



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 506

Resolution calling upon Animal Care and Control of New York City to establish a citywide Trap, Neuter, and Return program for feral animals.

By Council Members James, Dromm, Mark-Viverito, Palma, Williams, Rodriguez and Rose

Whereas, According to the Humane Society of the United States, the nation's largest animal protection agency, between six and eight million dogs and cats enter shelters each year in the United States; and

Whereas, Of the dogs and cats that enter shelters, approximately half are euthanized and the other half are adopted; and

Whereas, In New York City from 2000 to 2007, animal adoptions rose by more than 66% and the euthanasia rate fell by more than 54%; and

Whereas, While these figures are encouraging, more than 15,000 animals were euthanized by New York City shelters in 2007; and

Whereas, Another major animal issue, especially in urban cities, is the problem posed by feral animals, which are animals that are in a wild or untamed state; and

Whereas, According to the Humane Society of the United States, it is estimated that there are between 10 and 70 million feral cats in the country; and

Whereas, Several factors that contribute to the high number of feral cats in the United States include abandonment, accidental loss and failure to sterilize pet cats; and

Whereas, The plight of feral cats was raised by recent news reports of feral cats in John F. Kennedy Airport; and

Whereas, The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the entity that has jurisdiction over John F.

Kennedy Airport, began rounding up herds of feral cats without a clear plan as to the fate of the cats, citing safety concerns for airplanes, passengers and other general equipment; and

Whereas, Animal rights activists were troubled that the Port Authority was taking action against these animals, which have been on the airport land for many years and were frequently cared for by sympathetic Port Authority and airport employees; and

Whereas, A possible solution to the feral cat problem would be to institute a Trap, Neuter, and Return (TNR) program, which balances the needs of society and the animals by providing a more acceptable alternative to extermination; and

Whereas, The goal of the TNR program is to return the feral cat to their colony, after trapping and neutering or spaying the animal, which will directly result in controlling the population of the animal colony; and

Whereas, New York City's Mayor's Alliance for New York City's Animals currently administers a Feral Cat Initiative, which is a joint program of the Alliance and Neighborhood Cats, a non-profit organization committed to solving New York City's feral cat overpopulation crisis through the humane, non-lethal method of TNR; and

Whereas, The Feral Cat Initiative provides TNR Caretaker Training Workshops in all five boroughs, hands-on assistance at TNR projects, free equipment loans, public advice by phone and e-mail, feline education events, and distribution of information through printed materials, newsletters and their website; and

Whereas, The Feral Cat Initiative asserts that through the TNR process, the Initiative saves both feline lives and money normally spent on the costly euthanasia process; and

Whereas, The benefits to TNR programs include the humane treatment of animals, a decrease in the number of animals to be euthanized, improvement in the health of the animals, control of the animal population, the reduction or even elimination of new litters, and an immediate stabilization of the size of an animal colony; and

Whereas, Animal Care and Control (AC&C) of New York City is a not-for-profit organization responsible for New York City's municipal shelter system, rescuing, caring for, and finding homes for homeless and abandoned animals in New York City; and

Whereas, By administering a TNR program, AC&C could save financial resources and improve the quality of life of both people and feral cats in New York City; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon Animal Care and Control of New York City to establish a citywide Trap, Neuter, and Return program for feral animals.

JM
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