



December 7, 2016

The Honorable Fred Eisenberger, Mayor of Hamilton
Members of the Hamilton City Council

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Dear Mayor Eisenberger and Members of the Hamilton City Council:

We hope you are well. PETA, the world's largest animal rights organization, with more than 5 million members and supporters worldwide, has been contacted by Hamilton-area residents who were disappointed that council members couldn't agree on recommendations to implement cat-licensing requirements. When enforced, such bylaws protect cats, wildlife, and property owners. We hope you will continue to discuss this important issue.

As an animal-protection organization, PETA supports legislation that encourages responsible animal guardianship, including ordinances that require cat owners to spay and neuter their companions and [keep them indoors](#) unless closely supervised or securely confined to an outdoor enclosure. Such laws protect cats as well as native wildlife who are tormented, injured, and killed by cats—regardless of whether they are adequately fed—when they are allowed to roam outdoors without supervision.

Canadian wildlife groups recently urged owners to keep their cats indoors in order to prevent the killing of approximately 200 million birds each year. A 2013 study published by Environment Canada scientists listed cats as the number one killer of birds in Canada and found that some bird species in the country have decreased by **over 95 percent**.¹

It may be of interest to know that Peterborough recently passed a sensible bylaw that prohibits guardians from allowing their cats to roam outdoors without supervision and requires them to clean up cat waste and have the animals licensed and vaccinated against rabies. Councilors cited concerns for the welfare of cats and wildlife, as did local residents, many of whom perceived roaming cats as a nuisance.²

¹North by Northwest, "Cats, the No. 1 Killer of Birds in Canada," 27 June 2015, CBA.ca <<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/cats-the-no-1-killer-of-birds-in-canada-1.3130437>>.

²Taylor Clysdale, "Committee Approves Bylaw Requiring Cats in Peterborough to Be Leashed and Licensed," 20 June 2016, MyKawartha.com <<http://www.mykawartha.com/news->

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Calgary implemented a [cat-licensing bylaw](#) in 2006 and reports that it has drastically increased the number of lost cats who are reunited with their guardians in the community. As of 2013, the city reported that 45,421 cats had been licensed and that nearly half of all cats admitted to the community's animal shelter had been reunited with their owners—which is well above average—because of this law.³ The city also set up a system whereby cat-licensing revenue can be used to pay for spay-and-neuter programs, which helps reduce the number of cats breeding and roaming in the community as well as cat homelessness and euthanasia.

Requiring responsible animal ownership is critical to preventing costly problems for the city and its taxpayers—just as laws that require citizens to carry automobile insurance, wear seat belts, keep their yards within certain standards of sanitation, and enroll their children in school are intended to do. Preventing animal overpopulation, homelessness, and neglectful, irresponsible ownership is far more effective and less costly than addressing their damaging results.

I can be reached at 443-320-1277 or TeresaC@peta.org and hope you will let me know if we can be of further assistance. Meanwhile, thank you for all your hard work for the citizens of Hamilton.

Respectfully,



Teresa Chagrin
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[story/6732618-committee-approves-bylaw-requiring-cats-in-peterborough-to-be-leashed-and-licensed/](#)>.

³Stephen Burns, "Cat Licence Aims to Cut Euthanization," 9 Dec. 2014, WinnipegFreePress.com <<http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/cat-licence-aims-to-cut-euthanization-285181221.html>>.