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March 18, 2019

House Business and Labor Committee
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: VETERINARY SUPPORT for HB 2804, Oregon's Humane Pet Store Bill.

Dear Representatives:

On behalf of the Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association (HSVMA) and our 350 Oregon members, I am writing in support of HB 2804, legislation that would prohibit Oregon pet stores from selling dogs and cats. In lieu of these sales, this legislation would promote partnerships between Oregon pet stores and nonprofit rescue groups and municipal shelters for the adoption of cats and dogs from pet shop locations.

The framework in which pet sales occur is changing dramatically. A significant majority of pet stores in Oregon no longer sell live animals obtained from commercial breeding operations. Instead, many operate successfully using a viable business model in which they partner with rescue organizations to offer animals for adoption in their stores and achieve mutually beneficial results.

By severing connections with inherently inhumane commercial breeding enterprises known as 'mills,' the pet stores are no longer supporting businesses which often house animals in substandard conditions, provide inadequate veterinary medical care and little to no socialization. As veterinarians, we have seen many of these animals in our practices after they have been purchased by Oregon families and end up with severe health and behavior problems, causing unanticipated expenses and severe heartbreak for all involved.

Conversely, by partnering with rescue groups and shelters to offer animals for adoption in their stores, pet shops are helping to reduce the societal burdens of housing and/or euthanizing so many animals and also creating goodwill among the adopters, many of whom will become loyal customers for their pet supply needs. Families who still wish to purchase an animal from a breeder can work with responsible breeders who typically require that potential customers visit the animals at their breeding facility rather than selling their animals at a pet shop location.

Nearly 300 localities in the U.S as well as the states of California and Maryland have passed laws similar to HB 2804 banning retail sales of dogs and cats at pet shops. Given Oregon's longstanding leadership on humane issues, we look

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forward to our state enacting HB 2804 which will benefit both Oregon families and their animal companions.

Thank you for your humane leadership on this important animal welfare legislation.

Sincerely,

Dr. Katie Bahr
HSVMA Oregon State Representative

And the following Oregon veterinarians:

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