal government for over 50 years I am now able to donate a fair amount of my salary to charities I select. Mine and my wife's salaries (she also works for the federal government) are our only sources of income so these contributions stem entirely from our annual savings. For my part, about half goes to animal welfare groups and the other half to organizations helping those in need. My wife also makes contributions to her desired charities. **If this bill is passed, I commit to donate all my savings in my Fidelity IRA account to support a no-kill solution.** I will commit these funds to help defray the costs that established, legitimate, local animal welfare organizations incur to capture, spay/neuter and provide care for these and other cats in Howard county and surrounding areas. I will also continue to support other animal welfare organizations in Maryland and nationally. In Maryland these include Baywater Animal Rescue, Baltimore Humane Society, Last Chance Animal Rescue and Friskies Wildlife. Hopefully, this commitment will help convince the council that the animal welfare organizations will have some financial resources to follow through on their intentions.

Please free to contact me: cell 443 430-4004. I would be happy to discuss my financial details and take whatever steps to help the Council pass this bill.

Sincerely yours,

Murzy Jhabvala, Ph.D. (Pronouns: He/Him/His)  
6277 Linkythorn Lane  
Clarksville, MD 21029

**From:** [Teresa Chagrin](#)  
**To:** [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [Yungmann, David](#); [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** Official from PETA OPPOSING Bill No. 13-2024 RE Cats  
**Date:** Monday, March 11, 2024 2:34:29 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[PETA Letter Opposing Bill No. 13-2024.pdf](#)  
[Homeless Cats Are Not Super-Felines.pdf](#)  
[Important Briefing for Community Leaders on TNR \(3\).pdf](#)

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

March 11, 2024

The Honorable Deb Jung, Chair  
Members of the Howard County Council

Dear Ms. Jung and Council Members:

I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and our thousands of members and supporters in Howard County. We've heard from many of them who are troubled by the introduction of [Bill No. 13-2024](#), which proposes to legalize the abandonment of domestic cats when done under the guise of trap, neuter, and release (TNR) operations and to limit county animal control authorities' ability to address resident complaints about outdoor roaming cats. We hope the information herein is useful as you weigh the issue, and we **urge you to withdraw the proposed ordinance**.

Advocates of TNR routinely mislead officials into believing that all cats in a community can and will be captured, vaccinated, and sterilized by volunteers and that the practice will eventually reduce the number of homeless and feral cats. **Neither is true.** Many cats are missed or prove too difficult to trap. Unpaid individuals can't realistically be relied on to follow through with such a resource-heavy, time-consuming, labor-intensive, and long-term project. Cat populations also change in dynamics and grow rapidly—and when unsterilized, exponentially—as residents abandon unwanted cats at colonies, mistakenly believing that they'll be looked after.

The **National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians** notes the following:

[N]o evidence exists that maintained cat colonies adequately reduce human public health risks or appropriately address their impact on pets or native wildlife. Several reports suggest that support of “managed cat colonies” may **increase the public's likelihood of abandoning unwanted pets in lieu of more responsible options.** <sup>[1]</sup> [*Emphasis added.*]

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“Natural attrition” is the euphemism used by TNR proponents to describe the deaths of



homeless cats left to fend for themselves outdoors. Like other open-admission animal shelters across the country, PETA is regularly called to help stray and feral cats found with eyeballs hanging out of their sockets, eyes and noses crusted shut from upper respiratory infections, tails and legs stripped of skin after attacks by other animals, and ears turned into a bloody pulp from scratching at untreated ear mites.

Others are found wasting away from feline AIDS or leukemia. Like the cats we consider companions and keep indoors to protect them, cats abandoned outdoors also suffer from **hidden ailments**, including urinary tract infections, urinary blockages, and organ failure but are deprived of adequate veterinary care. *These animals are biologically identical to the cats who share our homes* and who receive regular veterinary care to prevent and treat diseases and parasites. **Cats who've been sterilized and abandoned outdoors aren't "saved."** They still die—typically [violently and after prolonged suffering](#).

We also receive reports about cats who are perceived to be a nuisance and have been intentionally harmed and/or killed by frustrated or hostile residents. While TNR proponents use marketing terms like “community cats,” many, if not most, people do not welcome the presence of roaming cats on or around their property. Even with caretakers and rigorously enforced guidelines, cats left abandoned outdoors can and do come to harm. Recently in Arizona, numerous homeless cats—who'd been sterilized and “released” by a group of people—were [found injured or dead](#) after they were evidently shot with a BB or pellet gun. In Florida, three homeless cats who'd been sterilized and reabandoned by a group were found [“dead—with their heads apparently bashed into concrete.”](#) In West Virginia, numerous homeless cats who'd been fed in a neighborhood were [“found dead, all showing signs they may have been poisoned.”](#) And in Texas, a woman who fed a “colony” of approximately 50 homeless cats at a park said that all but five or six of the animals had been poisoned and [endured “a horrible, slow death that I wouldn't wish on anyone.”](#)

In Havre de Grace, Maryland, a cat who was part of a colony fed by members of a TNR group was found dead with “visible injuries.”<sup>[2]</sup> A note was left next to the animal that read, “The cats must go.”<sup>[3]</sup> A spokesperson for the group said that another cat who had been fed at the location had been shot with a BB gun and that others had been poisoned. These are just a few of the countless cases we track. **As domesticated animals who depend on humans for basic necessities of life and safety, cats are at risk when left outdoors to fend for themselves.**

Populations of homeless, roaming cats also pose a risk to public health. **The Maryland Department of Health** concurs with the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** and reports that “cats are the most frequently identified rabid domestic animal.”<sup>[4]</sup> The near impossibility of re-trapping cats to provide them with legally required rabies vaccinations is one reason why free-roaming cat populations [have been identified](#) as a significant public-health threat.

A cat who'd been sterilized, **vaccinated**, and abandoned as part of a TNR operation in Florida bit a resident who was trying to help the suffering animal. [The cat tested positive for rabies](#), and the resident required post-exposure treatment. After a rabid cat was recently found in Ellicott City, Yahoo.com reported that “[t]he county health department advises residents against feeding any stray or feral animals, including leaving food dishes outside.”<sup>[5]</sup> Last month, an aggressive rabid feral cat was found near an elementary school in [Frederick County](#),

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Struggling native wildlife also don't stand a chance against roaming cats. **The Maryland Invasive Species Council**, which includes representatives from several state and federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of the Interior, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Maryland Department of Agriculture, and the University of Maryland, reports the following:

[S]mall cats are not part of the native food web in North America and can wreak havoc on an ecosystem. ... Feral cats can take a toll on native wildlife, decimating populations already under stress due to habitat shrinkage. ... Supplemental feeding of feral cats is not an answer. Even well-fed feral cats will capture and kill, but not always eat, their prey. <sup>[6]</sup>

PETA is concerned about cats and wildlife alike, and we hope you'll consider wildlife, too. We stand ready to help in any way we can to aid the county in passing proven, effective ordinances and establishing programs to address animal protection and public safety in your community. I can be reached at 443-320-1277 or [TeresaC@peta.org](mailto:TeresaC@peta.org). Thank you for all your hard work for the residents of Howard County.

Sincerely yours,



Teresa Chagrin  
Animal Care and Control Issues Manager  
Cruelty Investigations Department

### Attachments

- PETA Flier: "Homeless Cats Are Not Super-Felines"
- PETA, "Important Briefing for Community Leaders on Trap, Neuter, Reabandonment (TNR) Programs"

[1] National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians, "Free-Roaming/Unowned/Feral Cats," Position Statement, September 1996, <http://www.tnrrealitycheck.com/media/NASPHV.pdf>

<sup>2</sup>Elizabeth Janney, "HdG Cat Killer Focus of Animal Cruelty Investigation," Patch.com, February 13, 2017, <http://patch.com/maryland/havredegrace/hdg-cat-killer-focus-animal-cruelty-investigation>.

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PEOPLE FOR  
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- PETA India
- PETA France
- PETA Australia
- PETA Germany
- PETA Netherlands
- PETA Foundation (U.K.)

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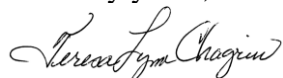
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# HOMELESS CATS ARE NOT SUPER-FELINES

Cats who have been abandoned to fend for themselves are biologically identical to the cats who share our homes, and they deserve—and require—the same care.



Trap-neuter-release (TNR) involves sterilizing and then abandoning homeless cats instead of sheltering them. Rather than reducing homeless cat populations, TNR actually causes populations to increase. More people are likely to abandon cats if they think the cats will be “cared for,” and food set out for “managed” colonies makes untrapped cats better able to reproduce. Additionally, it attracts more cats (as well as wildlife, including foxes, raccoons, and rats).

TNR also fails to protect cats from the many dangers they face on the streets, including extreme temperatures, deadly diseases, parasites, speeding cars, and attacks by dogs, wildlife, and cruel people.



PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL TREATMENT OF ANIMALS

# Trap, Neuter, Reabandonment (TNR) Programs

## REAL-WORLD RESULTS OF TNR

Public officials and animal shelters are under pressure to end the euthanasia of homeless animals, but there are pitfalls to using a slingshot approach to ending animal overpopulation. In TNR (trap, neuter, reabandonment) programs, for example, cats are captured, sterilized, and then put back outside, where they are exposed to diseases—including some that can be transmitted to humans, such as rabies—and they fall prey to the elements, traffic, cruel people who consider them a nuisance, and predators.

TNR programs are designed to keep cats out of animal shelters, usually with the goal of increasing “save rates.” However, leaving cats outdoors is not a humane or an effective solution to the overpopulation and homelessness crisis they face, and it often causes even more problems in the community.



## TNR INCREASES CAT POPULATIONS, RESIDENT COMPLAINTS, AND HEALTH HAZARDS

Cat colonies become dumping grounds for unwanted cats because people incorrectly believe that they’ll be cared for. Food set out for colonies attracts felines from surrounding areas, increasing unsterilized cats’ opportunities to mate and reproduce. It also attracts wild species, such as rats, and rabies-vector species, such as raccoons, to the area.

It can take up to 28 days for newly vaccinated cats to develop immunity to the rabies virus, and retrapping them for the necessary booster shots is virtually impossible and seldom attempted. Many people who feed cats—as well as passersby and curious children—have had to undergo rabies treatment after being bitten or scratched. Cats in colonies can also transmit parasites and diseases to humans who come into contact with them or their feces.

Finally, cats in TNR colonies stalk, injure, and kill native birds, reptiles, and other small animals who are part of the ecosystem and already struggling to survive habitat loss and other challenges.

Examples of these problems are below.

**Pembroke, Ontario:** The DailyObserver.ca [reported](#) that a TNR group was shutting down, citing the continued growth of the cat population because of abandonment by residents and difficulties trapping cats for sterilization. The city administrator said, “[N]ow there’s all kinds of cats and kittens down with lots of issues as a result. [The group] had a lot of sick cats, dead cats and feces where you had to wear rubber boots to try and walk around.”

“[N]o evidence exists that maintained cat colonies adequately reduce human public health risks or appropriately address their impact on pets or native wildlife. Several reports suggest that support of ‘managed cat colonies’ may increase the public’s likelihood of abandoning unwanted pets in lieu of more responsible options.”

—National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians



**Pocahontas, Virginia:** BDTOnline.com [reported](#) that a man had sustained injuries when he was attacked by a bear in his backyard. Authorities told him that the animal had likely been attracted to cat food left out on his porch.

**Hillsborough County, Florida:** WFLA.com [reported](#) that a cat who had been abandoned in the county's TNR program had bitten a good Samaritan. The animal tested positive for rabies.



**Borough of Cornwall, Pennsylvania:** LDNews.com [reported](#) that a child had had to undergo treatment for an illness caused by exposure to cats outdoors. The Cornwall Borough Board of Health reportedly agreed that food left out for roaming cats had created a health hazard.

**Port Orange, Florida:** News-JournalOnline.com [reported](#) that the number of cat colonies in the city's TNR program had increased from 12 to 168 in five years. The annual cost of the program had also increased, from \$9,000 in 2012 to \$23,000 in 2016.

**Whitby, Ontario:** DurhamRegion.com [reported](#) that city workers were trapping and removing cats who had previously been trapped, neutered, and reabandoned in a neighborhood because of "several complaints from residents, concerned with cats running at large and destroying their gardens."

**Panama City, Florida:** NewsHerald.com [reported](#) that staff and students at Gulf Coast State College had been told to stop feeding a colony of cats and that plans had been made to remove the animals because food left out for them was attracting coyotes and bears.

**Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania:** CitizensVoice.com [reported](#) that a homeless cat being fed by a resident had attacked an out-of-state woman who was visiting a neighbor. The cat either died or was euthanized before testing positive for rabies.

**Burnsville, Minnesota:** FOX9.com [reported](#) that a resident had contracted tularemia after he was bitten by an infected cat.

**Parry Sound, Ontario:** ParrySound.com [reported](#) that the city was reconsidering its pilot TNR program because "the number of feral cats appears to be increasing—as does the noise, smell and general nuisance."

**Avalon Peninsula, Newfoundland:** SaltWire.com [reported](#) that a TNR program had had to be suspended after an outbreak of feline distemper. A spokesperson for a TNR group said that populations were growing: "You can't get to them fast enough. People are dumping animals back in the colonies as fast as we get them cleaned up."

**Rochester, New York:** 13WHAM.com [reported](#) that the Monroe County Health Department had ordered the removal of wooden houses intended for homeless cats, because they had attracted rats. The Rochester environmental commissioner said, "Rats were actually nesting, roosting and breeding. It's contaminated with rat feces and things that are not good for public health."

**South Huntingdon Township, Pennsylvania:** TribLive.com [reported](#) that an employee had required post-exposure treatment after a rabid homeless cat entered a business and attacked the individual. A colony of homeless cats was reportedly fed near the business.



**"Free-roaming cats account for the most cases of human rabies exposure among domestic animals and account for approximately 1/3 of rabies post-exposure prophylaxis treatments in humans in the United States."**

—R.W. Gerhold and D.A. Jessup, "Zoonotic Diseases Associated With Free-Roaming Cats," *Zoonoses and Public Health*, 2012



**Albuquerque, New Mexico:** LCSun-News.com [reported](#) that an apparently homeless cat had been found dead and had tested positive for plague.

**Stanislaus County, California:** CeresCourier.com [reported](#) that a cat colony caretaker had found it impossible to keep up with the number of dumped and dying animals. “For the past 10 years [Neva] Walker has tended to the cats at the river location but is troubled that the problem is worsening. Many of the cats are dying from distemper or neglect. . . . ‘It’s happening daily,’ said Walker. ‘Last year not a day went by that I didn’t have at least one, possibly two or three cats abandoned.’”

**Front Royal, Virginia:** NVDaily.com [reported](#) that a colony of homeless cats was to be removed, in part because food left out for them was attracting deer, bears, and vultures.

**Chesapeake, Virginia:** 13NewsNow.com [reported](#) that a “rabid black and white short-hair cat with a broken front paw attacked customers in the parking lot of the Family Dollar Store and Easy Go Market.”

**Orange County, California:** OCGrandJury.org [reported](#) that because of feral cats around the county animal shelter and nearby jail, a Sheriff’s Office employee had been infected with flea-transmitted endemic typhus and required hospitalization.

**Phoenix, Arizona:** AZCentral.com [reported](#) that after eight years of allowing a TNR program on campus, Phoenix College had ended it because “[i]nstead of stabilizing the population, it has doubled, creating an unhealthy situation for the cats and the community.”

**Jacksonville, North Carolina:** JDNews.com [reported](#) that a homeless cat had bitten a man who was feeding a “colony of feral cats.” Authorities captured the animal, who was euthanized after exhibiting “neurological symptoms,” and he or she tested positive for rabies.

**Honolulu, Hawaii:** HawaiiNewsNow.com [reported](#) that after 20 years of allowing a TNR program on campus, Chaminade University had ended it because the homeless-cat population “continued to thrive and . . . feeders were just throwing the food around the campus, making a mess.” A spokesperson said, “It just didn’t work, I wish it did work.”

**Upper Marlboro, Maryland:** WUSA9.com [reported](#) that an area where cats were being fed was “beset



“Neutering, vaccinating, and feeding a cat after trapping leads to a longer life for the cat relative to trapping and euthanizing, but the eventual death of that cat will be much more inhumane. . . . No kill does not equal no death. It only postpones death and exchanges euthanasia for what will almost certainly be a much crueler death for the cat by car, disease, predator, or animal cruelty.”  
—Joel R. McNeal, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor of Biology  
Kennesaw State University

by a large flock of black vultures that roosts above the feral cat colony” to consume food put out by residents.

**Miami Beach, Florida:** Sun-Sentinel.com [reported](#) that seven people had been infected with hookworm near Miami Beach caused by cats defecating on pathways near the beach. Another eight cases were under investigation, including that of a 3-year-old boy.

\*\*\*\*\*

While TNR may lower shelters’ intake and euthanasia rates temporarily (because cats are turned away rather than being given shelter), it quickly creates even worse—and more complex—problems that plague communities.

The proven, humane, and sustainable way to address the crisis of homeless cats is by requiring that they be spayed or neutered, licensed, microchipped, and kept indoors.



“TNR advocates take advantage of the lack of population biology knowledge in the general public to sell neutering as population control, while their feeding has a much more profound effect on populations. Reduced intake rates at shelters are often promoted as successes, but this simply means there are more cats on the streets rather than coming through shelters and says nothing about population increase or decrease.”

–Joel R. McNeal, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor of Biology  
Kennesaw State University

“We estimate that free-ranging domestic cats kill 1.3–4.0 billion birds and 6.3–22.3 billion mammals annually. Un-owned cats ... cause the majority of this mortality.”

–Scott R. Loss, Tom Will,  
and Peter P. Marra,  
“The Impact of Free-Ranging  
Domestic Cats on Wildlife  
of the United States,”  
*Nature Communications*,  
12 Dec. 2013

“[C]at predation is one of the reasons why one in three American [bird] species are in decline.”

–George Fenwick, former president of American Bird Conservancy

**From:** [Barbara Ann Santiago](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** Trap and release bill CB13  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 12, 2024 3:51:36 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

This is a great bill, and trap and release works. I have 6 cats in my area that we take care of . Please pass this bill.



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**From:** Lisa Radov <radovlisa@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 12, 2024 5:57 PM  
**To:** CouncilMail  
**Subject:** County Council of Howard County, Maryland 2024 Legislative Session Legislative Day No. 3 Bill No. 13 -2024 Introduced by: Deb Jung SHORT TITLE: Trap-Neuter-Return Program – Establishment

**Follow Up Flag:** Flag for follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

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To: County Council of Howard County, Maryland  
Re: Bill No. 13 -2024

Dear Councilmembers,

My name is Lisa Radov. I am the President and Chair of Maryland Votes for Animals. We champion humane legislation to I prove the lives of animals in Maryland. One of the signature pieces of legislation that we passed was the Maryland Spay and Neuter Fund which not only gives low income spay and neuter services to Marylanders, it also provides these services to local TNR programs.

We are committed to supporting local efforts to establish more TNR programs that can participate in the statewide program. We hope with the establishment of a TNR program in Howard County, that residents can help the community cats in Howard County with the grants available through the Maryland State Spay/ Neuter Fund.

Maryland Votes for Animals strongly supports Bill 13- 2024. I know that the Maryland Spay and Neuter Fund will be eager to see local shelters and rescues in Howard County apply for these grants to fund TNR programs.

Thank you for considering this bill that will help so many cats in Howard County.

With gratitude,  
Lisa

Lisa G. Radov  
President and Chair of the Board  
Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc.  
<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.voteanimals.org%2F&data=05%7C02%7Cianderson%40howardcountymd.gov%7Cd835f5c8a73c42b78bf608dc42df514d%7C0538130803664bb7a95b95304bd11a58%7C1%7C0%7C638458774147949073%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljojoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTil6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=Amb%2FpofZuBWzQvVDZnmKe2DBI7dixd7FdEuTdLkqJgo%3D&reserved=0>

radovlisa@gmail.com  
443-286-5457

**From:** [Lisa Radov](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** Re: County Council of Howard County, Maryland 2024 Legislative Session Legislative Day No. 3 Bill No. 13 -2024  
Introduced by: Deb Jung SHORT TITLE: Trap-Neuter-Return Program – Establishment  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 13, 2024 7:56:48 AM  
**Attachments:** [Howard County Trap-Neuter Return Program - Establishment - Bill No. 13 -2024 .docx](#)

---

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Councilmembers:

Please find my testimony on our letterhead.

With gratitude,  
Lisa

On Tue, Mar 12, 2024 at 5:56 PM Lisa Radov <[radovlisa@gmail.com](mailto:radovlisa@gmail.com)> wrote:

To: County Council of Howard County, Maryland  
Re: Bill No. 13 -2024

Dear Councilmembers,

My name is Lisa Radov. I am the President and Chair of Maryland Votes for Animals. We champion humane legislation to I prove the lives of animals in Maryland. One of the signature pieces of legislation that we passed was the Maryland Spay and Neuter Fund which not only gives low income spay and neuter services to Marylanders, it also provides these services to local TNR programs.

We are committed to supporting local efforts to establish more TNR programs that can participate in the statewide program. We hope with the establishment of a TNR program in Howard County, that residents can help the community cats in Howard County with the grants available through the Maryland State Spay/ Neuter Fund.

Maryland Votes for Animals strongly supports Bill 13- 2024. I know that the Maryland Spay and Neuter Fund will be eager to see local shelters and rescues in Howard County apply for these grants to fund TNR programs.

Thank you for considering this bill that will help so many cats in Howard County.

With gratitude,  
Lisa

Lisa G. Radov  
President and Chair of the Board  
Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc.  
[www.voteanimals.org](http://www.voteanimals.org)  
[radovlisa@gmail.com](mailto:radovlisa@gmail.com)  
443-286-5457

--

**Lisa G. Radov**

President and Chair of the Board  
Maryland Votes For Animals, Inc.

[www.voteanimals.org](http://www.voteanimals.org)

[radovlisa@gmail.com](mailto:radovlisa@gmail.com)

443-286-5457





## MARYLAND VOTES FOR ANIMALS

PO Box 10411  
BALTIMORE, MD 21209

March 18, 2024

To: County Council of Howard County, Maryland  
Re: Bill No. 13 -2024 – Trap- Neuter- Return Program - Establishment

Dear Councilmembers,

My name is Lisa Radov. I am the President and Chair of Maryland Votes for Animals. We champion humane legislation to improve the lives of animals in Maryland. One of the signature pieces of legislation that we passed was the Maryland Spay and Neuter Fund which not only gives low income spay and neuter services to Marylanders, it also provides these services to local TNR programs.

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Thank you for considering this bill that will help so many cats in Howard County.

With gratitude,  
Lisa

Lisa G. Radov  
President and Chair of the Board  
Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc.  
[www.voteanimals.org](http://www.voteanimals.org)  
[radovlisa@gmail.com](mailto:radovlisa@gmail.com)  
443-286-5457

**From:** [Stephanie Kenez](#)  
**To:** [Rigby, Christiana](#)  
**Cc:** [CouncilMail](#); [Stephanie Kenez](#); [Helen Woods](#)  
**Subject:** I Support CB13-2024!  
**Date:** Thursday, March 14, 2024 4:18:48 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hi Councilwoman Rigby,

As an animal advocate and volunteer in our community, I was shocked and ashamed, as a Howard County District 3 resident, to learn that Howard County still uses a "trap-and-kill" program and does not endorse "trap-neuter-vaccinate-return" (TNVR) instead. **Please support CB13-2024**, which will make TNVR the official policy of Howard County, and end trap-and-kill!

Positives of TNVR:

- TNVR humanely reduces and eventually eliminates the outdoor cat population through publicly acceptable means. Cats are sterilized and vaccinated for rabies hence reducing problems caused by outdoor cats such as fighting, yowling and mating.
- One of the first effects of TNVR is to end the deluge of kittens that is brought into shelters every spring, straining both shelter staff and financial resources.
- We know from passing similar legislation in PG county that such a bill significantly reduces intake at the shelter potentially saving the shelter a lot of money on both direct costs and staffing.
- Passing this bill will also make the county shelter eligible for significant grant funds from agencies and organizations such as the Maryland Department of Agriculture and Best Friends Animal Society.
- Laurel Cats, Inc. (non-profit) has collected hard data from Laurel over the last decade that proves that a well run TNVR program will result in a continued and sustained decline in the cat population with even large cat colonies eventually going extinct over time.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Stephanie Kenez  
10307 Paddock Pl  
Laurel, MD 20723  
Cell: 240-506-0755



**From:** [Angela Robertson](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Saturday, March 16, 2024 10:56:11 PM

---

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council: I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club.

**From:** [sig29@aol.com](mailto:sig29@aol.com)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](mailto:CouncilMail@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Saturday, March 16, 2024 9:57:42 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I urge the Council to table this bill for further study and demonstrable action on the recommendations offered below. As a good faith measure, for the good of the county public health, the cats, and native county fauna to include birds, the Howard County Bird Club is prepared to donate \$5000 to Howard County Animal Control Services for the explicit purposes of facilitating adoption or enclosing community cats for their safety and that of native county fauna. This funding may be insufficient to accomplish resolving this issue for the health of both cats and native fauna to include birds, but it is intended to signal our good intent and we challenge the county and other organizations concerned about cat and/or native fauna welfare to step up to resource a realistic solution for the welfare of feral cats while preserving the diversity of our county native species. A vote for this bill as it stands is a vote against public health, the well-being of cats it ostensibly claims to protect, biodiversity and native animals.

[Gregg Petersen](#)

President, [Howard County Bird Club](#)

Cell: 202-256-8166

**We are very concerned about the continuing steep decline of our bird populations.** The United States have lost 29% of our birds since 1970. One cause of the decline is free-roaming cats, which kill 1-3 billion birds per year in the U.S. It should be noted that all native birds are federally protected under the International Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (MBTA). Legislating the release of cats with full knowledge of their certain continued bird predation constitutes legally sanctioning countless violations of the intent of the long-standing MBTA. Enforcement of violations of this act carry fines and imprisonment. No, it will probably not be enforced, despite the full knowledge that cats--an invasive species when outdoors--will kill scores of native birds, numbering far beyond any prosecuted offenses under

the act.

**We can agree on two points. None of us want to see cats suffer, and we must do something to lower or stop the negative effects of feral cats on the environment.** We do not think the CB-13, which would officially establish a Trap-Neuter-Return program in Howard County, will accomplish those goals.

**TNR IS NEITHER HUMANE NOR EFFECTIVE.** It is certainly not to birds that die in agony, nor to the cats. TNR returns cats to the outdoors, where they are subject to weather, disease, predators, cars, and food insecurity. Feral cats in the main do not die a natural death. In fact, for this reason, **People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals**, (PETA) strongly oppose TNR as inhumane, both to cats and their victims. Dr. Michael Fox, former Vice-President of the Humane Society of the United States, also condemns the practice, calling TNR “good in theory only” and “a total failure.” In addition, the **Humane Society of the U.S. (HSUS)** has stated that free-roaming cats often are hit by vehicles or fall victim to disease, starvation, poisons, attacks by other animals, and mistreatment by humans. Free-roaming cats are subject to contracting and spreading disease among themselves, wildlife, and people. TNR is not humane for the cats: it is worse than euthanasia.”

Peer-reviewed studies have shown that TNR only rarely reduces the numbers of cats. The only studies where numbers have shrunk have been small colonies of less than 50, or in isolated locations that do not allow in-migration of new cats and somewhat effective programs combine aggressive adoption and euthanasia to accomplish the documented reduction. And TNR does not reduce numbers in the short term, as the cats are put back into place. One can reasonably ask, when will numbers actually begin to decline, and how many TNR colonies actually disappear with time as they are supposed to do? One study which a prominent TNR advocacy organization cites as a “success,” documents a program in the Florida Keys that took 22 years to reduce the number of cats by 55%. The same organization also cites two studies done in California and New Mexico as proof that TNR works, but uses reduction in shelter intake and euthanasia as a measure of success, without measure of colony size. That organization’s “Trap-Neuter-Return Research Compendium” cites but two cases where a TNR colony disappeared. In one case, it took 16 years, in the other, 10 years. One would think if the program was so successful, they would cite numerous cases, rather than just two.

For so-called “successful” TNR colonies, an ecological principle called the “vacuum effect” happens. The niche formerly occupied and patrolled by the decreasing population of TNR cats opens up a vacuum that other feral non-TNR cats, also called “immigrant cats” flow into to continue the hyper predation in that niche. Nature abhors a vacuum is not just a saying: it is a principle and a reality documented by studies. In addition, humans add to the problem. With knowledge of the existence and location of TNR colonies some people dump unwanted and un-TNR treated cats into the cat colonies.

**TNR CATS STILL KILL BIRDS AND WILDLIFE.** These programs do nothing to help our declining bird populations. The area around a TNR site is likely to become devoid of small passerine birds and other small prey, which, in turn, can no longer support native predators. This process is known as “hyper predation.” Cardinals, Blue Jays, Robins, Juncos, Sparrows, and other ground birds will all continue to be killed. But these are common birds, so you might think that there are lots of them, just like there used to be of the Passenger Pigeon. This predation is already happening with or without TNR, but a key difference here is that you will be legislating it to document your complicity.

**TNR AND FREE ROAMING CATS ARE A THREAT TO PUBLIC AND WILDLIFE HEALTH.** While the cats are supposed to be vaccinated against rabies and other diseases, they rarely get the periodic booster shots needed to maintain immunity or to receive continuity of care. Lack of continuity of veterinary care meets the CB13-2024 definition of cruelty. Maryland and surrounding states have one of the highest rates of rabies in cats, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Yet TNR programs are not required to treat cats as rabies vectors, which is required of wildlife rehabilitators who deal with species such as racoons or foxes. Proponents of TNR cite low probability of rabies in the program. How many cases of TNR program caused rabies due to lack of vaccination continuity are acceptable to you and the community? Is it one? Is it some higher number?

**CATS SPREAD *TOXOPLASMA GONDII*.** As the definitive host, they are the only source of the parasite in the environment. Toxoplasmosis is a leading cause of human death from food-borne illness and has been linked to brain and behavioral changes in humans. Of concern is that over 60 million people are infected in the U.S. The CDC states that the best way to keep cats from getting infected by *Toxoplasma*

gondii is to keep them indoors. Toxoplasmosis also infects wildlife, and has been found in white-tailed deer. There is no assertion that feral or TNR cats do not carry this parasite, it is a fact. So, understanding this, how many sick residents or worse that become affected by this parasite are acceptable to you if you vote to approve this legislation? Despite not being able to empirically trace any one illness to the TNR program, are you comfortable with endorsing your complicity with this understanding?

**HUMANE CAT REDUCTION SUGGESTIONS:** The following steps can reduce the number of cats in a humane way, which in turn will benefit wildlife, public health, wildlife health, and the cats.

- Strongly promote adoption programs by animal control agencies and local governments as well as other appropriate solutions such as enclosed sanctuaries- remove them from the ecosystem where neither wildlife nor public health are threatened.
- Aggressively educate the public on the problem of cat overpopulation and the need for neutering and vaccination.
- Encourage cat owners to neuter their cats if not engaged in breeding.
- Encourage cat owners to keep their cats indoors or leashed or fenced when outdoors. A good resource for those wishing to expose their cats to the outdoors without hurting wildlife is the American Bird Conservancy's Cats Indoors! Program.
- Enact and enforce local municipal and county leash and licensing laws, with requirement of microchipping.
- Fully fund municipal and county animal control agencies.
- Provide low-cost or free neutering programs by local governments and humane organizations.
- Require animal control agencies to use euthanasia only as a last resort, while ensuring that genuine pets are not accidentally put down.
- That MOS continues a dialogue on this issue with organizations and government agencies to devise the most appropriate, humane, and conservation-minded solutions to the issues.

To conclude, CB-13 is bad for birds, public health, wildlife health, and the cats themselves.

**We urge the Council to table this bill for further study and demonstrable action on the recommendations offered above.**



**From:** [Howard County Bird Club](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** [BULK] Howard County Council bill on Trap-Neuter-Release  
**Date:** Saturday, March 16, 2024 9:34:26 PM

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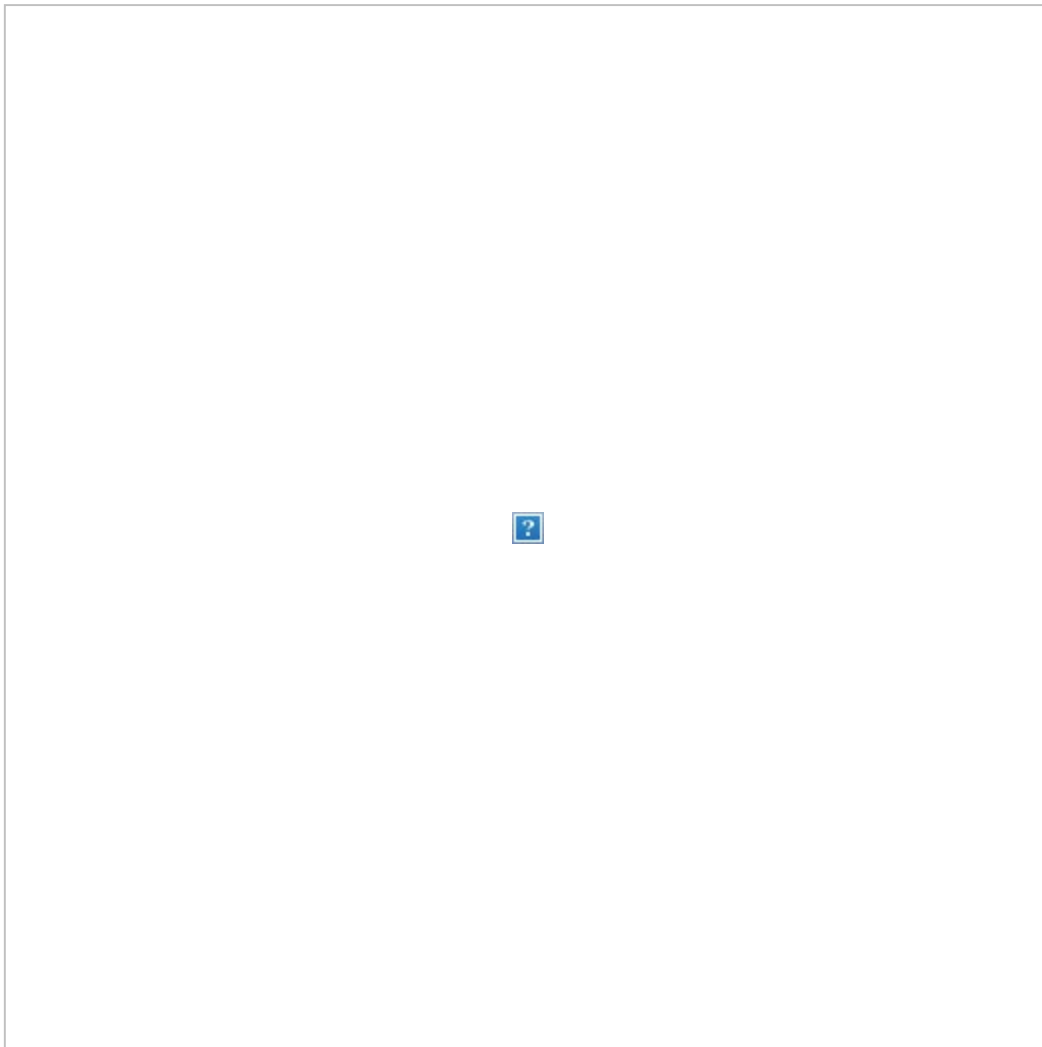
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Maryland Ornithological Society and HCBC position on this bill

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Hello Howard County,

The Howard County Council is considering a bill (CB13-2024) on Trap-Neuter-Release of feral cats. Below is information, opposing the bill as currently written, that will be summarized in testimony by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club. Constituent numbers count, so if you are concerned about this issue, please forward your version of this note to the council by clicking on the link below.

[Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13-2024 TNR](#)

Copy and paste into your email as much of the information below as you wish. Please add your own comments, your name, and your postal address.

Attend in person if you can! The hearing is Monday, March 18 beginning at 7:30 p.m. at the George Howard Building, 3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City in the Banneker Room.

**We are very concerned about the continuing steep decline of our bird populations.** The United States have lost 29% of our birds since 1970. One cause of the decline is free-roaming cats, which kill 1-3 billion birds per year in the U.S. It should be noted that all native birds are federally protected under the International Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (MBTA).

Legislating the release of cats with full knowledge of their certain continued bird predation constitutes legally sanctioning countless violations of the intent of the long-standing MBTA. Enforcement of violations of this act carry fines and imprisonment. No, it will probably not be enforced, despite the full knowledge that cats--an invasive species when outdoors--will kill scores of native birds, numbering far beyond any prosecuted offenses under the act.

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- Enact and enforce local municipal and county leash and licensing laws, with requirement of microchipping.
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- That MOS continues a dialogue on this issue with organizations and government agencies to devise the most appropriate, humane, and conservation-minded solutions to the issues.

To conclude, CB-13 is bad for birds, public health, wildlife health, and the cats themselves.

**We urge the Council to table this bill for further study and demonstrable action on the recommendations offered above.**

Forward to a Friend

Robin Todd, Conservation Chair

-->

Kurt Schwarz, Conservation Chair  
Emeritus

Reply

Gregg Petersen, President

Howard County Bird Club

**Howard County Bird Club**

P.O. Box 1323  
Columbia MD [21044-1323](tel:210441323)

Visit [HCBC website](#) and  
[HCBC Facebook page](#).

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**From:** [Jamie Smith](#)  
**To:** [CouncilDistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** Written support for CB13  
**Date:** Saturday, March 16, 2024 6:56:14 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hello and good afternoon,

I'm Jamie Smith, resident of Jessup, MD. I wanted to write in my support for CB13, the bill ending trap-and-kill and endorsing TNVR for free roaming cats.

As a student in Baltimore, I witnessed the positive impact TNVR can have. UMBC had a colony of feral cats. Originally, they were removed from the location, and raccoons immediately invaded in the cats' absence. After another cat colony grew, they tried the TNVR program and found that keeping a Neutered, Vaccinated colony of feral cats on campus both reduced the cat and raccoon population, and made the resident cats safer to approach.

Trapping and killing of cats allows more cats to take their place. As territorial animals, Neutered and Vaccinated cats keep other cats from invading, do not reproduce, are less aggressive, and do not spread rabies.

My family recently had a visiting feral cat. I called HCAC and realized that our county has a Trap-and-kill policy. They told me that it was my responsibility to bring in the feral cat and that it is illegal to let it roam. They also told me that when I bring the cat in, I no longer had a right to see it unless I was planning on adopting, and that it may be immediately put down. This made it incredibly difficult for me to take action as I was essentially caught between "illegal activity" and "putting down" a living animal for merely existing. Because of this, I believe the Trap-and-kill program makes it less likely for people to report feral cats, and makes it more likely for those feral cats to create more kittens and potentially spread diseases. In the end, our neighbor ended up "adopting" the cat, getting it neutered and vaccinated, and returning it to the neighborhood to live freely. We are lucky enough to be in a well-off neighborhood where we can afford to care for cats that are not our own, but I imagine other families in Howard County may not have the resources to neuter and vaccinate strays on their own dime.

In conclusion, I support CB13 and Howard County's Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return program for free-roaming cats. Trap-and-Kill is not as effective and makes it less likely for cats to be reported and cared for. TNVR makes roaming cats safer, friendlier, and controls the population much better, in a humane manner.

Thank you and have a great weekend!

Best,  
Jamie

--  
 **Jamie Smith**  
*Graphic Designer*

(410) 227-1860

[JAMIESMITHART.COM](http://JAMIESMITHART.COM)

[JSMITH13FIERCE@GMAIL.COM](mailto:JSMITH13FIERCE@GMAIL.COM)



**From:** [Julie Dunlap](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Saturday, March 16, 2024 10:10:46 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club. As an educator who teaches wildlife ecology to undergraduates, I'm well aware of the toll feral cats take on birds, mammals, herps, and invertebrates. At a time of rapid biodiversity decline, it is not responsible to establish an ineffective and inhumane policy that would almost inevitably lead to more hungry, ill, and injured outdoor cats and fewer wild animals.

There is plenty of evidence showing that feral cat so-called TNR colonies usually fail due to poor and inconsistent management. On my own street is a colony that is called by the well-meaning custodian "TNR" but is actually a feeding station for a growing number of outdoor cats that the custodian no longer tries to trap. One of the key problems of the bill is the lack of a clear definition of adequate TNR. *If* it is done under very careful, well managed, well funded conditions, it might work. But without regulations and adequate supervision by experts in the field (not advocates but true experts on trapping and managing discrete colonies with a goal not of reducing hunger but of reducing cat numbers), it is doomed to failure.

There are communities trying to bring together humane, public health, and wildlife conservation communities to find solutions, such as [Stillwater, Oklahoma](#). Instead of passing this bill without a clear, working TNR definition, let's follow other communities' examples and establish a committee to develop a humane and effective plan that reduces feral cat suffering, lowers euthanasia rates, prevents property damage and human health risks, and protect our dwindling wildlife. This bill does not fulfill that important goal.

Thank you for your consideration. Best wishes, Julie Dunlap

**From:** [Karlyn McPartland](mailto:Karlyn.McPartland@howardcountymd.gov)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](mailto:CouncilMail@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Saturday, March 16, 2024 10:10:15 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I am a veterinarian that practices in Howard County and also an advocate for our environment.

I love cats - I have spent my entire life devoted to the care of pets, including cats. I am always very saddened to see the condition that this wonderful little beast is subjected to when left to fend for itself outdoors. Disease, injuries, poisons, attacks by other animals, freezing temperatures, food insecurity if it is unable to hunt effectively are just a few of what they must contend with to survive. Trapping, neutering, tipping its ear and tossing it back to the elements is really not doing the poor creature any favors.

Feral cat populations are also a public health concern for a wide variety reasons. Within a year, the rabies shot it was given when trapped will run out, and believe me when I tell you that rabies is alive and well in the wildlife populations of Howard County. Toxoplasmosis, mange, roundworms are just a few of the serious zoonotic diseases that a feral cat population can harbor.

And finally, as an invasive species, they hunt native species and have been absolutely proven to be a factor in declining populations of wildlife, especially our birds. They are an amazing and effective predator, and when driven by hunger are not discriminating on whom they will consider dinner. Threatened birds are being pushed further towards extinction.

TNR programs are a bad idea. They are bad for cats, they are bad for people, they are bad for our environment. As a veterinarian, there was a time in my career when I participated in TNR activities. I have lived to regret this as I saw subsequently how not only did they not provide the promised decline in feral populations, but gave a hard life of suffering to the individuals that were released. And, unfortunately, an adverse impact on our environment.

I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club.

Sincerely,  
Karlyn McPartland, D.V.M.

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Lori Bivins](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](#); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](#);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](#); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](#);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](#)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Saturday, March 16, 2024 9:53:48 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club.

Sincerely,  
Lori Bivins

**From:** [Mary Parks](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](#); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](#);  
[CouncilDistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](#); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](#);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](#)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Saturday, March 16, 2024 10:12:58 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club.

Mary Parks  
cell 410.615.2914

**From:** [Mike Spurrier](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Saturday, March 16, 2024 10:11:12 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:<BR>I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club.

Mike Spurrier  
240-446-0305  
[mspurrier819@gmail.com](mailto:mspurrier819@gmail.com)  
[mike.spurrier@goddard.edu](mailto:mike.spurrier@goddard.edu)

**From:** [Robin Todd](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Saturday, March 16, 2024 9:08:11 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I strongly support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) and the Howard County Bird Club (HCBC) on CB13.

As written, CB13 would codify the keeping of cats out of doors to the detriment of bird life and the health of the cats themselves. The bill needs to be greatly strengthened, as suggested by MOS and HCBC, or voted down.

Sincerely,

Robin Todd  
Conservation Chair for MOS and HCBC  
10174 Green Clover Drive  
Ellicott City, MD 21042.

**From:** [Stephanie Ardito](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** CB13 Bill Support  
**Date:** Saturday, March 16, 2024 12:37:03 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

To all members of the Howard County Council:

Please support Bill CB13, which will allow animal care organizations and individuals to care for free-roaming cats (also called community cats) by sterilizing, vaccinating, and ear-tipping.

We strongly back this humane program, and hope you will find it in your hearts to approve CB13.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Ardito

**From:** [Alex Barenblitt](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Bill CB13-2024 Support of  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 5:31:03 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Council Members:

I support Bill CB13-2024 for the TNR of cats. I would only hope that funding could be established to also provide rabies shots to the cats that are TNR.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Alex Barenblitt

3513 Char Lil Court

Ellicott City, MD 21042

Regards,

Alex N. Barenblitt  
(443) 904-6131 (Mobile)  
(443) 686-9580 (Home)



**From:** [Arlene Kerber](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 5:54:34 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council: I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club.

I am a cat lover and have shared my home with several cats over the years. However, facts are facts and cats unfortunately kill birds. I strongly support capture and neutering but NOT releasing them back to the wild.

This is a cop-out. They are not a natural part of our environment and do too much damage to wildlife.

So I DO NOT support this bill. Other means are needed to keep cats out of the natural environment.

Arlene Kerber, Mad River Lane, Columbia, MD

**From:** [barb](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 7:48:40 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club.

From looking at the data, it appears that Trap-Neuter-release programs have rarely been successful in reducing the populations of feral cats. In addition, if cats are released, they are still preying on birds.

Please draft a better version of the bill to reduce feral cat population.

Respectfully,  
Barbara White  
Council district 1

**From:** [Charles Stirrat](mailto:Charles.Stirrat@howardcountymd.gov)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](mailto:CouncilMail@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 9:48:36 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club.

I confess that my primary concern with this bill is the number of birds that are killed by free-roaming cats. The fact that Trap-Neuter-Release programs have been shown to not decrease the number of feral cats means they will still be contributing to the ongoing decline of birdlife.

Releasing cats back to the outdoors, where they are subject to weather, disease, predators, cars, and food insecurity is hardly humane for the cats.

TNR and free roaming cats are a threat to public and wildlife health. Although initially vaccinated, released cats are seldom receiving the periodic vaccinations needed to maintain immunity or to receive continuity of care.

The MOS / HCBC position outlines nine steps that could reduce the number of cats in a humane way, which in turn will benefit wildlife, public health, wildlife health, and the cats. I urge you to review these suggestions.

**I urge the Council to table this bill for further study and take action on the recommendations offered in the MOS / HCBC position.**

Thank you for giving consideration to my input,

Charles R. Stirrat  
13318 Hunt Rdg  
Ellicott City, MD 21042

**From:** [Deborah Belchis](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 10:33:57 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I am a resident of Howard County. I strongly oppose a capture-neuter-release for feral cats. Feral cats are an invasive species. They are skilled hunters and are responsible for the death of billions of birds and other species.

IUCN/SSC Invasive Species Specialist  
Group (ISSG)  
[web.archive.org](http://web.archive.org)



Capture neuter release programs have been shown to ineffective in controlling feral cat populations.

Sincerely,  
Deborah Belchis

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Denise Tester](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 9:47:50 AM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club.

Please consider passing this bill as the most humane approach for all animals and people involved

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Gail Mackiernan](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 8:08:07 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

As a member of the Howard County Bird club, I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club on the proposed bill, CB 13.

Further, I support the position of the national humane organization, PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) that Trap-Neuter-Release is irresponsible and inhumane, inhumane for the cats and for the wildlife they inevitably kill. Their position can be viewed here: <https://www.peta.org/features/trap-neuter-release-wildlife>

Thank you for the opportunity to comment,

(Dr.) Gail B. Mackiernan  
Conservation Chair,  
Montgomery Bird Club

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Hedy Cohen](#)  
**To:** [CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** Supp  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 5:31:40 PM

---

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Council Members:

I support Bill CB13-2024 for the TNR of cats. I would only hope that funding could be established to also provide rabies shots to the cats that are TNR.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Hedy Cohen

3513 Char Lil Court

Ellicott City, MD 21042

**From:** [Jeannie](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 12:54:13 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club.

Humans are more harmful to the bird population than stray cats.

I am an avid birder, particularly a backyard birder. Over the years, as I have devoted more and more time to watching their everyday behavior, I have seen things that made me sad, even horrified. Every spring and summer I witness a weak or baby bird being carted off by a bird of prey. Nests fall victim to black snakes and raccoons.

English sparrows are the mortal enemies of bluebirds, killing the mother and building a nest on top of her.

I tell myself, they have to survive, too. In my opinion, this applies to the stray cat population as well. It's not their fault that they were either dumped or lost and never found. As with all things nature, it takes care of itself. I think we should pay much more attention to the bird population in relation to urban sprawl. We are building in their habitat, and they have suffered terribly. Not to mention windmills. For the most part, when there is an interruption in the animal kingdom, they deal with it. Take measures to educate and monitor, but as for the prevention of planned habitat destruction, and solutions to prevent it, we humans have a long way to go.

Let nature take its course.



**From:** [John McKitterick](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 9:23:08 AM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club.

Trap, Neuter, and Release is scientifically unsound, will not accomplish what the bill is intended to do, and does nothing to prevent the spread of diseases by the cats or to stop the slaughter of native birds by this non-native species. The bill is worse than useless.

--John McKitterick  
Allview Estates  
Columbia, MD

**From:** [Kurt Schwarz](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony for CB-13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 6:57:36 PM  
**Attachments:** [MOS CB-13 TNR March 2024.pdf](#)

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Find attached the testimony of the Maryland Ornithological Society and its Howard County Chapter on CB-13. Kindly enter it into the record.

Kurt Schwarz  
Conservation Chair Emeritus  
Maryland Ornithological Society  
Howard County Bird Club  
7329 Wildwood Court  
Columbia, MD 21046  
krschwa1@verizon.net  
443-538-2370



## MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY



March 18, 2024

**To: Howard County Council**

**RE: CB-13**

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

The Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) and its Howard County Chapter, the Howard County Bird Club (HCBC) wish to comment on CB-13-2024. MOS is an all-volunteer organization of two thousand members established in 1945 for the study, enjoyment, and protection of birds and their habitats. HCBC was established in 1972 and has 375 members.

We are very concerned about the continuing steep decline of our bird populations. The United States have lost 29% of our birds since 1970.<sup>1</sup> One cause of the decline is free-roaming cats, which kill 1-3 billion birds per year in the U.S.<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that all native songbirds are federally protected under the International Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (MBTA).<sup>3</sup> Legislating the release of cat with full knowledge of their certain continued bird predation constitutes legally sanctioning countless violations of the intent of the long-standing MBTA.

We can all agree on two points. None of us want to see cats suffer, and we must do something to lower the number of feral cats. We do not think the CB-13, which would officially establish a Trap-Neuter-Return program in Howard County, will accomplish those goals.

The bill states "TNR is humane and effective." It is neither, certainly not to birds, that die in terror and agony, nor to the cats. TNR returns cats to outdoors, where they are subject to weather, disease, predators, cars, and food insecurity. Feral cats in the main do not die a natural death. In fact, for this reason, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, (PETA) strongly oppose TNR as inhumane, both to cats and their victims.<sup>4</sup> Dr. Michael Fox, former Vice-President of the Humane Society of the United States, also condemns the practice, calling TNR "good in theory only" and "a total failure."<sup>5</sup>

Peer-reviewed studies have shown that TNR only rarely reduces the numbers of cats. The only studies where numbers have shrunk have been small colonies of less than 50, or in isolated locations that do not allow in-migration of new cats. And TNR does not reduce numbers in the short term, as the cats are put back into place. One can reasonably ask, when will numbers actually begin to decline, and how many TNR colonies actually disappear with time as they are supposed to do? One study which a prominent TNR advocacy organization cites as a "success,"

documents a program in the Florida Keys that took 22 years to reduce the number of cats by 55%. The same organization also cites two studies done in California and New Mexico as proof that TNR works, but uses reduction in shelter intake and euthanasia as a measure of success, without measure of colony size. That organization's "Trap-Neuter-Return Research Compendium" cites but two cases where a TNR colony disappeared. In one case, it took 16 years, in the other, 10 years. One would think if the program was so successful, they would cite numerous cases, rather than just two.

Cats in a TNR program will still catch and kill birds, so these programs do nothing to help our declining bird populations. The area around a TNR site is likely to become devoid of small passerine birds and other small prey, which, in turn, can no longer support native predators, process known as hyper-predation.<sup>6</sup>

TNR and free-roaming cats also present a serious threat to public and wildlife health. While the cats are supposed to be vaccinated against rabies and other diseases, they rarely get the periodic booster shots needed to maintain immunity or to receive continuity of care. Omission of veterinary care meets the CB13-2024 definition of cruelty. Maryland and surrounding states have one of the highest rates of rabies in cats, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Yet TNR programs are not required to treat cats as rabies vectors, which is required of wildlife rehabilitators, who deal with species such as racoons or foxes.

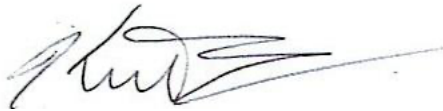
Cats spread the parasite *Toxoplasma gondii* in their feces, in fact, as the definitive host, they are the only source of the parasite in the environment. Toxoplasmosis is a leading cause of human death from food-borne illness, and has been linked to brain and behavioral changes in humans. Of concern is that over 60 million people are infected in the U.S. The CDC states that the best way to keep cats from getting infected by *Toxoplasma gondii* is to keep them indoors. Toxoplasmosis also infects wildlife, and has been found in white-tailed deer, and the cause of recent deaths of endangered sea otters in California.

We suggest the following steps to reduce the number of cats in a humane way, which in turn will benefit wildlife, public health, wildlife health, and the cats.

- Aggressively educate the public on the problem of cat overpopulation and the need for neutering and vaccination
- Encourage cat owners to neuter their cats if not engaged in breeding
- Encourage cat owners to keep their cats indoors or leashed or fenced when outdoors. A good resource for those wishing to expose their cats to the outdoors without hurting wildlife is the American Bird Conservancy's Cats Indoors! Program.
- Enact and enforce local municipal and county leash and licensing laws, with requirement of microchipping
- Fully fund municipal and county animal control agencies
- Provide low-cost or free neutering programs by local governments and humane organizations.

- Strongly promote adoption programs by animal control agencies and local governments as well as other appropriate solutions such as enclosed sanctuaries, where neither wildlife nor public health are threatened
- Require animal control agencies to use euthanasia only as a last resort, while ensuring that genuine pets are not accidentally put down.
- That MOS continues a dialogue on this issue with organizations and government agencies to devise the most appropriate, humane, and conservation-minded solutions to the issues.

To conclude, CB-13 is bad for birds, public health, wildlife health, and the cats. We urge the Council to table this bill for further study and demonstrable action on the recommendations offered above.



Kurt R. Schwarz  
 Conservation Chair Emeritus  
 Maryland Ornithological Society

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<sup>1</sup> Rosenberg, Kenneth V. et al, Decline of the North American avifauna, Science, VOL 366, NO. 6451, 19 September 2019, [https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.aaw1313?adobe\\_mc=MCORGID%3D242B6472541199F70A4C98A6%2540AdobeOrg%7CTS%3D1707754028](https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.aaw1313?adobe_mc=MCORGID%3D242B6472541199F70A4C98A6%2540AdobeOrg%7CTS%3D1707754028)

<sup>2</sup> Loss, Scott R., et al, The impact of free-ranging domestic cats on wildlife of the United States, Nature Communications, 29 January 2013, [https://repository.si.edu/bitstream/handle/10088/19537/nzp\\_Loss\\_et\\_al\\_2013\\_Nature\\_Communications\\_-\\_Impact\\_of\\_cat\\_predation\\_on\\_US\\_wildlife.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y](https://repository.si.edu/bitstream/handle/10088/19537/nzp_Loss_et_al_2013_Nature_Communications_-_Impact_of_cat_predation_on_US_wildlife.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y)

<sup>3</sup> Title 16 US Code 73-712 Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-2020-title16/pdf/USCODE-2020-title16-chap7-subchapII-sec703.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> PETA, The Great Outdoors? Not for Cats!, <https://www.peta.org/issues/animal-companion-issues/overpopulation/feral-cats/great-outdoors-cats/>

<sup>5</sup> Fox, Dr. Michael W. Releasing Cats to Live Outdoors: Humane, Environmental, and One Health Concerns, <https://drfoxonehealth.com/post/releasing-cats-to-live-outdoors-humane-environmental-and-one-health-concerns/>

<sup>6</sup> Longcore, Travis, Catherine Rich, and Lauren M. Sullivan, “Critical Assessment of Claims Regarding Management of Feral Cats by Trap-Neuter-Release,” Conservation Biology, Volume 23, No. 4, 2009, <http://www.urbanwildlands.org/Resources/2009LongcoreetalConBio.pdf>

**From:** [Lois Underwood](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 7:50:57 AM

---

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club.

**We are very concerned about the continuing steep decline of our bird populations.** The United States have lost 29% of our birds since 1970. One cause of the decline is free-roaming cats, which kill 1-3 billion birds per year in the U.S. It should be noted that all native birds are federally protected under the International Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (MBTA). Legislating the release of cats with full knowledge of their certain continued bird predation constitutes legally sanctioning countless violations of the intent of the long-standing MBTA. Enforcement of violations of this act carry fines and imprisonment. No, it will probably not be enforced, despite the full knowledge that cats--an invasive species when outdoors--will kill scores of native birds, numbering far beyond any prosecuted offenses under the act.

**None of us want to see cats suffer, and we must do something to lower or stop the negative effects of feral cats on the environment.** We do not think the CB-13, which would officially establish a Trap-Neuter-Return program in Howard County, will accomplish those goals.

**From:** [Michele DeMuis](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](#); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](#);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](#); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](#);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](#)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 12:03:24 PM

---

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club.

Michele DeMuis  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Nancy Compton](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](#); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](#);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](#); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](#);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](#)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 2:50:17 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club.

Nancy Compton

Sent from my iPhone



**From:** [Nathan Baum](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 12:51:04 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club. As a birder and someone who loves animals, I urge the Council to reject a bill that will only make things worse for cats, birds, and other animal and human populations where the actions authorized by this law would be implemented. The alternatives promoted by MOS and the Howard County Bird Club would be a much more effective and humane way of addressing the problem of bird predation by feral as well as domestic cats.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Nathan Baum  
8729 Endless Ocean Way  
Columbia, MD  
631-875-6320

**From:** [Nora Barenblitt](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Support of Bill CB13-2024  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 5:36:44 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Council Members:

I support Bill CB13-2024 for the TNR of cats. I hope that funding can be also established to provide rabies shots to the cats that are TNR.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Nora Barenblitt  
3513 Char Lil Court  
Ellicott City, MD 21042

**From:** [Patsy Kennan](mailto:Patsy.Kennan@howardcountymd.gov)  
**To:** [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilMail](mailto:CouncilMail@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13-2024 TNR  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 11:59:53 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council,

I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club.

**We are very concerned about the continuing steep decline of our bird populations.** Free-roaming cats kill 1-3 billion birds per year in the U.S.

**We can agree on two points. One, no one wants to see cats suffer, and two, we must do something to lower or stop the negative effects of feral cats on the environment.** We do not think the CB-13, which would officially establish a Trap-Neuter-Return program in Howard County, will accomplish those goals.

**TNR IS NEITHER HUMANE NOR EFFECTIVE.** People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, (PETA) strongly oppose TNR as inhumane, both to cats and their victims. Dr. Michael Fox, former Vice-President of the Humane Society of the United States, also condemns the practice, calling TNR “good in theory only” and “a total failure.” Peer-reviewed studies have shown that TNR only rarely reduces the number of feral cats, likely due to TNR cats being returned or the in-migration of other non-TNR cats.

**TNR CATS STILL KILL BIRDS AND WILDLIFE.** The area around a TNR site is likely to become devoid of birds such as Cardinals, Blue Jays, Robins, Juncos, Sparrows, and other ground-feeding birds. These are common birds, and you might think that there are lots of them, but recall that the Passenger Pigeon used to number in the millions.

**TNR AND FREE ROAMING CATS ARE A THREAT TO PUBLIC AND WILDLIFE HEALTH.** Maryland and surrounding states have among the highest rates of rabies in cats, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Yet TNR programs are not required to treat cats as rabies vectors, as required of wildlife rehabilitators who deal with species such as raccoons or foxes.

**CATS SPREAD TOXOPLASMA GONDII.** Cats are the only source of the parasite in

the environment. Over 60 million people are infected in the U.S. The CDC states that the best way to keep cats from getting infected by *Toxoplasma gondii* is to keep them indoors. Toxoplasmosis also infects wildlife, and has been found in white-tailed deer.

**HUMANE FERAL CAT POPULATION REDUCTION SUGGESTIONS:** The following steps can reduce the number of cats in a humane way, which in turn will benefit wildlife, public health, wildlife health, and the cats.

- Strongly promote adoption programs by animal control agencies and local governments, as well as other appropriate solutions such as enclosed sanctuaries—remove them from the ecosystem where neither wildlife nor public health are threatened.
- Aggressively educate the public on the problem of cat overpopulation and the need for neutering and vaccination.
- Encourage cat owners to neuter their cats if not engaged in breeding.
- Encourage cat owners to keep their cats indoors or leashed or fenced when outdoors. A good resource for those wishing to expose their cats to the outdoors without hurting wildlife is the American Bird Conservancy's Cats Indoors! Program.
- Enact and enforce local municipal and county leash and licensing laws, with requirement of microchipping.
- Fully fund municipal and county animal control agencies.
- Provide low-cost or free neutering programs by local governments and humane organizations.
- Require animal control agencies to use euthanasia only as a last resort, while ensuring that genuine pets are not accidentally put down.
- That MOS continues a dialogue on this issue with organizations and government agencies to devise the most appropriate, humane, and conservation-minded solutions to the issues.

To conclude, CB-13 is bad for birds, public health, wildlife health, and the cats themselves.

**We urge the Council to table this bill for further study and demonstrable action on the recommendations offered above.**

Thank you,  
Patsy Kennan  
7329 Wildwood Court  
Columbia, MD 21046

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

**From:** [Paul Baicich](#)  
**To:** [Rigby, Christiana](#)  
**Cc:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** CB13-2024 - Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) - NOT a good idea.  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 4:03:04 AM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Council Member,

I am writing to you about the proposed CB13-2024 on a Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) program for cats. It's NOT a good idea.

The U.S. has lost 29% of our birds since 1970. One cause of the decline is the proliferation of free-roaming cats, which kill an estimated 1-3 billion birds per year in the country.

And TNR does not reduce numbers of feral cats in the short term, as the cats - natural killers - are simply put back into place in the wild. TNR programs do nothing to help our declining bird populations; they actually make things worse. The area around a TNR site is likely to become devoid of small songbirds and small native mammals.

Of course, while the cats are supposed to be vaccinated against rabies and other diseases, these free-ranging predators rarely get the periodic booster shots needed to maintain immunity or to receive continuity of care.

Simply put, our cats belong indoors!

While TNR exacerbates wildlife problems, there are alternative approaches which, at the same time, can be "pro-cat." These include the following:

- Strongly promote adoption programs by animal control agencies and the county.
- Aggressively educate the public on the problem of cat overpopulation and the need for neutering and vaccination.
- Encourage cat owners to neuter their cats if not engaged in breeding.
- Fully fund municipal and county animal control agencies so that they can do their real work.

Please make sure that CB13-2024 does not pass. We can do better.

Sincerely,  
Paul J. Baicich  
7237 Swan Point Way

Columbia, Md 21045

**From:** [RALPH GEUDER](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](#); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](#);  
[CouncilDistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](#); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](#);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](#)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 11:49:59 AM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council: I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club. Please oppose CB13. This bill would not solve any problems in a meaningful way. Thanks.

Ralph W. Gender  
5219 Talbots.Landing  
Ellicott.City MD. 21043



**From:** [Richard D](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](#); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](#);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](#); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](#); [CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](#)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 6:46:21 AM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club. Short version - we oppose CB-13 as currently drafted. Thanks for your no vote.

[View in browser](#)



**We are very concerned about the continuing steep decline of our bird populations.** The United States have lost 29% of our birds since 1970. One cause of the decline is free-roaming cats, which kill 1-3 billion birds per year in the U.S. It should be noted that all native birds are federally protected under the International Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (MBTA). Legislating the release of cats with full knowledge of their certain continued bird predation constitutes legally sanctioning countless violations of the intent of the long-standing MBTA. Enforcement of violations of this act carry

finer and imprisonment. No, it will probably not be enforced, despite the full knowledge that cats--an invasive species when outdoors--will kill scores of native birds, numbering far beyond any prosecuted offenses under the act.

**We can agree on two points. None of us want to see cats suffer, and we must do something to lower or stop the negative effects of feral cats on the environment.** We do not think the CB-13, which would officially establish a Trap-Neuter-Return program in Howard County, will accomplish those goals.

**TNR IS NEITHER HUMANE NOR EFFECTIVE.** It is certainly not to birds that die in agony, nor to the cats. TNR returns cats to the outdoors, where they are subject to weather, disease, predators, cars, and food insecurity. Feral cats in the main do not die a natural death. In fact, for this reason, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, (PETA) strongly oppose TNR as inhumane, both to cats and their victims. Dr. Michael Fox, former Vice-President of the Humane Society of the United States, also condemns the practice, calling TNR "good in theory only" and "a total failure."

Peer-reviewed studies have shown that TNR only rarely reduces the numbers of cats. The only studies where numbers have shrunk have been small colonies of less than 50, or in isolated locations that do not allow immigration of new cats and somewhat effective programs combine aggressive adoption and euthanasia to accomplish the documented reduction. And TNR does not reduce numbers in the short term, as the cats are put back into place. One can reasonably ask, when will numbers actually begin to decline, and how many TNR colonies actually disappear with time as they are supposed to do? One study which a prominent TNR advocacy organization cites as a "success," documents a program in the Florida Keys that took 22 years to reduce the number of cats by 55%. The same organization also cites two studies done in California and New Mexico as proof that TNR works, but uses reduction in shelter intake and euthanasia as a measure of success, without measure of colony size. That organization's "Trap-Neuter-Return Research Compendium" cites but two cases where a TNR colony disappeared. In one case, it took 16 years, in the other, 10 years. One would think if the program was so successful, they

would cite numerous cases, rather than just two.

For so-called “successful” TNR colonies, an ecological principle called the “vacuum effect” happens. The niche formerly occupied and patrolled by the decreasing population of TNR cats opens up a vacuum that other feral non-TNR cats, also called “immigrant cats” flow into to continue the hyper predation in that niche. Nature abhors a vacuum is not just a saying: it is a principle and a reality documented by studies. In addition, humans add to the problem. With knowledge of the existence and location of TNR colonies some people dump unwanted and un-TNR treated cats into the cat colonies.

**TNR CATS STILL KILL BIRDS AND WILDLIFE.** These programs do nothing to help our declining bird populations. The area around a TNR site is likely to become devoid of small passerine birds and other small prey, which, in turn, can no longer support native predators. This process is known as “hyper predation.” Cardinals, Blue Jays, Robins, Juncos, Sparrows, and other ground birds will all continue to be killed. But these are common birds, so you might think that there are lots of them, just like there used to be of the Passenger Pigeon. This predation is already happening with or without TNR, but a key difference here is that you will be legislating it to document your complicity.

**TNR AND FREE ROAMING CATS ARE A THREAT TO PUBLIC AND WILDLIFE HEALTH.** While the cats are supposed to be vaccinated against rabies and other diseases, they rarely get the periodic booster shots needed to maintain immunity or to receive continuity of care. Lack of continuity of veterinary care meets the CB13-2024 definition of cruelty. Maryland and surrounding states have one of the highest rates of rabies in cats, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Yet TNR programs are not required to treat cats as rabies vectors, which is required of wildlife rehabilitators who deal with species such as racoons or foxes. Proponents of TNR cite low probability of rabies in the program. How many cases of TNR program caused rabies due to lack of vaccination continuity are acceptable to you and the community? Is it one? Is it some higher number?

**CATS SPREAD TOXOPLASMA GONDII.** As the definitive host, they are the only source of the parasite in the environment. Toxoplasmosis is a leading cause of human death from food-borne illness and has been linked to brain and behavioral changes in humans. Of concern is that over 60 million people are infected in the U.S. The CDC states that the best way to keep cats from getting infected by *Toxoplasma gondii* is to keep them indoors. Toxoplasmosis also infects wildlife, and has been found in white-tailed deer. There is no assertion that feral or TNR cats do not carry this parasite, it is a fact. So, understanding this, how many sick residents or worse that become affected by this parasite are acceptable to you if you vote to approve this legislation? Despite not being able to empirically trace any one illness to the TNR program, are you comfortable with endorsing your complicity with this understanding?

**HUMANE CAT REDUCTION SUGGESTIONS:** The following steps can reduce the number of cats in a humane way, which in turn will benefit wildlife, public health, wildlife health, and the cats.

- Strongly promote adoption programs by animal control agencies and local governments as well as other appropriate solutions such as enclosed sanctuaries-remove them from the ecosystem where neither wildlife nor public health are threatened.
- Aggressively educate the public on the problem of cat overpopulation and the need for neutering and vaccination.
- Encourage cat owners to neuter their cats if not engaged in breeding.
- Encourage cat owners to keep their cats indoors or leashed or fenced when outdoors. A good resource for those wishing to expose their cats to the outdoors without hurting wildlife is the American Bird Conservancy's Cats Indoors! Program.
- Enact and enforce local municipal and county leash and licensing laws, with requirement of microchipping.
- Fully fund municipal and county animal control agencies.
- Provide low-cost or free neutering programs by local governments and

humane organizations.

- Require animal control agencies to use euthanasia only as a last resort, while ensuring that genuine pets are not accidentally put down.
- That MOS continues a dialogue on this issue with organizations and government agencies to devise the most appropriate, humane, and conservation-minded solutions to the issues.

To conclude, CB-13 is bad for birds, public health, wildlife health, and the cats themselves.

**We urge the Council to table this bill for further study and demonstrable action on the recommendations offered above.**

**Richard Deutschmann  
9485 Hickory Limb  
Columbia, MD. 21045**

**From:** [Jo & Bob Solem](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13-2024: TNR  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 10:40:20 AM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:  
We support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club:

Do not pass the legislation in its current form!

The Maryland Ornithological Society/Howard County Bird Club researched the problem and has made available the scientific studies backing up their testimony (even if there are not citations included in the material they provided).

None of us want to see cats suffer, but we must do something to lower or stop the negative effects of feral cats on the environment.

TNR is neither humane nor effective.

TNR cats still kill birds and wildlife.

TNR and free roaming cats are a threat fo public and wildlife health.

Cats spread *Toxoplasma gondii*.

At the very least, you need to table it until it can be amended into a sensible bill. If you are unwilling to do that, vote it down and be done with it.

Robert and Joanne Solem  
10617 Graeloch Road  
Laurel, MD 20723

**From:** [Robert Kendall](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 11:40:08 AM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club.

Robert L. Kendall, 10588 Jason Lane, Columbia, MD 21044

**From:** [sabrina lovell](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [Jung, Debra](#)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 1:43:29 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council members,

Please do not pass CB-13 on Trap, Neuter and Release of feral cats. While I like cats very much, I also support the preservation of our local, state and national wildlife and ecosystems, which suffer severe negative impacts from outdoor cats. Outdoor cats, including feral cats, kill extraordinary numbers of birds, and other small wildlife every year, contributing to the decline in many of our common and rare bird species. As a birder and concerned citizen, we need to do everything we can to protect our nation's birds. All native birds are federally protected under the International Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (MBTA), with exceptions for game birds and incidental take. Allowing TNR programs to continue is in direct violation of this law. Additionally, peer-reviewed studies have shown that TNR does little to reduce the numbers of cats in the environment over the short or long term.

I am also very familiar with the problem of feral cat colonies spreading *Toxoplasma Gondii* (particularly in places like Hawaii where it spreads to endangered monk seals) so not only are outdoor cats bad for bird populations, but they can spread disease to other mammals, such as white-tailed deer, and of course, humans which makes this a public health issue as well.

Another important consideration is that wildlife watching is enjoyed by over half the US population 16 years and older (USFWS, 2022). 148.3 million US residents, 57% of the population over 16, enjoy watching wildlife, and of that birds were the greatest focus, with 96.3 million people watching. Of those, 91.1 million watched them around the home, while 44%, 42.6 million, took trips away from home to observe birds, averaging 78 days of birding in 2022 for all birders. More importantly, 63% percent of all the dollars spent in 2022 for wildlife-related recreation was due to wildlife watching. Participants in wildlife watching spent \$250.2 billion, an average of \$2,188 per spender. These expenditures then go on to generate large economic impacts both locally, statewide, and nationally. The benefit-cost analysis one might do would surely come out in favor of conservation and protection of wildlife versus TNR.

The American Bird Conservancy has an informative website detailing the issues, with outdoor cats impacts on wildlife, with a list of cited scientific studies, including those on TNR. From their website:

"Predation by domestic cats is the number-one direct, human-caused threat to birds in the United States and Canada. In the United States alone, outdoor cats kill approximately 2.4 billion birds every year. Although this number may seem unbelievable, it represents the combined impact of tens of millions of outdoor cats. Each outdoor cat plays a part."

<https://abcbirds.org/program/cats-indoors/cats-and-birds/#:~:text=Outdoor%20domestic%20cats%20are%20a,extinction%2C%20such%20as%20Piping%20Plover.>

Instead of CB-13,

Here are steps we can take, that will make a bigger difference to birds and other wildlife:

- Strongly promote adoption programs by animal control agencies and local governments as well as other appropriate solutions such as enclosed sanctuaries-remove them from the ecosystem where neither wildlife nor public health are threatened.
- Aggressively educate the public on the problem of cat overpopulation and the need for neutering and vaccination.
- Encourage cat owners to neuter their cats if not engaged in breeding.
- Encourage cat owners to keep their cats indoors or leashed or fenced when outdoors. A good resource for



those wishing to expose their cats to the outdoors without hurting wildlife is the American Bird Conservancy's Cats Indoors! Program.

- Enact and enforce local municipal and county leash and licensing laws, with requirement of microchipping.
- Fully fund municipal and county animal control agencies.
- Provide low-cost or free neutering programs by local governments and humane organizations.
- Require animal control agencies to use euthanasia only as a last resort, while ensuring that genuine pets are not accidentally put down.

To conclude, CB-13 is bad for birds, public health, wildlife health, and the cats themselves.

I very strongly suggest that the Council table this bill for further study and demonstrable action on the recommendations offered above.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sabrina Lovell, PhD

6474 River Run

Columbia MD 21044

U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2022 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation available at

[https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Final\\_2022-National-Survey\\_101223-accessible-single-page.pdf](https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Final_2022-National-Survey_101223-accessible-single-page.pdf)

**From:** [Stephanie Oberle](mailto:Stephanie.Oberle@howardcountymd.gov)  
**To:** [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilMail](mailto:CouncilMail@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 3:06:51 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club.

Trap-neuter-release programs for feral cats do not work. Cats are an invasive exotic species that have decimated populations of native birds and other animals. CB-13 is bad for birds, the public, and the environment.

Use scientific data, not emotions, to develop good policy. Don't waste tax dollars on a TNR program that has been shown not to work.

I urge you to table this bill and work with credible organizations to develop a new program that can effectively stop the impact of feral cats on the environment.

Stephanie Oberle  
7018 Newberry Drive  
Columbia, MD. 21044  
301-318-6866

**From:** [Tom Franklin](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** Howard County Council Council bill CB13-2024  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 2:17:59 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Council Members:

I strongly urge the Howard County Council to table Council bill CB13-2024 concerning Trap-Neuter-Release of feral cats for further study and demonstrable action. The information offered below explains the view on this issue by The Wildlife Society, the international association of professional wildlife biologists and managers.

"Trap-neuter-release (TNR) is often considered as a humane solution to reducing feral cat overpopulation, and involves catching, vaccinating, sterilizing, and then releasing feral cats. With a long-term commitment of resources—and the sterilization of approximately 71-94% of a population—this type of high-intensity management can theoretically reduce feral cat colonies. However, numerous long-term scientific studies have shown TNR programs to be ineffective or even counterproductive because they enable the abandonment of owned cats, thus resulting in the indefinite maintenance of feral cat colonies. This compounds the problems caused by feral cats and justifies the continued presence of an invasive species in North America. As a result, TNR undermines the work of wildlife professionals and severely jeopardizes the integrity of native biodiversity."

Please include this email in the hearing record. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Thomas M. Franklin  
Certified Wildlife Biologist®  
17504 Timberleigh Way  
Woodbine, MD 21797-7929

**From:** [Tony Raymond](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 2:07:42 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club.

**From:** [Val Swan](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Sunday, March 17, 2024 4:39:25 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club. I am so very proud of my county for the Safe Skies initiatives to protect birds. There have been huge losses of birds since the 70's with window strikes, habitat loss, and predation by cats being the main reasons. TNR could quite possibly negate all of the good created by Safe Skies. I am a bird and cat lover and would much prefer our leaders to help cats find proper homes. Please reverse your thinking concerning TNR.

Thank you, Val Swan  
13735 Barberry Way

**From:** [Amy Martin](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** Cat Colonies  
**Date:** Monday, March 18, 2024 6:37:46 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Esteemed Council Members of Howard County,

I am writing to ask that you not allow the TNR bill for feral cats. Feral cats, if caught and found to be unadoptable, need to be humanely put down. Allowing invasive feral cats to roam free endangers our struggling, native species.

According to <https://mdinvasives.org/iotm/april-2010/>, birds, especially nestlings or fledglings, make up 20% of a feral cat's diet. According to the Chesapeake Bay Program, <https://www.chesapeakebay.net/news/blog/outdoor-cats-ruffle-feathers>, some of our iconic local birds, such as the Baltimore Oriole, Eastern BlueBird, and Ruby-throated Hummingbird face predation by feral cats. According to the same website, studies say that between 1.3 billion and 4 billion birds are killed in the US by cats, 2/3 of which are feral. That is a huge number, and not sustainable.

Anyone who has ever had a bird feeder, or enjoyed watching birds, has experienced the joy of seeing these beautiful birds in action. I have seen it, and hope that my children and grandchildren will get to see it too. But if we allow populations of feral cats to go unchecked, they may not get to see these beloved birds. Additionally, reducing the bird population increases the mosquito population because many birds eat mosquitos.

Cats do not kill because they are "bad", but simply because they are born to be hunters. They cannot be retrained, even the best of "good kitties" will kill if given the opportunity. Feral cats, even those with cat food available outside, will still kill because, although fluffy, small, and cute, they are predators.

The Smithsonian says that, if this were not enough, 6.9 billion to 20.7 billion small mammals are also killed by feral cats in the US, 285 million to 822 million reptiles and 95 million to 299 amphibians also die by the paw of feral felines in the US. Many amphibians and reptiles are suffering from the additional stresses of habitat loss and climate change. See <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/feral-cats-kill-billions-of-small-critters-each-year-7814590/>

While some may think that TNR is better than humanely euthanizing, I disagree. The best option is to trap these cats, and if possible, re-home them in a loving human family that will keep them indoors. If they are not adoptable, they need to be put down. Feral cats can carry diseases such as rabies and spread them to pets and people. Feral cats also may suffer from diseases because they are not vaccinated.

This article from NOLA [https://www.nola.com/archive/booming-feral-cat-populations-are-a-disaster-science-says-here-are-15-reasons-why/article\\_eb5c5aae-d596-552f-995d-6dfbe87ce68f.html](https://www.nola.com/archive/booming-feral-cat-populations-are-a-disaster-science-says-here-are-15-reasons-why/article_eb5c5aae-d596-552f-995d-6dfbe87ce68f.html) reminds us that food left out for feral community cats also feeds feral community rats. The same articles states that many feral cats carry toxoplasmosis. Also, they suggested that the TNR programs did not reduce populations because other unneutered/unspayed cats moved in.

Yes, it is sad to put down cats. But, we have a choice to make. Do we rather have feral cats wandering, killing everything smaller than themselves? This means no, or fewer songbirds, more mosquitoes, more ticks (cats kill snakes, which kill mice, which harbor ticks, so fewer snakes means more mice and ticks), and a greater chance of contracting rabies and/or toxoplasmosis.

Or, are we willing to put down unadoptable, invasive feral cats that may be suffering anyway, and see our native ecologically important birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians thrive? I vote for the second



choice. All invasive species problems are difficult. Yet we do not advocate for growing kudzu or helping the spotted lanternfly thrive. Nor are we trying to breed the Murder Hornets from Asia. We are trying to stop those species because we recognize them as detrimental to our delicate ecology. Similarly, feral cats need to be either re-homed or taken out of our already stressed ecosystem.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Amy Martin  
Columbia, Maryland

**From:** [Ann](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** TNR program  
**Date:** Monday, March 18, 2024 8:39:26 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hello. I am writing on behalf of the community cats of Howard county. I am a caretaker of many colonies in Howard county, Baltimore county and Anne Arundel. We need a program like this in Howard county which is long overdue. These cats have not asked to be thrown outside and reproduce constantly. If it weren't for people this would not be happening. They deserve a chance. I have spent endless hours trapping and spaying, neutering these cats. They deserve a chance. I have always said that Howard county is the only county that does not have such a program and we have more funds then most of the other counties. I pay high taxes and believe some of my tax money should go to helping these colonies . We need to have our own facility which does the spaying and neutering along with vaccines. Barcs of Baltimore City does a tremendous job and so can Howard county. Thank you Ann Mansfield

[Sent from AOL on Android](#)

## Anderson, Isaiah

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**From:** Barbara Winter Watson <bwinterwatson@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 18, 2024 11:27 AM  
**To:** CouncilMail; CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov; CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov; coucildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov; CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov; CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club in opposition to CB13.

Feral cat populations have killed billions of birds and rodents and amphibians.

The capture, neuter and release programs have not been shown definitively to reduce their populations fast enough to prevent the environmental destruction associated with cats and do not prevent toxoplasma infections or other diseases that affect these populations.

As a Howard County resident, I urge you to not pass the proposed legislation CB13 as written.

Sincerely,

Barbara Winter Watson  
Ellicott City, MD

**From:** [Bettye Maki](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Monday, March 18, 2024 4:19:41 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council,

I am writing in favor of bill (CB13-2024). TNR is an excellent program that has humanely reduced the feral cat population by the thousands. I strongly support your passage of this bill.

I would like to share some personal experiences with you as a person who has actively trapped, neutered, and returned around 300 cats working with many people who support a colony of cats.

I am also a birder and have been the president of an MOS chapter for 5.5 years, I am aware of the decline of our bird population.

However, I see climate changes, loss of habitat, wind turbines, poisonous chemicals, wind turbines as a more serious threat to birds than predators such as hawks, owls, cats, foxes, racoons, squirrels.

I recently received an email against this bill as it stands, I will use the format of this email for my talking points.

### **TNR IS NEITHER HUMANE OR EFFECTIVE.**

TNR is humane and effective. Each cat put through TNR has a sponsor who has cared enough to trap, or get this cat trapped by someone else and has agreed to monitor this cat afterwards. Each cat has its left ear clipped so an observer can see that it has been neutered. Each cat is examined for health, its teeth, ears, and all over body condition, all clinics inoculate for FVRCP (feline distemper) and some inoculate for Felv/FIV (feline leukemia) neither of these are transmissible to humans. Each cat is held for a day or two after surgery to be sure it recovers and is eating. If a cat is missing important canine teeth, it is not released back to its colony. If a socialized cat appears it will go into an adoption program.

If kittens are discovered they are fostered, then put into an adoption program.

The sponsor of a cat colony will feed daily, they will monitor the colony and are aware when a new cat arrives, this cat will be trapped and neutered also.

How can TNR not be effective? Since Christmas this year, I have personally trapped 10 females, each female has an average litter of 4 kittens. Without TNR there could be 40 kittens born this spring. When the kittens are about 10 weeks old the female can get pregnant again, 40 more kittens are born in the

fall. So now the 10 females have increased their numbers to 90 cats. These spring kittens reach sexual maturity when they are 8 months old. Good news is, since the 10 females have been spayed the number remains at 10.

I have only occasionally trapped a cat that was 6 years or older, all are younger. As any animal living out of doors, they are subject to predators like hawks, owls, racoons' foxes, vultures, and cars. It is plain to see that if cats are not reproducing their numbers will soon decline. Anyone who raises chickens knows how hard it is to outsmart these predators. Some people may think it is terrible that these cats are subject to these dangers, however, they live happy free lives as wild creatures as long as they can.

### **TNR CATS STILL KILL BIRDS AND WILDLIFE;**

Yes, a certain amount of wildlife will be killed by cats as it is by hawks, owls, vultures, foxes, racoons, cars etc. Since food for these cats is being supplemented, they are less driven to hunt so therefore will kill less.

Where I am now trapping cats the bird life is abundant, small passerine are hopping from bush to bush, all the regular Maryland birds are in this area. Birds are very observant and aware of cats; they readily give an alarm call when a cat appears.

1 – 3 billion birds each year are killed by free roaming cats? This figure, leads me to ask where is the research? I have looked but have not found documentation on any field studies of someone following feral cats to enumerate each bird they killed. Are not scientific studies performed by actual observation?

### **Where do these numbers of birds killed by cats come from? Are they actual scientific facts?**

### **TNR AND FREE ROAMING CATS ARE A THREAT TO PUBLIC AND WILDLIFE HEALTH**

Toxoplasma Gondii is carried by more then 40 million people in the US. How do they contact this parasite? By eating raw or undercooked meat containing the parasite and by the rare possibility of cat contaminated fecal material. (Mayo Clinic)

How many people will have their hands in cat fecal material?

**FROM THE [MARYLAND.GOV](http://MARYLAND.GOV) WEBSITE**

How common is rabies in Maryland? According to the CDC it is most often found in raccoons, skunks, foxes, bats, cats, and groundhogs in this order. Cats are not implicated enough to warrant fear. In 2021 there were 177 cases of rabies reported in Maryland, 19 were cat, 97 were racoon.

**PETA's VIEW ON FERAL CAT TNR** (Taken from their website)

We believe that trap, vaccinate, spay/neuter and release programs are acceptable when the cats are isolated from roads, people and other animals who could harm them; regularly attended to by people who not only feed them but care for their medical needs.

Another of PETA's concerns is that a cat once trapped will be difficult to re-trap if it becomes ill or injured. From personal experience this is not true in general, there is always an exception, the colony I am presently trapping has approximately 31 cats, I have caught 27, I have a hard time keeping the ones I have already caught out of the traps so I can catch new ones.

I have trapped for many people, they call me because they care about their free roaming cats, they help with spay/neuter costs, they provide food, water, and shelter for their colony. These people are nature lovers who are protective of all living creatures.

Respectfully submitted

Bettye Maki

**From:** [Brooke Tyson](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** Legislative Public Hearing - CB13-24 Testimony - Brooke Tyson  
**Date:** Monday, March 18, 2024 6:39:01 PM  
**Attachments:** [CB13-24 Testimony - Brooke Tyson-2.pdf](#)

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hello,

Attached is a copy of my testimony for Legislative Public Hearing - CB13-24 Testimony.

Thank you,  
Brooke Tyson

--

**Brooke Tyson**  
Brooke Tyson Photography  
[BrookeTysonPhotography.com](http://BrookeTysonPhotography.com)  
[Brooke@BrookeTysonPhotography.com](mailto:Brooke@BrookeTysonPhotography.com)  
215.806.2476

[Facebook](#) // [Instagram](#) // [Blog](#)



Hello,

My name is Brooke Tyson and I am a lifelong Howard County resident, a cat owner, and a professor of English at Howard Community College. I am testifying in support of CB13-24 to develop a TNR, or trap-neuter-return, program in Howard County.

TNR programs work to reduce the number of feral or community cats.

In 2020, researchers Daniel Spehar and Peter Wolf wrote that, “a growing collection of evidence that associates trap–neuter–return (TNR) programs with substantial and sustained reductions in community cat populations across a variety of environments has recently emerged” (Spehar and Wolf).

A number of recent studies support this. Laurel Cats, a local nonprofit, completed a nine year study of Laurel’s community cat population. In 2015, the number of community cats in Laurel was just under 500. In 2024, that number has declined by 61% to under 200 cats due to TNR efforts. Other studies have shown similar results. For example, a 16 year study of community cats in the San Francisco Bay Area showed a decline of community cats by more than 99% due to TNR efforts, with a starting number of 258 cats and just one cat at the end of the study (Spehar and Wolf). In that study, “no cats [were] euthanized except for untreatable illness and injury” (Boone et al).

In another journal article, researcher John Boone concluded that “With sufficient intensity, management by TNR offers significant advantages in terms of combined lifesaving and population size reduction” (Boone et al).

We need to develop a TNR program in Howard County to support the cats in our community.

TNR reduces the community cat population. It reduces the number of cats that are suffering due to lack of food or care. It reduces the number of cats that can be

hit or killed by vehicles. It reduces the number of cats that will go on to produce litter after litter of kittens.

The Humane Society of the United States advocates that one of the key ways to solve cat overpopulation - which will ultimately reduce the number of cats entering our county shelter - is through "Spaying and neutering of community cats through strategic, high-intensity TNR and related programs." One unaltered female cat can produce up to three litters of kittens a year, with each litter ranging from 4-6 kittens, on average. One unaltered cat and her offspring can produce hundreds and even thousands of cats in just a few years. The Humane Society of the United States also states "If enough cats in a community are TNR'd, the population will stabilize and over time, will decline and eventually die out" ("Outdoor Cat FAQ"). By spaying and neutering community cats, we can work to put an end to this problem and reduce the community cat population ethically.

It's important that we protect those that reside in our county and that we provide resources and methods that will manage issues in our county ethically and with compassion.

Thank you for your time.

## Works Cited and Consulted

Boone, John D et al. "A Long-Term Lens: Cumulative Impacts of Free-Roaming Cat Management Strategy and Intensity on Preventable Cat Mortalities." *Frontiers in veterinary science* vol. 6 238. 26 Jul. 2019, doi:10.3389/fvets.2019.00238

Gow, Elizabeth A., et al. "Popular Press Portrayal of Issues Surrounding free-roaming Domestic Cats Felis Catus." *People and Nature*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2022, pp. 143-154. *ProQuest*, <https://libproxy.howardcc.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/popular-press-portrayal-issues-surrounding-free/docview/2624068621/se-2>, doi:<https://doi.org/10.1002/pan3.10269>.

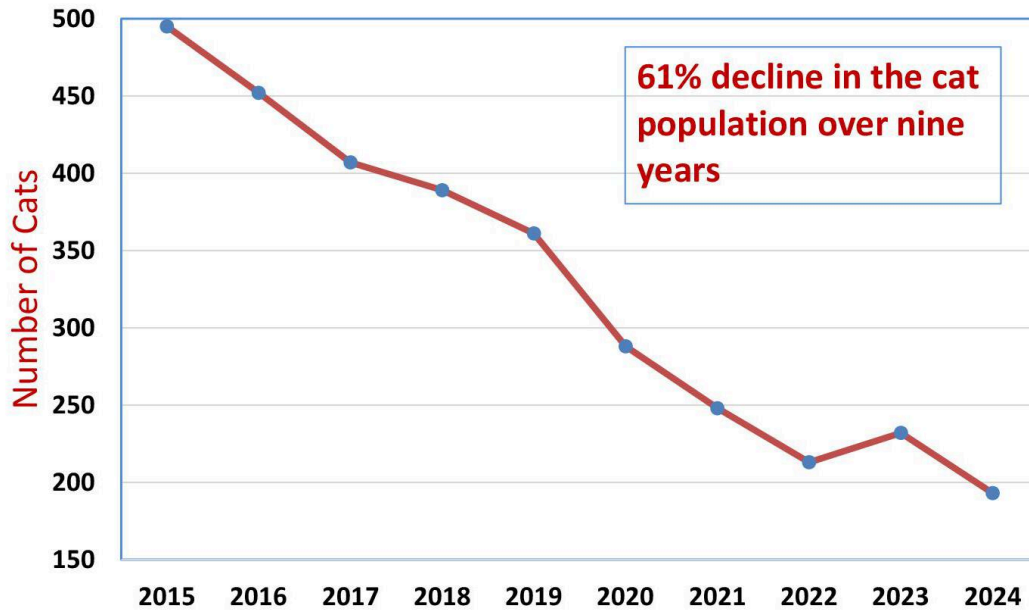
Lambert, Robert. "Cats can be Managed in a Way that Protects Birds: MARYLAND VOICES." *The Baltimore Sun*, Mar 02, 2013. *ProQuest*, <https://libproxy.howardcc.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/cats-can-be-managed-way-that-protects-birds/docview/1314523866/se-2>.

"Laurel Cat Population of Colonies Surveyed Since 2015." Laurel Cats, [laurelcats.org/](http://laurelcats.org/). Accessed 18 Mar. 2024.

*Outdoor Cats FAQ*, The Humane Society of the United States, [www.humanesociety.org/resources/outdoor-cats-faq#TNR](http://www.humanesociety.org/resources/outdoor-cats-faq#TNR). Accessed 18 Mar. 2024.

Spehar, Daniel D, and Peter J Wolf. "The Impact of Targeted Trap-Neuter-Return Efforts in the San Francisco Bay Area." *Animals : an open access journal from MDPI* vol. 10,11 2089. 11 Nov. 2020, doi:10.3390/ani10112089

## Laurel Cat Population Of Colonies Surveyed Since 2015



**From:** [Charles Beers](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Monday, March 18, 2024 8:23:47 AM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club.

Please do not pass the TNR and feel like you have done something good. It won't get rid of feral cats and we have to eliminate feral cats. They are a health hazard to our kids as well as to the general community.

Further, the county executive needs to address this issue in one of his county issuances we receive in email about monthly, noting to cat owners and lovers that letting their cats out at night is NOT good. "My cat loves to go out" doesn't cut it.

Charles Beers

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Eileen Clegg](mailto:Eileen.Clegg@howardcountymd.gov)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](mailto:CouncilMail@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Subject:** Agreement with Maryland Ornithological Society position on CB13  
**Date:** Monday, March 18, 2024 12:18:10 AM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Members of the Howard County Council:

I support the position taken by the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club in full concerning CB13.

As a member of the very active Howard County Bird Club (350 members +) and the Maryland Ornithological Society, for over 40 years, I strongly oppose CB13.

Outside cats are predators of our native and local wild bird life. Feral cats take a particularly high toll of birdlife due to predation, especially young fledglings, ground nesting birds, including migratory song, and game birds.

Feral cats resist being caught, thus many lack the necessary shots needed to prevent diseases in animals and humans. PETA does not support feral cat programs. It takes years, decades in some cases to reduce or eliminate a feral cat colony.

Enforcement of feral cat policies is difficult.

The ethical treatment of animals, both WILD and domestic should be measured and considered in this feral cat decision. WILD BIRD populations are under drastic pressures due to predation from feral cats, domestic cats that are allowed outside, loss of habitat and changing weather patterns. Humans are the only ones who are able to advocate for their survival.

Please table CB13 for further insight, research. SUPPORT WILD BIRD LIFE in MARYLAND and HOWARD COUNTY.

Eileen Clegg  
6007 Flywheel Court  
Columbia, Md 21044

**From:** [sig29@aol.com](mailto:sig29@aol.com)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](mailto:CouncilMail@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict1@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict2@howardcountymd.gov);  
[councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:councildistrict3@howardcountymd.gov); [CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict4@howardcountymd.gov);  
[CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:CouncilDistrict5@howardcountymd.gov)  
**Cc:** [Kurt Schwarz](#); [Jo & Bob Solem](#); [Sue Muller](#); [Mary Lou Clark](#); [Val Swan](#); [Charles Stirrat](#); [Robin Todd](#)  
**Subject:** CB13-2024 TNR "Catio" Concept  
**Date:** Monday, March 18, 2024 3:43:57 PM  
**Importance:** High

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Esteemed council members-

As part of a more humane, healthy, and environmentally friendly strategy, the Maryland Ornithological Society, Howard County Bird Club, and other organizations such as the American Bird Conservancy have proposed the use of "catios" to **contain** rather than to **release** Trapped, Neutered, Vaccinated feral cats. The pictured catio was built by a friend that truly cares for her community cats, their welfare, native wildlife, and the welfare of her community. We recommend Community Cat advocates act to build and maintain these structures at their own expense both for the good of the feral cats they so fiercely advocate for and for the good of our community.

The benefits of a catio are as follows: humane environment for cats: safe from the elements, not in danger of being run over, no exposure to diseased feral, non-TNR cats, and safe from larger predators. With regard to public health, the TN cats are not hunting on, encroaching on, or defecating on neighbors' property with its attendant identified health risks. With regard to our precious native fauna, this ceases the TNR cats' unnecessary slaughter of native small mammals, birds, and herps (reptiles and amphibians). A feral cat or any cat for that matter, is an invasive, apex-predator, and still hunts for sport even if they have a reliable source of cat food.

This pictured catio is 12' X 30', double-screened to keep out mosquitoes, has ½" by ½" square screening to keep cats in and predators out. This catio has air conditioning and heating simply because the owners like spending time year-round with their cats. This fairly elaborate design is not a prescription, but an example of what has been done demonstrating loving care and respect for cats while not demanding that our community sanction and bear the unnecessary risks posed by free roaming cats.

Respectfully,

[Gregg Petersen](#)

President, [Howard County Bird Club](#)

Cell: 202-256-8166

Columbia, MD



**From:** [Jennifer Bevan-Dangel](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Cc:** [Danielle Bays \(she/her\)](#)  
**Subject:** HSUS testimony in support of CB13-2024  
**Date:** Monday, March 18, 2024 12:17:49 PM  
**Attachments:** [Outlook-HSUS-logo-](#)  
[Outlook-facebook-i](#)  
[Outlook-twitter-ic](#)  
[Outlook-blog-icon-](#)  
[HSUS Support for CB13-2024 TNR Howard County MD.pdf](#)

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hello,

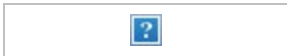
Please find attached the written testimony from the Humane Society of the United States in support of CB13-2024, Trap Neuter Return Program - Establishment. I look forward to testifying virtually this evening; I apologize for not being in person, I have a few legislative issues that are being debated in Annapolis this evening as well.

If you have any questions please contact myself or our policy expert, Danielle Bays, who is cc'd here.

Thank you,

**Jennifer Bevan-Dangel**  
Maryland State Director, State Affairs  
*Pronouns: she/her*

[jbevandangel@humanesociety.org](mailto:jbevandangel@humanesociety.org)  
C 410-303-7954  
[humanesociety.org](http://humanesociety.org)



**Fight for all animals.** The Humane Society of the United States is the nation's most effective animal protection organization, fighting for all animals for more than 60 years. To support our work, please make a [monthly donation](#), give in [another way](#) or [volunteer](#).





March 18, 2024

Deb Jung, Chair  
Howard County Council  
3430 Court House Drive  
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Re: Support CB13-2024 Trap-Neuter-Return

Dear Chair Jung and members of the Council,

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), the nation's largest animal protection organization, understands that managing community cats is a complex issue that concerns many local leaders and agencies mandated to serve and protect the public. Cat management should be designed to protect public safety, protect cats, and provide animal control agencies with effective, proactive, humane tools to manage cat populations. We support and promote strategic, non-lethal management of community cats who already exist outdoors through sterilization and vaccination efforts, such as trap-neuter-return (TNR). Our publication, [Managing Community Cats: A Guide for Municipal Leaders](#), outlines the efficacy and benefits of non-lethal management for unowned community cats.

The HSUS supports the proposed Trap-Neuter-Return Program amendments to Howard County's animal ordinance and the efforts of local stakeholders to implement TNR and other proven strategies for addressing free-roaming cats for the benefit of all residents of your community. The updates enable the county's animal control division to set guidelines for conducting TNR as well as supports the countless residents who provide food, water, shelter and veterinary care to the county's community cats. The new law will also clarify that caring for these cats is not a de facto nuisance, rather there must be a mitigating factor to declare the action such.

Community cat programs are now the standard for animal shelters across the country, combining community-based trap-neuter return with shelter policies allowing healthy stray cats to be sterilized and vaccinated then returned to their outdoor home and efforts to rehome young kittens. Many animal control agencies and animal shelters work with their community to ensure the sterilization and vaccination of community cats and provide support to the people who care for them, with more than half directly participating in sterilizing and returning cats. It's estimated that almost one third of shelters have staff positions dedicated to community cat programs. This is a testament to how effective these efforts are.

After a century of removing cats from the outdoors without having an impact on their numbers, shelter professionals have found trap-neuter-return based programs are far more effective in both saving lives within the shelter and decreasing the overall population of free-roaming cats in our communities. A number of studies have been published to support this:



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- A community cat program at the University of Central Florida in the 1990s reduced cat population by 85% over the course of 10 years.<sup>1</sup>
- A population of over 300 cats in Newburyport, MA was eliminated through a concerted TNR effort paired with rehoming of adoptable kittens.<sup>2</sup>
- A 67% decrease in cat population was found in a Chicago neighborhood targeted for TNR, over the course of 8 years.<sup>3</sup>
- A study of TNR in rural North Carolina compared the impact of TNR with control groups. There was a 36% mean decrease where TNR was employed (range 30-89%) versus a 47% mean *increase* of control groups – where the actual increases across the three sites were 31%, 127%, 283%.<sup>4</sup>

Sadly, kittens born to the cats currently living outdoors, if not sterilized, will continue to fill the shelter at taxpayer expense or they will perish – only 25% of kittens born outdoors survive past 6 months of age. These deaths are preventable with TNR.

A study of data from before and after community cat programs were implemented six shelters across the country found a 40% decline in kitten intake with a 32% decline in overall cat intake and a corresponding 87% decline in kittens euthanized and an 83% decline in overall feline euthanasia.<sup>5</sup>

Trap-neuter-return programs are supported by the [American Association of Feline Practitioners](#) and the [Association of Shelter Veterinarians](#) as well as a plethora of other veterinary organizations and individual veterinary professionals. The [American Bar Association](#) also supports TNR, encouraging county and municipal governments to adopt laws that allow residents to engage in TNR and the ongoing management of free-roaming cats.

The National Animal Care and Control Association, a professional organization for animal control and humane law enforcement officers, also favors TNR over trap and remove. In a statement on [Animal Control Intake of Free-Roaming Cats](#), it states: It is the position of NACA that indiscriminate pick up or admission of healthy, free-roaming cats, regardless of temperament, for any purpose other than TNR/SNR, **fails to serve**

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<sup>1</sup> Levy, J. K., Gale, D. W., & Gale, L. A. (2003). Evaluation of the effect of a long-term trap-neuter-return and adoption program on a free-roaming cat population. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, 222(1), 42-46. doi:10.2460/javma.2003.222.42

<sup>2</sup> Spehar, D., & Wolf, P. (2017). An Examination of an Iconic Trap-Neuter-Return Program: The Newburyport, Massachusetts Case Study. *Animals*, 7(11), 81.

<sup>3</sup> Spehar, D., & Wolf, P. (2018). A Case Study in Citizen Science: The Effectiveness of a Trap-Neuter-Return Program in a Chicago Neighborhood. *Animals*, 8(1), 14.

<sup>4</sup> Stoskopf, M. K., & Nutter, F. B. (2004). Analyzing approaches to feral cat management—one size does not fit all. *J Am Vet Med Assoc*, 225(9), 1361-1364.

<sup>5</sup> Spehar, D. D., & Wolf, P. J. (2019). Integrated Return-To-Field and Targeted Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return Programs Result in Reductions of Feline Intake and Euthanasia at Six Municipal Animal Shelters [Original Research]. 6(77). <https://doi.org/10.3389/fvets.2019.00077>



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commonly held goals of community animal management and protection programs and, as such, is a misuse of time and public funds and should be avoided.

A trap-and-remove management scheme is simply ineffective and expensive. Consider a scenario where an officer traps and removes a portion of the cats, possibly satisfying the initial complaints. The remaining cats will reproduce, and the population will return to the level it was prior to the officer's trapping. The officer will again respond to complaints by removing those cats who are easily trapped, while the remaining cats produce new kittens. The cycle continues and the problem is never solved. The costs associated with various community cat management strategies implemented over the course of ten years was analyzed in a peer-reviewed paper published last year. A summary of the finding is outlined in [Guidance to Better Manage Free-Roaming Cat Populations](#).

Working alongside humane organizations and compassionate citizens to sterilize and stabilize the community's cat population can achieve the shared goal of fewer unowned cats outdoors. Fewer outdoor cats mean fewer community complaints and a reduced risk of predation on wildlife. For reasons mentioned above, TNR programs are the most effective option for protecting native wildlife—not allowing for TNR does not mean cats are removed from outdoors, rather it means they simply aren't managed and are allowed to continue to reproduce. More cats means more of a threat to wildlife.

Moreover, allowing residents to openly manage cat colonies promotes the adoption of sanitary feeding practices, identification, and intervention of new cats to the colony – who may be lost or abandoned – so that they may be reunited or rehomed, and collaboration with authorities when a problem arises. By clearing pathways for cats to be sterilized, an overall reduction in the community's outdoor cat population can be realized more quickly.

Thank you for considering our comments to make your Howard County a healthier and safer place for people, cats, and wildlife. Should you have any questions or desire to discuss this matter in more detail, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We welcome an opportunity to assist you in creating effective, humane policy for cats and your community.

Sincerely,

Danielle Bays  
Senior Analyst, Cat Protection and Policy  
[dbays@humanesociety.org](mailto:dbays@humanesociety.org)  
202-839-2022

Jennifer Bevan-Dangel  
State Director, Maryland  
[jbevandangel@humanesociety.org](mailto:jbevandangel@humanesociety.org)  
410-303-7954

**From:** [joel hurewitz](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** CB13-2024 Trap-Neuter-Return Program – Establishment - Suggested Amendments  
**Date:** Monday, March 18, 2024 7:51:48 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Councilmembers,

Amendments are needed to clarify the readability, interpretation, and application of CB13-2024.

On Page 1, Lines 24-25 "A COMMUNITY CAT CAREGIVER IS NOT THE OWNER OF A COMMUNITY CAT " should be moved to the definition of "Owner" on Page 3, Lines 33-36 and not part of "Animal Care Organization." "Owner" already has a sentence exempting veterinary hospital, commercial boarding or grooming facility. Additionally, "Owner" is relevant to the further discussion of nuisances.

Explicit exemption language should be added to Section 17.302 Nuisances. The bill will exempt the community cats from being treated as running at large under Section 17.302(a)(1), but to what extent do any of the other elements of a nuisance in Section 17.302(a) apply to a community cat especially (a)(9) "A domesticated animal disturbs the public peace"? Section 17.323(c) appears to modify this by requiring a "**significant** disturbance . . . of the public peace." It will be clearer to include new Section 17.323(c), regarding a nuisance of a community cat, as an amendment to Section 17.302. Alternatively, Section 17.302 could have a reference "except as provided in Section 17.323(c) a nuisance does not apply to a community cat."

Furthermore, the bill needs language regarding the procedural steps of a nuisance community cat in Section 17.302(c). The current County Code requires the Animal Control Administrator to "give the owner written notice of (1) The declaration; and (2) the owner's right to appeal the declaration to the [Animal Matters Hearing Board] within seven days." Procedurally, because the community cat has no owner, to whom is the Administrator to provide notice and who has rights to appear on behalf of the community cat before the Animal Matters Hearing Board?

Also need an exemption from Section 17.301(b)(1) which requires a cat license for an individual who "has custody of a ... cat."

Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Joel Hurewitz  
Columbia, MD

**From:** [rsm7@verizon.net](mailto:rsm7@verizon.net)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** Trap-Neuter-Release of feral cats (CB13-2024)  
**Date:** Monday, March 18, 2024 4:10:13 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Council Members,

As a resident of Howard County I'm very concerned about the subject bill. I believe it is unwise to promote the existence of the feral cat population. Feral cats are the main contributors of the decline of the wild bird population. Since feral cats are an invasive species, I do not believe it is wise to encourage their presence in our county to the detriment of our native birds. I strongly encourage you not to pass this bill. Thank you for your consideration!

Ron Martorana  
6729 Pine Drive  
Columbia, MD 21046-1114



**From:** [green12205@gmail.com](mailto:green12205@gmail.com)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** [SUSPECTED SPAM] CB13 - cats  
**Date:** Monday, March 18, 2024 7:39:53 AM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hello,

I am a citizen of Howard County for 30+ years. I love cats and have had them all my life. I do not support this bill. I see nothing in this bill to address the trash that is created by forming cat colonies. I just found a new colony on Wednesday. I was out looking for a Raven nest walking along the edge of the woods when I couldn't help but notice all of the red color on the forest floor. I looked with my binoculars and could see they were red plastic plates. I said uh oh, there must be a colony nearby. I proceeded into the woods and it didn't take me long to find the colony. The red plates were blown into the woods as far as I could see. Why are these people who love cats so much allowed to litter? I can send photos of the plates in the woods if you would like.

Sue

**From:** [Suzanne Probst](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** CB-13 2024  
**Date:** Monday, March 18, 2024 4:30:35 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Dear Howard County Council Members,

I have been living in Columbia for 40+ years. And I have been a 25-year resident of Longfellow in Harper's Choice. I am fortunate enough to back up to permanent open space, and I love attracting birds and other wildlife to our backyard. A number of years ago, a Northern Cardinal family made a nest in a Dwarf Alberta Spruce right outside our front door. It was a delight to watch momma sit on her eggs and then finally hatch them. But on Mother's Day, one of the TNR feral cats in our neighborhood attacked the nest and ate all the babies! I actually saw the cat. I was heartbroken — especially for the cardinal parents! At that time there was a feral cat colony being maintained two streets away. I am almost certain that this cat was a member of that colony, since the cat did not belong to any of my neighbors.

I often find feral cats in my yard stalking the birds that come to my bird feeders. They especially like to go after the small passerines that feed on the ground.

I have been member of the Howard County Bird Club and a "bluebird trail monitor" at Belmont Manor in ElkrIDGE for over 30 years. I try to do my small part to protect the native birds species in our county. As I am sure you know, aside from game birds species (which require a permit to hunt), all our native birds are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918. Even nests are protected! So allowing feral cats to roam and prey on birds, nesting or otherwise, to me is a violation of that Act.

TNR activity can not prevent cats from doing what they naturally do. They are born predators. Even if they are being fed, they still like to hunt.

Unfortunately feral cats can also carry diseases such as rabies and toxoplasmosis, as well as feline leukemia and FIV — deadly to other cats.

I would like to close in saying that I do NOT wish all feral cats be euthanized! I hate to see any creature being killed. But I am saying that this bill should either be retracted or tabled in order to find a better way to deal with this problem of feral cats in Howard County. We should promote public education to ensure people keep all cats indoors — as much for the cats safety as anything! Also, no-kill cat shelters and encouraging cat adoptions. Not all feral cats are a loss cause then it comes to being adopted. I have family members who have successfully adopted stray/feral cats.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Probst  
Howard County Bird Club member and Maryland Master Naturalist  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Tamela Terry](#)  
**To:** [CouncilMail](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: please vote yes for TNR  
**Date:** Monday, March 18, 2024 10:40:53 PM

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[Note: This email originated from outside of the organization. Please only click on links or attachments if you know the sender.]

Hello I am writing in favor of the new TNR legislation that would enable the shelter and volunteers to care for community cats without taking on official ownership of them. There are many advantages to TNR, the strongest being that it's a humane and economical way to curb and control the outdoor cat population.

Tamela Terry  
6321 Beechwood Drive  
Columbia MD 21046