

Senate Bill 750

TO: Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

DATE: March 6, 2026

FROM: Caroline A. Griffin, Esquire *cag*

RE: **SB 750 – Trap-Neuter-Return Policies for Community Cats – Requirements and Restrictions (Ash’s Law)**

POSITION: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENT

Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and members of the Committee, my name is Caroline A. Griffin and I reside in Baltimore. I am the co-founder of the non-profit **Show Your Soft Side (SYSS)**, a national anti-cruelty campaign that works with professional athletes and celebrities nationwide to demonstrate that compassion to animals is a strength. SYSS supports SB 750 with the amendment proposed by PAWS (Professional Animal Workers of Maryland) that provides clarifying language to ensure the safety of cats, and would oppose any amendment that removes the prohibition against registries.

SB 750 is a life-saving measure that would reduce intake and euthanasia at Maryland animal shelters, ultimately reducing expenses on taxpayers. Baltimore has had regulations governing trap-neuter-return (TNR) since 2009, which provide that TNR is the preferred method of managing community cat populations. BARCS Animal Shelter, Maryland’s largest shelter, has a robust community cat program, which works with community cat caregivers to safely reduce the community cat population and protect public health through TNR. Since the inception of the program in 2014, feline euthanasia has decreased by 75% and cat intake has decreased by nearly 50%.

Despite these successes, much work remains to be done, as there are an estimated 85,000 free-roaming cats in Baltimore, according to BARCS. SYSS hosts TNR clinics and has a Street Kitty Medical Fund (SKMF) program, which provides urgent medical care to Baltimore’s sick and injured community cats. Every unaltered cat treated through the SKMF program is also sterilized and returned to its colony. SYSS has seen an increase in friendly cats through this program, animals who were likely abandoned by their owners. SYSS works with rescue partners to rehome these socialized cats who are ill-suited to return to the colonies where they were found.

Collectively, these initiatives will reduce the number of free-roaming cats over time, prevent cats from entering shelters, prevent unnecessary euthanasia, protect cats from illness and disease, and support citizens who care for these animals.

I urge the Committee to issue a favorable report. Thank you.

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