



NYC Rules

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Public comments for: [Animals \(Article 161\) and Reportable Diseases and Conditions \(Article 11\)](#)

Comments

Robert Szpanderfer

Comment:

Dear Commissioner Mary Travis Bassett,, As someone who was born and raised in NYC for 18 years, I was shocked to learn that ferrets were not legal in the boroughs. I no longer live in the area; however, I still have family and friends that reside in NYC. Nearly a decade ago, I purchased my first ferret while studying in Maryland and I have owned ferrets ever since. They are charming, intelligent, and gentle animals that echo the love of their owners. Ferrets are the perfect companion for many residents of the NYC area as they are quiet, litter trained, and sleep for approximately 18-20 hours a day. The domesticated ferret cannot thrive without their owners providing them the proper care. Many of the comments that have been submitted provide strong evidence that ferrets make excellent companions and pose no threat to the NYC area. Therefore, I am submitting my comment to show support for the ferret owners that reside in NYC. Thank you for allowing the opportunity to submit comments.

Agency: [DOHMH](#)

Jackie Burke

Comment:

The ban on ferret ownership should be lifted. I got my ferrets when I lived in Indiana. I had graduated from the police academy and was also in my sophomore year of undergrad. I was going through a very tough depression and had started visiting the dogs at the pet store to help alleviate my depression. I desperately wanted a pet to help me cope, but caring for a dog in a small apartment was impractical. During my visits to the pet store, the ferrets captured my attention and stole my heart. After months of researching ferret care and

ownership, I welcomed two of these lovely creatures into my home. They have changed my life. They have been a constant source of joy. They have helped me cope with depression, survive breakups, and actually motivated me to do better in school. As a police officer and full time student I faced a lot of stress, but caring for these ferrets gave me a purpose outside of myself, and playing with them gave me daily stress relief. Now in NYC I attend law school and face even more stressors than before. My ferrets continually provide me with the relief from my stress that only a pet can bring. Ferrets are suited to an apartment environment; they do not need as much space as other pets, they do not need to be taken outside for bathroom breaks (as they are litter trained), and they are still able to get proper exercise in the limited space that NYC apartments provide. Ferrets are also a perfect match for the busy, on-the-go New Yorker lifestyle. Ferrets sleep 20 hours a day in their cage which allows owners to maintain their schedules without sacrificing the animal's well-being, unlike dogs who are often left in crates for hours on end and must have strangers come to walk them. Regular care for my ferrets has been an issue since moving to the city. I am left wondering where I can take them for veterinary care. My ferrets receive both rabies and distemper shots every year and they are due for their, but I have been afraid to make any appointments because I fear they will be confiscated. However, the ban should be lifted for private ownership only. Ferrets are very unique animals with unique needs. If ferrets were sold in stores, impulse buys would result, and the animals would suffer. Responsible owners would just like to enjoy the pets that they love in the city that they love. Overall, ferrets are heartwarming pets that increase the health and happiness of the people who own them. There is no reasonable reason for ferrets to be banned. The ban places a burden on people who wish to own a pet but may not be able to own a dog or cat due to space constraints or allergies. Ferrets are not dangerous, there is no risk of overbreeding because most are neutered before ever leaving the breeders', and they do not cause more damage to households than either cats or dogs. Ferrets enrich the lives of their owners and should be allowed in the city.

Agency: [DOHMH](#)

Sangeun Lee

Comment:

I request ferret ownership ban to be lifted. Ferrets are highly trainable and friendly animals. They suit for animal lovers who unfortunately do not have too much personal time. They are quite and they sleep most of the times. Big cities like NYC have complex living arrangement, which suggests that ferret is the best option. As long as they are neutered and descented, a few possible concerns will be certainly eliminated. They generally love to be petted by people. Now it's the time we should pay the same respect.

Agency: [DOHMH](#)

Hyomyung Kim

Comment:

Ferret ownership in nyc should be lgalized that they are nice and sweet. They are nothing more dangerous than people have cats and dogs. They sleep for more than where and doesn't make noisy. Its perfect for city pet.

Agency: [DOHMH](#)

Edita Birnkrant

Comment:

Dear Commissioner Mary Travis Bassett, Please review Friends of Animals' comments in regards to the Proposed resolution to amend Animals (Article 161) and Reportable Diseases and Conditions (Article 11) of the New York City Health Code . In regards to the proposal for the Board of Health to lift the ban of ownership and sale of ferrets as pets in New York City, Friends of Animals strongly opposes lifting the ban, as lifting the ban would mean that ferrets would then be widely sold in pet shops. Friends of Animals, an international animal advocacy organization founded in 1957 in New York, is a leader in the movement to end the homeless pet problem, which is the cause of millions of healthy pets being euthanized, languishing in shelters or living risky lives on the streets. We operate the country's first and longest running, nationwide, low-cost spay neuter program, and to date we've facilitated over 2.6 million spay neuter surgeries. Since 1957 we've educated the public about responsible pet ownership. There is progress being made in New York City in regards to the issues affecting pets that already are legal—dogs, cats, rabbits, etc, but there is still much work to be done. There are still so many unwanted pets in city shelters that are currently legal—adding another species to the mix that has been banned for decades is misguided and would have disastrous consequences. We were very glad that legislation recently passed in the City Council that prohibits the commercial sale of rabbits in pet stores. However, lifting the ban on ownership of ferrets would create the exact problems that led to the need to ban the sale of rabbits in pet stores. The last thing we should be doing is creating another market for irresponsible breeders. Allowing the sale of ferrets means creating a new market for these breeders, and that means there will be large numbers of "surplus" ferrets that will likely be dumped in shelters or on the streets. This is the wrong thing to do, just as we're making some real progress with all the issues that lead to the pet overpopulation problem. In closing, Friends of Animals strongly opposes lifting the ban of ownership and sale of ferrets in New York City. To lift this ban is to guarantee creating a host of problems with surplus numbers of ferrets being introduced into New York City, at a time when dogs, cats and rabbits are still being euthanized in city shelters for lack of adoption homes. Sincerely, Edita Birnkrant Campaigns Director 1841 Broadway, Suite 350 New York, NY 10023 Phone: 212.247.8120 Fax: 212.582.4482 E-mail: edita@friendsofanimals.org
Agency: [DOHMH](#)

Elizabeth Bovenmyer

Comment:

In my personal opinion i think the people of NYC should be able to adopt these lovable, caring, creatures that bring so much joy to ones life Elizabeth Bovenmyer ferret owner to many over the years
Agency: [DOHMH](#)

Susann Thiel

Comment:

Thank you for accepting comments on the legal status of domestic ferrets in New York City. As a ferret owner for about 33 years and a Brooklyn native, I can testify that ferrets make terrific pets, especially for apartment dwellers. Ferrets form strong emotional bonds with caregivers and other household pets. Ferrets are highly sociable and intelligent. Thousands, maybe tens of thousands of ferrets are

living in City homes already. They don't survive on the streets or in parks. "Feral" ferrets don't exist. Shelter operators, veterinarians and ferret owners have already shared their knowledge here. I would like to add a different perspective, as a disaster responder with the Red Cross, CERT, county and state animal response teams and multiple national humane organizations since 1998. On any given day, a pet owner's poor judgment, lack of resources or inability to secure good veterinary care may cause pets to suffer starvation and neglect, abandonment, illness and injury, or worse. Human health and safety are also at risk in these circumstances. In a disaster, from a single house fire to a catastrophic Hurricane Sandy, people make life-altering decisions in the midst of chaos. People endanger themselves by refusing to leave without pets. Or people do leave, but then try to re-enter unsafe areas. New York's response to Hurricane Sandy in 2012 became a national role model; human lives were saved and health outcomes improved because people were able to evacuate with pets on public transportation, and pets were allowed in the shelters. But where were the ferrets? Why no ferrets in the ASPCA's shelter in Brooklyn, where hundreds of other animals were cared for? Why weren't ferrets rescued alive on Staten Island or in Queens? I won't forget the deep, wracking sobs of a woman who returned home to find her ferrets drowned, or the teenager who tried to hide his six ferrets in a laundry hamper. Or the ferrets being fed salad and peanuts by shelter workers who didn't know those foods would kill. Secrecy can defeat the best, most compassionate intentions. I hope the Commission will also mandate that domestic ferrets be spayed/neutered. The mandate will significantly reduce the number of ferrets brought to animal shelters. Also, responsible pet merchants like PetSmart decided years ago to reduce or halt the sale of ferrets (and dogs and cats) in their stores. Instead, they sponsor adoption events for local rescue groups and humane societies. Like puppies, most pet store ferrets came from large-scale, commercial "mills." Research has linked such breeding facilities with negative health and behavioral outcomes. Even perfectly healthy animals are frequent victims of impulse buys or life circumstances that render pet ownership impractical. Store managers were faced with euthanizing "returned" or finding a private, home-based ferret shelter that could squeeze in "just one more."

Agency: [DOHMH](#)

Tamara von Ouhl...

Comment:

I support this proposal as ferrets are not wild animals but domesticated and at the most exotic. As with any pet ownership the proper research needs to be done to properly care for the pet prior to purchase. Although I would not recommend ferrets to be sold in NYC to minimize impulse purchases and issues with proper care at the selling facilities. I do however believe that those who move to the city should be able to bring their pet with them and to get the proper and quality services that a "legal" pet would receive from shelters, rescues, veterinarians and animal hospitals in NYC.

Agency: [DOHMH](#)

Jody Renouf

Comment:

I am from Massachusetts, where ferrets were legalized in 1996. Having owned and fostered 15 ferrets in as many years, and now in a household with three of these little family members, I support ferret legalization in NYC. As with any pet, ferret ownership requires

research before committing. Given the commitment, I am not in favor of their being sold in pet stores, where they may be an impulse or fad purchase. New York City can lead the way in only allowing adoption from nonprofit organizations which meet high standards of care.
Agency: [DOHMH](#)

Ella Johnson

Comment:

I fully support removing the ban of ferrets in NYC. I've owned several ferrets over the years and they are not a threat or harm in any way shape or form. They are exceptional pets as are dogs, cats, and other small animals. With proper vet attention, care, diet, and dedicated owner they make truly wonderful pets, nobody should miss out on the chance to experience what a joy and honor it is to have such an amazing animal. I do believe there should be some requirements before allowing to buy or adopt a ferret. They are not a caged or easy animal to care for, they need proper diet, several hours of play time, and they're prone to cancer which racks up Vet bills. If someone is unable to provide them with the care they need and deserve they should not own a ferret or any animal for that matter. If rules are enforced we will have less ferrets in shelters. I do not believe they should be extensive but do believe it would be something good to take under consideration.

Agency: [DOHMH](#)

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