Batta Cats

Dear Chairman Blessing, Vice Chair Roegner, Ranking Member DeMora and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to write in support of HB 148. I am a Board Member of Batta Cats, a dedicated feline rescue organization based in Ohio. At Batta Cats, we work tirelessly to rescue, rehabilitate, and rehome cats in need, and we rely heavily on resources like those provided by the Ohio Pet Fund to support our spay/neuter efforts. We strongly support House Bill 148 and its proposal to add a check-off box to the Ohio Income Tax form, which would allow Ohioans to donate to a Companion Animal Fund—boosting the Ohio Pet Fund's ability to provide larger, more impactful grants.

The Ohio Pet Fund's grants have been a lifeline for Batta Cats, enabling us to spay and neuter dozens of cats each year and prevent countless unwanted litters. However, the current grant amounts limit our capacity to address the overwhelming demand for these services in our community. Without adequate spay/neuter opportunities, we see the heartbreaking consequences: overcrowded shelters, increased euthanasia rates, and struggling feral cat colonies. A single unspayed female cat can lead to hundreds of kittens in just a few years, perpetuating a cycle of suffering that larger grants could help us break. HB 148 would empower us to expand our reach and make a tangible difference for Ohio's cats and the communities they live in.

Passing HB 148 is a practical, proven solution—other states with similar tax form check-off programs have successfully increased funding for animal welfare organizations. For Batta Cats, larger grants would mean more spay/neuter surgeries, fewer abandoned animals, and healthier feline populations across Ohio. We urge the legislature to pass this bill and give Ohioans the chance to directly support this critical cause. Thank you for considering our testimony and for your commitment to improving the lives of companion animals in our state.

Please feel free to contact me.

Yours,
Meleena M. Bowers