

January 25, 2016

On January 9, 2016 the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) House of Delegates approved revisions for its [policy on “free-roaming abandoned and feral cats”](#). The policy now further supports Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR), but that is the good news. The approved revisions did not include critical, lifesaving amendments introduced by key delegates who are leading the way in humane veterinary medicine for cats, including the American Association of Feline Practitioner’s (AAFP) Dr. Marcus Brown.

Despite the AAFP and the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA)—organizations that represent thousands of veterinary professionals—submitting amendments to remove language condoning euthanasia, the House of Delegates approved a policy revision that still contains that language. The finalized policy still states that “the AVMA does not oppose the consideration of euthanasia” for “colonies not achieving attrition and posing active threats to the area in which they are residing”.

Condoning euthanasia of healthy cats is just one way the policy contradicts itself on its support of TNR. The policy rightly states that managed colonies—cats that have undergone TNR and are regularly fed and cared for—improve cats’ lives and should be protected. But it also states that cats not in “properly managed colonies” should be “removed from their environment and treated in the same manner as other abandoned and stray animals”. This language discourages people from practicing TNR and puts cats’ lives in danger.