

OREGON HUMANE SOCIETY

Date: February 17, 2026

To: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire
Senator Jeff Golden, Chair
Senator Todd Nash, Vice-Chair
Senator Fred Girod
Senator Floyd Prozanski
Senator Kathleen Taylor

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

RE: House Bill 4034

Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Nash, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Veronica Broadley, representing Oregon Humane Society.

Established in 1868, the Oregon Humane Society is the largest and oldest animal welfare organization in Oregon with campuses in Salem and Portland and over 50,000 supporters statewide. We are not affiliated with any local or national organization. Today, we ask for your support of HB 4034.

In 2025, OHS adopted out over 12,000 animals. That is a great many lives we were responsible for safeguarding. More than half of the animals we received in were transferred in through our Second Chance program from our rescue partners - smaller organizations with fewer resources available to them, but putting their all into serving the animals, people, and community to the best of their ability. We were able to support more than 40 different Oregon rescue partners last year.

In 2013, the 77th Legislative Assembly passed Senate Bill 6, and declared that the suffering of animals at the hands of unlicensed animal rescue organizations that are unable to provide sufficient food and care for the animals can be reduced by requiring such organizations to comply with regulations. At that time, counties were given responsibility for implementation and enforcement. Rescue entity oversight fell by the wayside as counties lacked resources to carry out implementation. Six years later, the 80th Legislative Assembly passed Senate Bill 883, transferring responsibility to ODA and providing initial funding, after which the program was meant to be self-sustaining.

As the program has been implemented, it has become apparent that the statutory language as written has unduly burdened both the compliance-minded rescues and the ODA, resulting in excessive costs for all and diverting focus to paperwork rather than truly assessing and promoting animal welfare.

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The rescue licensing program is still needed. Fewer animals are falling through the cracks of a faulty system, but “bad actors” remain.

One example is found in the criminal animal neglect prosecution of a noncompliant rescue operator last year. Through its Animal Crimes Forensic Center, OHS supported the investigation of animal neglect involving a person operating a rescue out of her home. The animals were found to be living in poor conditions, most hidden away in a dark basement.

Excerpts from the veterinarian’s report:

“I was asked to examine several dogs and one cat who were seized from a rescue site. I examined these animals and found several of them to be dirty as though they had been living in a dirty or confined space. Many had matted fur and long, overgrown nails. Several of the dogs had evidence of ear and eye infections that were not being medically managed. Of the dogs I examined, 40% of them were underweight.”

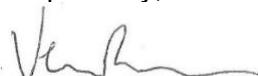
“Overall, the animals that were seized appear to be suffering from issues common in overcrowded or dirty living conditions – conjunctivitis, otitis, dirty coats....Failure to provide this level of care for these animals, likely prolonged and exacerbated their respective conditions and contributed to physical pain and suffering.”

The person operating the rescue was convicted of 16 charges of animal neglect. While this individual faced consequences for her actions, the suffering the animals experienced was preventable. It is the type of dark situation that should be brought to light through oversight.

We have more work ahead of us. HB 4034 will redirect us back to the original goal of animal rescue entity oversight – protecting the vulnerable animals most in need of help.

Help make Oregon the safest place for pets. Vote ‘yes’ on HB 4034.

Respectfully,



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