

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION
No. 113
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
213th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JANUARY 13, 2009

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman DAWN MARIE ADDIEGO

District 8 (Burlington)

Assemblywoman JOAN M. VOSS

District 38 (Bergen)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblyman Rudder

SYNOPSIS

Recognizes October 16 of each year as “National Feral Cat Day.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

A JOINT RESOLUTION recognizing October 16 as “National Feral Cat Day” in the State of New Jersey.

WHEREAS, New Jersey is home to many animal shelters and organizations whose mission and goals are to protect the welfare of animals, including feral cats; and

WHEREAS, Feral cats are often the offspring of stray or abandoned domestic cats, living naturally on their own in the outdoors, and are fearful of and not socialized to humans, and are not adoptable; and

WHEREAS, The Office of Animal Welfare, in the Department of Health and Senior Services, estimates that one unspayed female cat and her unaltered offspring can produce 420,000 cats in seven years; and

WHEREAS, According to Alley Cat Allies, a leading cat advocacy organization, over 70% of cats, including feral, stray, and domestic companions, entering the nation’s animal control pounds and shelters are euthanized each year, with that number increasing to nearly 100% for feral cats; and

WHEREAS, Trap, neuter, and release, also known as trap, neuter, and return or TNR, is a nonlethal population control method in which feral cat colonies are humanely trapped, vaccinated, and spayed or neutered by licensed veterinarians, and returned to the wild, or are adopted if possible; and

WHEREAS, Controlling cat populations with the TNR approach has also proven effective in reducing nuisance behaviors of wild cats, such as cat yowling or aggression, and allowing feral cats to live healthily, safely, and peacefully in their territories; and

WHEREAS, Through the use of TNR, feral cats are vaccinated to prevent the spread of disease within feral cat colonies or to other animals such as domesticated pets; and

WHEREAS, Throughout the country, October 16 of each year is recognized as “National Feral Cat Day,” and advocates and supporters celebrate the day with educational programs, activities, and events; and

WHEREAS, Many animal rescue organizations, cat advocates, and volunteers have rescued adoptable cats and humanely controlled the feral cat population in this State, saving hundreds of cats each year; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. October 16 of each year is recognized as “National Feral Cat Day” in the State of New Jersey.

2. The Governor shall annually issue a proclamation establishing October 16 as “National Feral Cat Day” and call upon the Office of Animal Welfare in the Department of Health and Senior Services, the State’s animal rescue shelters and organizations, and the people of this State to observe and promote the day with appropriate activities and programs.

3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This joint resolution would recognize “National Feral Cat Day” in the State of New Jersey on October 16 of each year. “National Feral Cat Day” is celebrated by advocates, volunteers, and supporters around the country with programs, activities, and events to educate the public about feral cats. This date has also been recognized by the state of Pennsylvania.

Feral cats are often the offspring of stray or abandoned domestic cats, living naturally on their own in the outdoors. They are fearful of and not socialized to humans, and are not adoptable. Over 70% of cats, including feral, stray, and domestic companions, entering the nation’s animal control pounds and shelters are euthanized, with that number increasing to nearly 100% for feral cats, according to Alley Cat Allies, a leading cat advocacy organization.

Trap, neuter, and release (TNR) is a nonlethal health and population control method in which feral cat colonies are humanely trapped, vaccinated, and spayed or

neutered by licensed veterinarians, and returned to the wild, or are adopted if possible. The TNR approach has proven effective in controlling feral cat populations, reducing nuisance behaviors of wild cats, such as yowling or aggression, and allowing feral cats to live healthily, safely, and peacefully in their territories. The TNR approach also provides an opportunity to vaccinate feral cats and prevent diseases that would otherwise spread in feral cat colonies, or to other animals, including domesticated pets. By celebrating and supporting “National Feral Cat Day,” New Jerseyans will have more access to information concerning feral cats and can continue to humanely control the feral cat population in the State.