

Testimony in support of Kansas HB 2437

Susan Hakes Kaufmann
Fairway, Kansas

Thank you for your time and allowing me to speak in favor of HB 2437, which includes several positive changes to the Kansas Pet Animal Act. After 33 years, the act desperately requires long-awaited improvements. As a Kansas resident and pet advocate, I am supportive of the proposed updates.

Before I speak specifically of these important improvements, I wanted to take a moment to provide some background on my perspective and experience. I have:

- Served on the boards of two animal shelters
- Co-founded two organizations to support spay and neuter and vaccination for pet owners who cannot afford these services
- Managed a cat rescue program as part of a well-run shelter in Shawnee, Kansas, for three years, and I am in the process of co-founding a new cat rescue to rescue and adopt homeless cats in Johnson and Wyandotte counties
- Fostered numerous dogs and cats

And I currently serve as board chair for Friends of KCK Animal Services as well as serving as an HSUS Kansas volunteer. So, you could say I might just be a little excited about the positive impact the improvements in this bill could have on Kansas pets and their people.

The management and oversight changes will bring more transparency to the AFI program and will track deficiencies across a longer timeline. The improvements also close loopholes so distributors selling animals into the state will now be required to have a license to ensure disease traceability. And all licensees will have to comply with the Kansas Pet Animal Act whether they sell in-state or out-of-state. In my view, this sounds like a great idea for our state considering our dependency on agriculture for our economy.

There are also common-sense improvements to hopefully help prevent inhumane treatment of dogs and cats, such as setting the standard for dogs and cats to have continuous access to water as recommended by the AVMA, among other improvements. And as a founder and supporter of animal shelters and rescue networks, I am particularly heartened by some of the relief items for licensees, which are practical and make a great deal of sense.

In conclusion, I urge the committee to keep the proposed changes to the Kansas Pet Animal Act intact, and pass HB 2437 out of committee for a vote. Again, I appreciate your time. Thank you for listening.