

<http://www.bloggernews.net/113729>

Iowa Introduces Bill to Legalize the Exotic/Domestic Cat Hybrids

REXANO Press, www.REXANO.org

Las Vegas (February 11, 2008)– Iowa Senator Tom Rielly introduced bill to legalize the small exotic/domestic cat hybrids in Iowa state. His bill provides that a hybrid cat is no longer classified as a dangerous wild animal.

The recently introduced bill SF 2017 is “an act relating to hybrid cats, by providing that a person may possess, breed, and transport the offspring of a domestic cat and a cat classified as a dangerous wild animal or a subsequent generation originating from that offspring”.

On May 25 2007, Iowa Governor Culver signed SENATE FILE 564, which prohibited private possession of many exotic animals, including small hybrids between domestic and exotic cats.

(<http://www.rexano.org/StatePages/IowaFrame.htm>)

Senator Rielly’s bill would undo some of the damage caused by the current exotic pet ban in Iowa State. Examples of these cat hybrids are small Bengal or Savannah cats often seen in respected cat shows.

According to the USDA (US Department of Agriculture), which is the federal agency overseeing animal welfare act: “Crosses between wild animal species, such as lions and tigers, are considered to be wild animals. Crosses between wild animal species and domestic animals, such as dogs and wolves or buffalo and domestic cattle, are considered to be domestic animals.”

(http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare/downloads/awr/9cfr1.1.txt)

“REXANO applauds Senator Tom Rielly for his vision to recognize that not only is it almost impossible to prove the wild percentage of these sweet pets, but also that these domestic animals pose no public safety risk and are cherished and loved family members” says Zuzana Kukol, a Nevada big cat trainer and co-founder of REXANO, Responsible Exotic Animal Ownership, www.REXANO.org

The Feline Conservation Federation, FCF, www.felineconservation.org supports senate Bill 2017 in Iowa that will legalize exotic domestic cat breeds. FCF recognizes the efforts of cat breeders to develop hybrid breeding programs to produce companion felines like the Savannah and Bengal that possess the special personalities and incredibly beautiful markings of nature's wild felines. FCF president Lynn Culver believes the hybrid

domestic cats have value to conservation as educational ambassadors. Culver says, "Their arresting beauty draws people's attention to nature and awareness about wild felines. Culver notes, "For many city and urban dwellers, this is as close to nature as they will ever come."

New York State Assemblyman Marc S. Alessi introduced similar bill A09535 to remove the small exotic/domestic cat hybrids from the definition of wildlife in New York state. Current law stipulates that only hybrids removed from a wild felid parentage for a minimum of five generations are allowed to be owned as family pets.

http://www.rexano.org/StatePages/New_York_Frame.htm

REXANO is committed to protecting the rights of animal owners and supports responsible private ownership of exotic animals in any form, be it non-commercial pet or sanctuary, as well as commercial breeder or exhibitor.

"Most of the wild habitat is disappearing. The only chance to save many endangered animals from extinction is captive breeding in the private sector, which has the majority of available habitat," says Scott Shoemaker, co-founder of REXANO. "Many future wildlife researchers start as small animal pet owners and gain valuable experience in the process".