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Testimony of Amy Sacks on House Bill 3141 (2015)
House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources

April 14, 2015

Chair Witt and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

My name is Amy Sacks. I am the Executive Director of the Pixie Project animal rescue and adoption center and a board member of Humane Oregon. I am here today representing Humane Oregon. Humane Oregon was formed last year to help promote humane treatment of animals through participation in Oregon's political process and elections.

Humane Oregon supports passage of House Bill 3141 with the -1 Amendments. This bill would simply require certain disclosures to consumers from businesses that are leasing instead of selling pets to consumers. First, the bill would require these businesses to make the same disclosures as businesses selling pets – disclosures such as breeding conditions and prior medical history. Second, with the -1 amendments, the bill would require disclosures to make clear to consumers when the business technically is the owner of the animal and has authority to make decisions regarding veterinary care of the animal.

These are commonsense changes in the law to treat businesses supplying pets to the public in similar fashion regardless of whether the transaction is technically a sale or a lease; and to ensure that consumers who do not own the pet understand that they do not own the pet.

The bill also would help create some transparency about the sourcing of pets for the leasing business by requiring certain disclosures about the origin of the animal. The source of the animals is a significant issue of dispute between the leasing business and some animal welfare groups, with the business claiming to source primarily from shelters and others claiming that is not true. Even if the community is not entitled to a legal written disclosure on that point, certainly the person who will have custody of the animal is entitled to it, which is all this bill would require.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and I would be happy to answer any questions.