

House Agriculture, Water & Natural Resources

02/10/2025 01:30 PM

HB25-1137 Adopt a Shelter Pet Account Community Cats

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
<p>Ingrid Moore For themselves</p>	<p>Please vote YES to pass this bill.</p> <p>The bill will help communities that have large community cat populations. These are free-roaming domestic cats that may have a caretaker and are not socialized to humans.</p> <p>Many are being fed and/or cared for by individuals, volunteer rescue organizations, clinics, or volunteer spay/neuter organizations who use personal funds or limited donations to try to impact the increase in populations of these community cats.</p> <p>The fund will assist with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Trapping, sterilizing, vaccinating, and ear-tipping community cats in Colorado;Veterinary care for the treatment and sterilization of community cats in Colorado;Education and outreach to promote public awareness of trap-neuter-return programs in Colorado and to encourage community participation;Training for community cat caretakers and animal control personnel in humane trapping and trap-neuter-return protocols in Colorado; and <p>For an animal welfare facility that is a spay and neuter organization, veterinary materials and support for mobile clinics in Colorado.</p> <p>Many of these cats succumb to predators, hunger, disease, conflict with humans, cars, etc.</p> <p>This is a humane partial solution to expanding rural cat populations.</p> <p>PLEASE VOTE YES!</p>
<p>Abigail Roche For themselves</p>	<p>As a Colorado resident, I think it is important to have the funds for the Colorado Overpopulation Fund (COPF) available to organizations that are in need. These funds would give rescues the ability to control problems that many rural areas face, specifically the issue with feral cats. Trap and release to spay or neuter is a great option for organizations and should be prioritized as a way to control over population of cats in rural counties. As a recent Colorado resident, I was disappointed to hear about how often the funds benefit organizations that have leadership on the board overseeing the COPF when organizations need help and</p>

	<p>don't receive the same amount of funding. This bill is essential to the well-being of Colorado's animals and rescues.</p>
<p>Jennifer Hunter For themselves</p>	<p>Testimony in Support of Equitable Distribution of Pet License Plate Funds for TNR and Small Rescues</p> <p>Jennifer Hunter Neonatal Kitten Rescuer, TNR Advocate, and Mentor 2/10/2024 State Agriculture Committee Hearing</p> <p>My name is Jennifer Hunter and I have been actively fostering kittens for over 12 years. I've personally fostered more than 1,000 kittens—so many that I've lost count. I also mentor rescuers across Colorado and nationwide. Some of my friends call me the "Colorado Kitten Lady" because of my deep commitment to neonatal kitten care and TNR.</p> <p>I led a well-publicized TNR effort at Coors Field, and I am currently leading the massive, ongoing effort to humanely manage a 200-cat colony at Cedar Run Apartments in Denver. I am here today to strongly support this bill, which will ensure that funds from our state's pet license plates are distributed equitably to include small and rural TNR groups. These groups are critical in reducing cat overpopulation and preventing unnecessary suffering, yet they often lack access to adequate funding.</p> <p>TNR is Common-Sense, Whether You Like Cats or Not</p> <p>TNR is not about personal feelings toward cats. It is about practical, effective animal population management. If left unaltered, community cats reproduce exponentially, flooding shelters, straining taxpayer-funded animal services, and increasing the number of suffering animals outdoors. By spaying, neutering, vaccinating, and returning these cats to their outdoor homes, we prevent the cycle from continuing. This means fewer kittens in shelters, fewer euthanasia cases, and fewer cats struggling to survive in our communities.</p> <p>The Majority of Kittens in Shelters Are Born Outside</p> <p>Most of the kittens I and my fellow rescuers care for come from outdoor litters. When I say "most" i mean easily over 90%. This is proof that TNR is necessary. Every kitten born outside is another sign that we need to expand our spay/neuter programs. If we don't, the cycle continues, and shelters remain overwhelmed.</p>

	<p>Without TNR, our rescue work will always be reactive—picking up the pieces after kittens are born, rather than preventing suffering before it begins.</p> <p>Most Outdoor-Born Kittens Don't Survive Their First Year</p> <p>For every kitten I have fostered, I know that there are many more who never made it to safety. Most outdoor-born kittens don't survive to their first birthday. They die from starvation, disease, predation, or harsh weather. The few that do survive often end up in shelters that are forced to euthanize due to overcrowding. This is an unnecessary tragedy, and one that we can prevent by investing in TNR.</p> <p>This Bill Ensures Fair Funding Distribution</p> <p>This bill isn't about taking money away from large shelters—it's about fairness. Small and rural rescues, many of which are entirely volunteer-run, are doing some of the hardest and most important work in animal welfare. They are preventing litters before they ever reach shelters, yet they are often excluded from funding opportunities. Without financial support, these groups struggle to continue their lifesaving work.</p> <p>I urge you to vote in favor of this bill. It is a practical, humane, and fiscally responsible solution to cat overpopulation in our state. Thank you for your time and for considering the needs of all organizations working to create a better future for our communities and for the animals we share them with.</p>
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Hello,

My name is Sara Ferguson and I represent Happy Cats Haven. I am a constituent and am writing to express my support of House Bill 25-1137, related to the use of the Colorado Pet Overpopulation Fund (CPOF).

The Colorado Pet Overpopulation Fund (CPOF) grants hundreds of thousands of dollars annually. Since 2011, Happy Cats Haven has rescued and rehomed over 7,000 cats and kittens, and contributed over 3,000 spays and neuters through our regional TNR program. Yet we have only received the CPOF grant once in 14 years.

There is an unnecessary rift in the animal rescue world in Colorado. Those who choose the label Socially Conscious Sheltering are not allowed to also support the No-Kill goal to save, rehabilitate and rehome at least 90% of all animals coming through their doors.

As a former librarian, I guide our nonprofit organization toward accessibility for our public. Our organization embraces both labels as the best way to reach our adopters. In old school library terms, it's simple cross-referencing of both terms in our marketing.

This has meant that Happy Cats Haven has been rejected from receiving our state-funded grant because of our commitment to both philosophies and use of both labels, rather than just one.

According to CPOF, our last application was rejected because we are active in trap-neuter-return (TNR), preventing thousands of needless feline deaths in our region through active spay/neuter work for our community cats. The outcome of that decision is that a nonprofit active in preventing pet overpopulation is not allowed to receive funds to prevent overpopulation.

Add to that the missing transparency that should be standard for any Colorado nonprofit in making public their financial transactions and governing board roster and we hope you can see why we support this bill to hold the Colorado Pet Overpopulation Fund (CPOF) accountable.

Please **VOTE YES on HB 25-1137** in the House Agriculture, Water and Natural Resources committee on Monday, Feb. 10th.

Sincerely,

Sara Ferguson, Executive Director
Happy Cats Haven

