



Maryland Division
The Izaak Walton League of America
707 Conservation Lane
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20878-2983

DATE: March 10, 2026

TO: Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment
Senator Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice-Chair, Education Energy, and the Environment

RE: Oppose MD SB 750 - Trap-Neuter-Return Policies for Community Cats – Requirements and Restrictions

Honorable Senators Feldman and Kagan:

On behalf of the Maryland Division-Izaak Walton League (MD-IWLA), I am asking you to oppose MD SB 750 - Trap-Neuter-Return Policies for Community Cats – Requirements and Restrictions. This bill would create a category statewide called ‘community cats’ which would allow unhoused cats to be Trapped, Neutered and then Returned throughout the state. The State would basically be supporting an invasive species to destroy our native wildlife.

Feral cats are an invasive species, brought to North America by the European colonists. The USDA in recognition of these issues developed a Wildlife Damage Management Technical Series publication on feral cats in 2021 (<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/sites/default/files/free-ranging-and-feral-cats.pdf>). “Many studies have shown that cats are a major, if not the greatest, source of mortality to native birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians (Lepczyk et al. 2003; Beckerman et al. 2007; Van Heezik 2010; Lloyd et al. 2013; Loss et al. 2013 and 2015; Woinarski et al. 2017 and 2018; Li et al. 2021). While loss of habitat is the primary cause of species extinctions, cats have contributed to the extinction of at least 63 species in the wild around the world (Doherty et al. 2016). In addition to direct predation, feral cats impact species survival through nest failure, injury, and behavioral changes, such as reduced feeding opportunities due to harassment (Beckerman et al. 2007; Bonnington et al. 2013).”

The Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) programs have been shown time and again not to reduce the number of feral cats, as stated by numerous sources including the Animal Humane Society. “To decrease a cat population using TNR, you must sterilize and return at least 70% of the cats – and even then, small populations are rarely eradicated altogether.” (<https://www.animalhumanesociety.org/resource/real-impacts-trap-neuter-return>). The People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) admits that TNR doesn’t work. “On the contrary, it actually encourages more people to abandon their cats because they think the animals will be cared for. The food set out for “managed” colonies also attracts more cats (as well as wildlife, including rabies-vector species).” (<https://www.peta.org/features/does-tnr-really-save-cats/>).

These cats then continue to prey upon small birds, mammals, and other native wildlife. The cats frequently lead short, brutal lives. They should be inside loving homes, not left outside to fend for themselves.

Chartered in 1945, the MD-IWLA (www.marylandiwla.org) includes over 4,300 avid anglers, hunters, and outdoor sports enthusiasts across Maryland who are committed to the wise stewardship of our soil, air, woods, waters, and wildlife. Please support continued wise stewardship and vote NO on SB 750.

Sincerely,

Curt Howard, President
Maryland Division-Izaak Walton League of America