

Submitter: Melinda Rossow
On Behalf Of: Community Members
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3604

Thank you for taking time to read my testimony. I have been a volunteer Cat Rescuer for the past 16 years in our community. In years past my rescue partner and I had a very close relationship with Willamette Humane Society. On average the WHS took 300 plus stray, abandoned or feral cats from the two of us working as a team. We would triage community requests and prioritize the greatest needs for intake at Willamette Humane Society. This very important service helped not only our community members but the smaller rescue organizations. After the merger a few years ago, we lost the ability to take stray and abandoned cats to the shelter. In turn, the new policy by Oregon Humane Society Salem to not accept any stray cats from Marion County began to quickly inundate the small rescues with hundreds of request daily and more during kitten season. The Humane Society took this position due concerns of civil liability.

Sadly, the suffering this has caused to animals in our community has been deeply felt by those in rescue, small shelters and concerned community members. Having to say, "There's no help" is so disheartening when we once could offer quick solutions. Many of us have taken our pleas for help to our local city council members, the mayor and even state representatives. We were once know as one of the best communities to help cats. Please consider voting in favor of this bill so that we can once again provide desperately needed help to animals in need.

Thank you,

Melinda Rossow
Volunteer Rescuer