

OREGON HUMANE SOCIETY

Date: March 12, 2023

To: House Committee on Judiciary

Representative Jason Kropf, Chair
Representative Tom Anderson, Vice-Chair
Representative Kim Wallan, Vice-Chair
Representative Janelle Bynum
Representative Farrah Chaichi
Representative Charlie Conrad
Representative Rick Lewis
Representative Lily Morgan
Representative Lisa Reynolds
Representative Thuy Tran

From: Veronica Broadley, Humane Law Enforcement Support Services Manager, Oregon Humane Society

RE: House Bill 3384

My name is Veronica Broadley, and I am the Support Services Manager of the Humane Law Enforcement Department of the Oregon Humane Society. This department is the only specialty humane law enforcement unit of its kind in Oregon. The team consists of sworn peace officers commissioned by the Oregon State Police who are tasked with enforcing Oregon's animal welfare laws and non-sworn professionals working under their direction to accept reports of animal welfare concerns, collect evidence (including living and deceased animals), and support veterinarians performing services in our Animal Crimes Forensic Center. In addition to the investigations performed by our own humane special agents, our department frequently assists police officers in other agencies with their own animal cruelty investigations.

I have worked in this department for over nine years and in that time I have had the opportunity to observe or assist with thousands of animal welfare investigations. I have had the honor to bear witness to the experience of many, many animal victims – both those who survived their experience and those who did not.

Today, I ask for your support of HB 3384.

Most reports investigated by our humane special agents are resolved without a criminal prosecution. Most often, when there is a valid concern of neglect of an animal, the best resolution for those involved is in education, guidance, or facilitating access to resources. In doing so, we hope to improve an animal's quality of life while maintaining the human-animal bond, and prevent future issues.

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Our humane special agents can provide direct access to pet food, litter, and other supplies and can help facilitate access to other resources. Oregon Humane Society has a veterinary social worker who can help facilitate support, a Client Resource Center to help with a variety of needs, a Behavior and Training Department that helps pets and their people resolve training issues together, and a Community Veterinary Hospital that can help families access veterinary care. If we can't help directly, we may call upon other community resources such as equine rescues and community veterinarians or other animal welfare agencies who may be better able to meet the person and/or animal's needs. Oregon Humane Society is just one many animal welfare agencies in our state ready to help people who find themselves in crisis.

There are circumstances when despite these available resources, criminal investigation is the tool needed to ensure the safety of an animal, and times when prosecution is the tool necessary to seek justice for the crime victim.

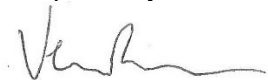
HB 3384 would recognize that as with the existing felony level crime of Aggravated Animal Abuse, there are some animal neglect crimes that are far more serious than others and which cause greater harm to victims and to society. These are not the offenders lacking education; these are people who are choosing neglect. This felony-level behavior should be met with felony charges.

Finally, HB 3384, once amended, would improve upon existing statutes that promote another opportunity for people convicted of animal crimes to receive education and which provide tools to help prevent future incidents of neglect.

We would appreciate the opportunity to discuss amendments.

Please vote 'yes' on HB 3384.

Respectfully,



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