**Sample Letter to Legislators**

**Letter on Licensing Requirements**

[Date]

[Official’s Name and Title]

[Official’s Address]

Dear \_\_\_\_,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I have lived in \_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_ years. I am writing to express my concern with the \_\_\_\_ [CITY COUNCIL/COMMISSIONS]’s consideration of a licensing requirement for cats. Placing a new tax on cat owners is not the way to help cats or our community. Passing this licensing law will not accomplish *any* of the stated goals.

1. **Licensing does not return more cats to their owners.** Nationally, only 2% of impounded cats are reunited with their owners, and the introduction of cat licensing doesn’t improve recovery rates. More than 70% of cats who are brought to animal shelters are killed nationwide. As more cats are impounded due to a licensing law, even more will be killed, and fewer cats will be returning home.
2. **Licensing does not generate revenue**. Licensing programs are notoriously expensive to implement and enforce. Since few people comply with cat licensing requirements, the program’s cost typically exceeds the revenue generated. Rather than contribute to the [CITY/COUNTY’S] budget, cats will remain unlicensed and taxpayers will be forced to foot the bill as more cats are impounded and killed.
3. **Licensing does not increase sterilizations or vaccinations.** The best way to increase the number of pets who are spayed or neutered and vaccinated is to increase access to free or low-cost services. Studies have found that the primary reason that people don’t sterilize or vaccinate their pets is cost and access to clinics. Adding a licensing fee on top of these costs will only discourage these people from seeking veterinary care.

Finally, this proposed licensing law is incompatible with Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR), the only humane and effective approach to community cats. Community cats, also called feral cats, are unowned cats who live outdoors. Most community cats are not socialized or friendly to people, so they cannot be adopted and live indoors. During TNR, community cats are humanely trapped, spayed or neutered, vaccinated, eartipped for identification, and returned to their outdoor homes. Since community cats do not have owners, a cat licensing requirement is a death sentence.

[CITY/COUNTY] doesn’t need a licensing law—it needs to follow a responsible path for its cats. Thank you for your time and consideration. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[You Contact Information}