

From: [Michelle Blake](#)
To: [LRO](#)
Subject: Testimony supporting SB 268
Date: Thursday, April 4, 2019 11:24:59 AM

April 4, 2019

Chairman Mark Hass
Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue
900 Court St. NE
Salem Oregon 97301

Re: SB 268 2019 Support

Dear Chair Hass, Vice-Chair Bentz, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 268. I come to this issue with a few decades of animal welfare experience, from working at Willamette Humane Society in Salem in the early 1990s, returning later to serve on their board and eventually as board president. I was a member of the board of directors that founded Fences For Fido in 2009, and I continue to be involved with the organization today. I also work as managing editor at Spot Magazine – a 15-year-old publication that covers everything pet in the Northwest.

I speak today on behalf of Fences For Fido. We're a nonprofit organization that works with families in Oregon and Washington who have dogs living outside primarily on chains or in small enclosures. To date, our volunteers have built free fenced yards for more than 2,000 dogs. As one would imagine, we often meet families for whom a fence is not going to be the best solution. In those cases, we work as a liaison between those families and reputable shelters and rescues to rehome those dogs.

We strongly support SB 268. This is an innovative approach to encourage adoption that we can all get behind.

We also celebrate that this would make Oregon the first to adopt this approach. Our state is a leader in save rates and humane legislation. I can tell you from my experience at a large open-admission shelter in the early 1990s – when a heartbreaking 40-60 percent of pets did not leave the shelter alive – Oregon has made nationally-recognized progress toward eliminating shelter euthanasia and getting all healthy, adoptable animals placed in permanent homes. It's easy to forget the strides we've made here. SB 268 celebrates this success.

All of us who have pets can attest also: responsible pet care is not inexpensive. In fact, tomorrow morning my husband and I will take one of our adopted dogs for a minor surgery that will cost somewhere in the area of \$1,400. In the past, our pets have faced more serious medical conditions with the more serious expenses to match. All pet caregivers can relate to having to meet these expenses in the interest of keeping an important family member healthy and well. SB 268 would recognize adoption as the significant financial responsibility that it is.

In closing, Fences For Fido strongly supports SB 268. Let's celebrate our state's amazing strides in saving the lives of homeless pets.

Respectfully,

Michelle Blake
Salem