



MultCoPets.org  
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February 11, 2021

To: House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources  
Re: Support for HB 2733

Dear Chair Witt and Members of the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources,

**Multnomah County supports HB 2733, which removes the requirement of agencies to withhold issuing a dog license prior to verifying the dog has a rabies inoculation, and provides a grace period to provide such proof.**

Currently, Oregon statute requires any county that licenses dogs to have proof of rabies vaccination before issuing that license. In 2018, Multnomah County Animal Services conducted an internal audit and found itself out of compliance. Immediately after coming into compliance with this law, we experienced a 35% drop in dog license rates over the course of 3 months. We were able to track instances of online orders for licenses which were abandoned at the point where proof of rabies vaccination was required.

The reduction in licensure is problematic, since we are unable to monitor or enforce the rabies vaccine requirement for unlicensed animals. The proposed bill, HB 2733, allows counties to issue a license, and then allows a sixty (60) day grace period for proof of rabies vaccination to be provided. These new terms will allow licensing agencies to track unvaccinated animals and still enforce the rabies vaccination requirement, while also removing barriers to pet owners who need to license their dog. Then, the owner can either provide proof of vaccination directly to our agency, or local veterinarians can submit the information about animals they vaccinate per an existing Multnomah County ordinance.

The issue of rabies compliance has been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, as most veterinary and vaccination clinics throughout the state have been impacted and reduced service hours. This means that owners are often delayed in obtaining a rabies inoculation for their dog due to veterinary availability. As a result, many pets are left unlicensed as they cannot immediately meet the state requirements for inoculation prior to licensing.

For Oregon counties who prefer the rabies vaccination policy as it is now, HB 2733 allows them to keep their current licensing process and rabies reporting requirements without any modifications, and they will not be impacted. For counties who want to allow the 60 day grace period, HB 2733 provides that as a possibility, one which we know will both increase rabies inoculation and licensing compliance in our respective jurisdictions.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 2733 in the interest of public health, its positive impact for dog owners, and dog licensing agencies.

Respectfully,



Wade Sadler

Director

Multnomah County Animal Services

Department of Community Services

