



**Senate Bill 6  
Position: Support**

**March 26, 2013**

**Senate Committee on Judiciary  
Chair, Sen. Floyd Prozanski / Vice Chair, Sen. Betsy Close**

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Close and Committee Members:

I am here this morning on behalf of the Oregon Veterinary Medical Association in support of Senate Bill 6.

If you have been in the veterinary profession long enough, you pretty much have seen it all – from a cat whose body was pierced by an arrow to a dog that was diagnosed with multiple bruises and fractures after having been kicked and thrown against a wall. And from a cow that was beaten by teenage boys with sticks – just for the fun of it – to horses so malnourished they could barely walk to other equines whose legs were mired in muck and with festering wounds and serious infections.

Just a few months ago, in Mill City, a teenager became so enraged with the family's dog that he beat the pug, before shoving it in a hot oven. Fortunately, the boy's father stopped his son from further harming the animal and sought veterinary care for the dog; the son has been charged with animal abuse.

A little closer to home, here in the Willamette Valley, authorities got a search warrant and impounded 140 dogs in various stages of serious neglect and abuse from a local rescue group that did not provide sufficient care for the animals in their custody.

These stories are a disturbing part of what we see in the veterinary profession, and I don't relish sharing them with you. But my purpose in conveying such stories is to illustrate that animal neglect and abuse exists across our entire state – including the districts in which each member of this committee represents.

Oregon has a national reputation for having sound animal welfare laws – among the best in the country. But Senate Bill 6 makes them even better.

Senate Bill 6 sends a clear message to abusers: If you harm animals to the point of serious injury or death (especially if you are a repeat offender), your actions will not be tolerated, and your punishment will be at a level commensurate with the seriousness of your offense against the animal.

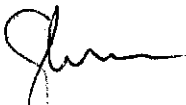
With regard to rescue groups, we believe that their intentions are good and honorable – and that they have an incredible desire to help animals in need of good care and adoptive homes. As you may know, many of these organizations are challenged with a threadbare budget – that's a stark reality – and the economic downturn these past few years has made their missions that more difficult.

However, should they find that their desire to help animals is overmatched by their ability to provide both sufficient financial and human resources – including veterinary care – for taking good care of animals in their custody, then they have an obligation to reach out and ask for help. Anything less is not acceptable, regardless of how well-intentioned the rescue group may be.

We believe that the merits of Senate Bill 6 provide necessary oversight and some measure of a safety net for the hundreds of thousands of animals in Oregon. Is it foolproof? Few things are, but this legislation is a strong step forward. That is why the Oregon Veterinary Medical Association supports SB 6 and why we are asking for your support, too.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Glenn M. Kolb  
Executive Director