

Submitter: Leslie Hasse
On Behalf Of: Blue Mountain Humane Association
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4034

February 17, 2026 In Support of HB 4034
Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Leslie Hasse. I live in La Grande in Union County, and I serve as Treasurer of Blue Mountain Humane Association. I am here today in strong support of HB 4034.

Blue Mountain Humane Association is not a large organization with deep reserves. We are a small rural nonprofit operating on a true shoestring budget. Every day, we take in animals that have nowhere else to go — abandoned pets, strays, animals surrendered during times of crisis. In Eastern Oregon, we are the safety net. There is no overflow shelter. There is no larger facility down the road to take our place.

Recently, our organization was assessed punitive civil penalties following a virtual audit. We were not given a meaningful opportunity to explain or correct concerns before penalties were imposed. For a small nonprofit like ours, those penalties are not just numbers on paper.

They are bags of food not purchased.

They are medical treatments delayed.

They are animals who may not receive the care they desperately need.

We are not asking to avoid accountability. We believe in standards. We believe in doing things right. But enforcement that does not consider good faith, intent, actual harm, or the financial realities of small rural nonprofits does not strengthen animal welfare — it weakens it.

When limited charitable dollars are diverted away from animal care and into punitive fines, the ones who suffer are not administrators. It is the animals.

If Blue Mountain Humane Association is forced to divert scarce resources to penalties, our community loses its only humane shelter. And the animals in Union County will have nowhere to go.

HB 4034 restores balance. It allows oversight without crushing the very organizations working tirelessly to serve the public good.

I urge you to support HB 4034 — for rural communities, for volunteers who give their time freely, and for the animals who depend entirely on us for survival.

Thank you for your time and consideration.