



Marion County

OREGON

Board of Commissioners

March 16, 2023

(503) 588-5212
(503) 588-5237-FAX

Representative Jason Kropf, Chair
Representative Tom Andersen, Vice-Chair
Representative Kim Wallan, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Colm Willis, Chair
Kevin Cameron
Danielle Bethell

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Jan Fritz

RE: Marion County Supports HB 3571

Dear Chairs Representative Kropf, Vice-Chair Anderson, Vice-Chair Wallan, and Members of the Committee:

The Marion County Board of Commissioners support House Bill 3571, which will establish immunity from prosecution for theft in first degree and civil liability for nonprofit animal rescues who take possession of, keep, and rehome cats or dogs. HB 3571 will clear a murky legal liability, keeping non-profits from providing a vital service to communities across Oregon.

Current Oregon law considers domestic animals as property. That means that the finder of a stray dog or cat must go through an inconvenient and poorly understood 90-day notice-and-hold process before they can obtain legal ownership of the animal. Considering domestic animals as property creates a legal liability around sheltering and rehoming of strays found in our community. Although counties are permitted to adopt out dogs after a reduced hold period of only three days, there is not a clear exception for stray cats.

HB 3571 would allow non-profit shelters to accept stray cats and provide a vital service to our communities at no cost to the government. It would expand the number of potential service providers to assist with cat overpopulation and homelessness, while protecting these providers from liability for their good-faith efforts to accept and rehome stray cats.

Thank you for continued work to support our communities. The Marion County Board of Commissioners urges the committee to votes yes on HB 3571.

Sincerely,

Colm Willis
Chair

Kevin Cameron
Commissioner

Danielle Bethell
Commissioner

BOC: AMK