

## **Joint Statement Opposing Proposed Chicago Livestock Ordinance (02019-7576)**

**September 26, 2019**

Right now, Aldermen Lopez (15th ward) and Napolitano (41st ward) are pushing an ordinance to severely limit livestock in your backyards and neighborhood farms. This ordinance - **introduced without meaningful community input** - hinders the ability of Chicago residents and urban farmers to grow and raise their own food through fees, fines, and unnecessary burdensome regulations. This ordinance also puts animal welfare organizations at risk for caring for abused animals, if they shelter roosters or exceed the limit on livestock. Together as urban agriculture and animal welfare advocates, we oppose the Chicago Livestock Ordinance, 02019-7576. **Join us in contacting your Alderman, as well as Ald. Lopez and Ald. Napolitano, to oppose this ordinance.**

Current regulations protect Chicagoans' right to raise backyard livestock and practice urban farming that is humane to animals and respectful of neighbors. Existing City of Chicago ordinances already address the potential public health, nuisance, and animal welfare concerns related to raising small farmed animals. The ordinance will create unnecessary regulation by banning roosters, capping the total number of fowl at six and other livestock at two, only allowing single-family or two-flat residences to keep livestock, and levying fines up to \$500 per day for permit violations - all without consideration for lot size.

**If enacted, this ordinance will threaten the ability of many of our city's residents and urban farmers to raise their own food and put them at financial risk with costly fees and fines.** In addition, the ordinance infringes on the rights of residents by unduly limiting what animals they can keep. These animals are critical community members, offer hands-on ways to learn about ecology and food (in homes, schools and daycare centers), and provide organic pest control and fertilizer, companionship, and other environmental benefits.

We have worked together for years to create a supportive system for Chicago's thriving home and community gardens, urban farms, and livestock keeping. These activities are critical to healthy food access, ecological health, and workforce development in our city. Community education and networking is often more effective than blanket regulation to prevent and solve potential problems. We look forward to collaborating with the Lightfoot administration on our major priorities, including equitable land access,

affordable water access, ecological resilience, stronger animal protections, and clear business licensing for urban farms.

Please contact your Alderman today to oppose the proposed ordinance 02019-7576. Please use the letter below as a template and **tell your Alderman to VOTE NO** on these proposed changes and to support community-developed urban agriculture and animal welfare solutions.

Signed,

*Advocates for Urban Agriculture  
Chicago Animal Save  
Chicago Food Policy Action Council  
Chicago Roo Crew  
Chicagoland Chicken Enthusiasts  
Home to Roost  
Illinois Environmental Council  
Urban Growers Collective*

As of 9/26/19

**TAKE ACTION: Tell Your Alderman to Oppose Ordinance 02019-7576**  
Help us track the citywide opposition by [filling out this brief form](#) after your interaction

**FIND YOUR WARD AND ALDERMAN BY STREET ADDRESS**

**Call Script:**

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am a resident of the \_\_\_\_ ward. I'm calling to ask that you oppose ordinance 02019-7576, introduced by Aldermen Lopez and Napolitano. This ordinance, introduced without meaningful community input, burdens residents who keep roosters, chickens and other livestock with fees, fines, and unnecessary regulations. I urge my alderman to vote no on this ordinance and to support community-led urban agriculture and animal welfare solutions. Thank you very much.

## **FIND YOUR ALDERMAN'S EMAIL ADDRESS**

### **Email Script:**

Dear Alderman \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am a resident of the \_\_\_ ward. I am writing to ask that you **oppose** ordinance O2019-7576, introduced by Aldermen Lopez and Napolitano. This ordinance, introduced without meaningful community input, hinders the ability of Chicago residents and urban farmers to grow and raise their own food through fees, fines, and unnecessary burdensome regulations. This ordinance also puts animal welfare organizations at risk for caring for abused animals, if they shelter roosters or exceed the limit on livestock.

Current regulations protect Chicagoans' right to raise backyard livestock and practice urban farming that is humane to animals and respectful of neighbors. Existing City of Chicago ordinances already address the potential public health, nuisance, and animal welfare concerns related to raising small farm animals.

There are better ways to address concerns around the treatment of these animals, as well as the communities that keep them. I respectfully request that you oppose the proposed legislation and meet with members of the animal rescue and urban farming community to consider alternatives to this regulation.

Sincerely,

### **TAKE ACTION: Contact Aldermen Lopez and Napolitano to Express Your Opposition**

**Alderman Raymond A. Lopez (15th)**  
Ward Office: (773) 823-1539  
City Hall: (312) 744-4321  
Email: Ward15@cityofchicago.org

**Alderman Anthony V. Napolitano (41st)**  
Ward Office: (773) 631-2241  
City Hall: (312) 744-3942  
Email: Ward41@cityofchicago.org

### **Additional Ordinance Details:**

The [proposed ordinance](#) (O2019-7576) would amend Municipal Code Titles 4 and 7 to regulate backyard livestock, roosters and urban farms. It outlines the following:

- Require those possessing fowl or livestock to obtain a “livestock permit” from the Commissioner of Health for \$25 per animal, which must be renewed annually.
- Applies only to single-family home or two-flats. All other residential properties would be BANNED from obtaining a permit.
- Cap the total number of fowl at 6 and other livestock at 2, regardless of the size of the livestock and of the property where they would reside.
- Require anyone applying for a permit to contact all residents within 500 feet of their property line to inform them of the proposed keeping of fowl or livestock. If 51% or more of those contacted object, the City must not issue the permit, regardless of reason for objections.
- Levy fines of up to \$500 for each animal every day until the animals were removed. This would apply to anyone in violation of this ordinance, even those operating within the law before its adoption.
- Ban roosters within the city, even though existing nuisance ordinances are more than adequate in addressing any sound or nuisance complaint a rooster may cause.
- Require those selling any products from livestock or fowl (i.e. eggs, milk, butter, etc.) to obtain an “Urban Farm” business license. Currently, no clear urban farm business license exists within the City of Chicago.
- Require the Commissioner of Health to immediately notify the appropriate alderman when an urban farm license is requested in his or her ward.