

OREGON HUMANE SOCIETY

Date: March 11, 2025

To: **House Committee on Judiciary**
Representative Jason Kropf, Chair
Representative Willy Chotzen, Vice-Chair
Representative Kim Wallan, Vice-Chair
Representative Tom Anderson
Representative Farrah Chaichi
Representative Rick Lewis
Representative Kevin Mannix
Representative Thuy Tran

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

RE: House Bill 3604

My name is Veronica Broadley, and I am the Support Services Manager of the Humane Law Enforcement Department of Oregon Humane Society. As one of the largest animal shelters in Oregon, Oregon Humane Society is leading the effort to help stray cats and the communities they live in by requesting the Oregon Legislature pass HB 3604, and specifically the anticipated -1 amendment.

Who will be helped by HB 3604?

Many communities in Oregon have seen a marked increase in population of both owned and unowned cats in recent years. Organizations that serve cats have experienced high demand to meet the increased need to assist owned and unowned adoptable cats. HB 3604 supports this effort by providing a means to obtain legal ownership of cats. Moving more cats into the adoption pathway also reduces the number of cats reproducing in the community.

What is the goal?

The goal of HB 3604 is to establish a legal framework that sets a stray hold period for stray cats, sets standards for agencies who assist stray cats, and provides a means for the agency to become a stray cat's owner if the cat is unclaimed. HB 3604 protects qualified agencies when they follow requirements.

Why do we need a statewide solution? Can't counties serve stray cats?

Most of Oregon's 36 counties don't have ordinances that apply to cats, and most counties don't have facilities or resources to shelter and rehome cats. HB 3604 fills the gap without prohibiting counties from operating their own existing stray cat programs or enacting new programs.

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Is this a trap-neuter-return (TNR) bill?

No. Trap-neuter-return (TNR) and shelter-neuter-return (SNR) programs are working well in Oregon and HB 3604 does not aim to disrupt these successful community services. HB 3604 aims to help cats in need of sheltering and rehoming and lost cats in need of reunification with their owner.

How does HB 3604 protect cat owners?

HB 3604 limits eligible organizations to those with resources to promote reunification of lost pets with their owners, including limiting the eligible agencies to licensed animal rescue entities with a physical building open to the public. HB 3604 requires agencies to avoid intaking owned cats as strays, safeguard the cats throughout a holding period, and promote reunification through modern forms of publication and cross-reports to local municipal agencies. The combined requirements limit the number of places a pet owner must look for their lost pet and reduce barriers to reunification.

How does HB 3604 protect agencies?

HB 3604 protects qualified agencies from civil liability and provides defenses for criminal liability if they follow the guidelines as required.

How does HB 3604 protect cats?

HB 3604 limits eligible organizations to those with resources to provide adequate care and veterinary services to cats. HB 3604 sets a stray hold period that keeps the needs of sheltered cats in mind, limiting their exposure to stress and illness.

More cats in Oregon communities can be helped when agencies have a pathway to legal ownership and can move cats along that pathway in a reasonable time frame.

Please vote 'yes' on HB 3604 and its -1 amendment.

Respectfully,



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