

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), on behalf of its over eight million members and constituents, voices its grave concerns about subjecting sentient animals to commercial exploitation through cloning biotechnology and condemns this practice.

Given the current pet overpopulation problem, which costs millions of animals their lives and millions in public tax dollars each year, the cloning of pets has no social value. Furthermore, commercial cloning of collections of genetically identical individuals reinforces the perception of animals as disposable, manufactured commodities. Cloning and patenting of sentient beings erodes the morality of respect for the individual interests of others, a morality that is critical to the future well-being of both humans and animals.

Cloned animals are as sensitive to physical and psychological suffering as are other animals and our moral responsibility toward them is no less. Cloning of animals will increase suffering by:

- Producing a wide range of medical complications, some of which remain unknown. Most clones die as embryos, and many of those surviving until birth die shortly afterwards
- Facilitating the exploitation of animals as organ donors
- Facilitating the replication of sick animals, disabled by genetic manipulation for use as models of human disease
- Accelerating the intensification of animal production (or factory farming), as genetically identical individuals are used as production "machines," increasing already excessive yields and existing welfare problems
- Rendering animals more susceptible to infectious and other diseases due to the absence of genetic diversity
- Subjecting animals used in the cloning process, such as surrogate mothers, to invasive procedures

It is important for the public to understand that cloning a pet will not create an animal identical to the one who is gone. Cloning can only replicate the pet's genetics; therefore a pet's personality, the specific trait that most owners would most like to preserve, is the trait least likely to be replicated by cloning. In addition, there is no guarantee that the cloned companion animal will even physically resemble the original pet.

Cloning sentient beings raises many important and unaddressed ethical questions. The HSUS argues that the public is entitled to a full review of all ramifications of cloning technology, that animal welfare must be part of that review, and that the exclusion of the legitimate interests of individual animals from a public discourse and evaluation of the ramifications of this technology is unacceptable. Finally, The HSUS urges people to adopt their next pet from an animal shelter.