



Tanya M. Harding

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Honorable Members of the Legislature:

RE: Support for HB 4034

My name is Tanya Harding, and I serve as Co-Chair of Meow Village, an all-volunteer, foster-based nonprofit rescue organization focused on improving the lives of feral and at-risk cats. Meow Village serves Clackamas, Marion, Multnomah, Polk, Washington, and Yamhill counties. I am writing on behalf of our organization to express strong support for HB 4034.

Current ARE requirements significantly impacted our organization in 2024–2025. Our record-keeping system was designed to meet what we understood the rules to require, and we successfully completed the initial records request. However, when responding to a subsequent request for “full records for 10 animals,” we inadvertently failed to meet several requirements. The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) cited three categories of violations:

- Six counts of missing cat weights recorded on the “intake date”;
- Two counts of missing photos taken on the intake date for newborn kittens; and
- Seven counts of missing medication dosage entries.

The associated penalty was \$3,290 - funds that could otherwise have been used to spay/neuter and vaccinate about 25 cats, or provide emergency medical care to six severely injured cats who would not survive without treatment.

While the ODA worked with Meow Village to reach a settlement for 50% of the original penalty, the process required approximately 80 additional volunteer hours, on top of more than 40 hours already spent responding to the initial ARE requirements. This represents a substantial diversion of time and resources away from rescuing vulnerable cats.

In response, we have redesigned our record-keeping system, retrained our volunteers, and revised procedures for kittens born to feral mothers. These changes enable us to comply with requirements for weights and photos on the “intake date,” while also ensuring the safety and well-being of feral mothers and their kittens. However, the extensive time devoted to rebuilding these systems reduces our capacity to provide direct care and rescue services.

We fully support the State’s role in licensing and monitoring Animal Rescue Entities to ensure animal welfare. However, balanced reform is essential. The administrative requirements placed on rescues must be reasonable, and the rule-making process must incorporate meaningful input from the AREs expected to comply with these rules.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to pass HB 4034.

Thank you for your consideration and for your commitment to animal welfare.

Sincerely,
Tanya M. Harding, Ph.D.
Co-Chair, Meow Village