

March 6, 2026

Maryland State Legislature
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
c/o Chair Feldman
via online portal

Re: Proponent testimony to SB 750

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Honorable Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

On behalf of Alley Cat Allies and our supporters in Maryland, I submit this written testimony as a proponent of Senate Bill 750 (“SB 750”), a bill currently under your consideration. Alley Cat Allies urges the Committee to support this bill. If enacted, SB 750 will establish the first-ever comprehensive law to provide statewide protections for Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR). In protecting and advancing TNR, Maryland will not only save the lives of countless cats, but also support and inspire the people and organizations dedicated to caring for these cats and improving their communities.

Alley Cat Allies was founded in 1990 and is the leader of the global movement to protect and improve the lives of cats and kittens. As the leading advocacy organization for cats, we work with lawmakers, shelters, and the public toward humane, nonlethal, and effective laws and policies that serve the best interests of cats and the communities in which they live. Alley Cat Allies is based in Bethesda, Maryland, and is grateful for the privilege of working with Vice Chair Guyton in support of this historic bill.

SB 750, also known as “Ash’s Law,” makes TNR the law of the land and creates uniformity across the state, ensuring not only that TNR is permitted and community cats are protected from being killed in shelters, but also that those who care for community cats are treated consistently. Maryland residents and organizations who spend their own time and money to conduct TNR will gain critical protections, including clarification that returning a cat to her outdoor home through a TNR program is not criminal abandonment. It is, in fact, a reunion.

Trap-Neuter-Return (“TNR”) is the only humane and effective approach to community cats; unowned cats who live outdoors, also known as stray or feral cats. TNR is proven to stabilize community cat populations by stopping the cycle of reproduction; improve cats’ health through vaccinations; and benefit animal control agencies and shelters by reducing cat intake and calls of concern. Community cats, who are generally not socialized to people and therefore unadoptable, can return to their outdoor homes to thrive rather than be impounded in local shelters only to be killed.

During TNR, cats are humanely trapped, taken to a veterinarian to be spayed or neutered, vaccinated and eartipped (the universal sign that a cat has been part of a TNR program). After recovery, the cats are returned to their original outdoor homes.

Today, TNR is being practiced by government entities, individuals, grassroots groups, veterinarians, and shelters across Maryland and the country. Many communities have adopted ordinances or policies supporting TNR, and thousands more worldwide are conducting grassroots, volunteer-led programs. However, consistency is essential to ensure no advocate in Maryland faces roadblocks, citations, or other penalties for taking compassionate, beneficial action for community cats.

Alley Cat Allies gave SB 750 the name “Ash’s Law” in honor of Ash, a beloved community cat who once lived in Riverdale, Maryland. In 2016, Ash was taken from her outdoor home with her six young kittens by animal control and impounded in an animal shelter. Ash spent her final day confined in a cage. When Ash’s caregiver came to bring her home less than 24 hours after she had been impounded, Ash and her kittens had already been killed.

Piluco, a member of Ash’s colony, avoided the same fate out of sheer luck. Instead, he was neutered and returned to his outdoor home. But Piluco’s TNR was carried out separately from, and despite, lethal policies that took the lives of so many community cats like Ash. And he is still here today.

Ash and Piluco’s story exposes the consequences of inconsistency in humane policies for cats in Maryland communities—a discrepancy Ash’s Law would end.

Maryland has the opportunity to make history for cats and the people who care for them and stand at the forefront of our nation’s humane movement. Tragically, every year cats like Ash are needlessly killed in Maryland governmental shelters, and at great cost to taxpayers. By ratifying TNR, SB 750 will stop the killing, support Maryland residents who care for and about community cats, and bring Maryland communities together in humane, effective action for cats and kittens.

I encourage the members of the Committee to support SB 750, Ash’s Law. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,



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ASH



PILUCO

