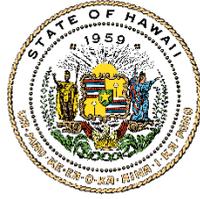


JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

DIVISION OF AQUATIC RESOURCES  
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ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

July 25, 2023

**TO:** Board of Agriculture, Hawaii Department of Agriculture  
**FROM:** Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Aquatic Resources  
**SUBJECT:** Testimony on Plant Quarantine Branch Agenda Item #1

The Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) **opposes the request from Tiffany Leilani Nerveza-Clark to initiate administrative rule-making and rule amendment to Ch. 4-71 to change the list placement of the hybrid Savannah cat, crossed of the Serval cat with the domestic cat, on the list of prohibited animals to enable individual possession.**

The introduction of such a cat will increase the already known impacts of the large abundance of feral cats and cats at large (outdoor pet cats) in the Hawaiian islands. There are an estimated 300,000 feral cats on O'ahu alone. At present, Humane Societies across the state are at full capacity and are unable to handle cats brought in for adoption—feral or domestic—so cannot assist with removing cats from the landscape.

Cats are the only known species that spreads *Toxoplasma gondii* eggs into the environment. *Toxoplasma gondii* is a single-celled protozoan parasite with a variety of host organisms. Cats are the definitive host, where the parasite can complete its life cycle and reproduce, making cats the only species that can shed infective oocysts (parasite eggs). Cats can shed millions of oocysts in their feces throughout the watershed, mauka to makai. The oocysts can live at least two years in freshwater, salt water and soil. In wildlife, *Toxoplasma gondii* causes organ damage in multiple organs (including the brain), reproductive failure, and death. In humans, *Toxoplasma gondii* can cause serious illness; if pregnant women are infected, *Toxoplasma gondii* can cause stillbirth, or hydrocephaly, microcephaly, neurological damage, or blindness in the baby. To date, there are 15 known Hawaiian monk seal deaths due to toxoplasmosis, likely an underestimate because many seals die undetected or found in advanced decomposition. In Hawai'i, two spinner dolphins have died of the disease and recently, a bottlenose dolphin. Toxoplasmosis is also a threat to endangered native bird species including the nene and 'alalā.

To diminish the threat of toxoplasmosis to Hawai'i's native wildlife, the input of oocysts into the environment must be reduced, requiring the reduction of feral and pet cats that shed oocysts into the environment. DAR cannot allow the introduction of a hybrid cat species with unknown genetic and behavioral predispositions and disease transmission potential to Hawai'i.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition.

## Clingan, Marci

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**From:** Alice Olivia Flyng <alice.olivia.f@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 24, 2023 7:38 PM  
**To:** HDOA.BOARD.TESTIMONY  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Testimony in favor of banning the importation of exotic animals

Dear HDOA,

I support a ban on the importation of exotic animals.

Best regards,  
Alice Olivia Flyng

## Clingan, Marci

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**From:** Suhani Sahoonya <suhanimahajan11@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 24, 2023 12:16 PM  
**To:** HDOA.BOARD.TESTIMONY  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Testimony in favour of banning the importation of exotic animals

Hi there,

It is 2023. Clearly humans have found 2023 new ways of entertaining themselves than to rely on wild animals to parade and perform for them like they are not a living being with emotions . Please stop 🙏

Thank you  
Suhani Mahajan

## Clingan, Marci

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**From:** Jaime Turgeon <jaime.turgeon@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 24, 2023 11:26 AM  
**To:** HDOA.BOARD.TESTIMONY  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] TESTIMONY In favor of banning the import of exotic animals

I fully support a ban on the importation of exotic animals for exhibition in Hawaii.  
Thank you.

Sent from my iPhone