



Rep. Ken Rahjes
House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources
H.Agriculture@house.ks.gov
VIA EMAIL

February 12, 2024

Chairman Rahjes and Members of the Committee,

The Lawrence Humane Society serves the Lawrence/Douglas County area by taking in animals that may be ill, injured, or homeless. We serve over 6,000 animals each year from Douglas County and other areas. Our organization nurtures the human-animal bond by providing shelter, care, and advocacy for homeless and abused animals, as well as resources for the pets and people in our community.

Today, we are testifying as a proponent of HB 2542, which amends certain sections of the Kansas Pet Animal Act. We also write today to kindly ask you to consider a minor amendment to HB 2542 that would add “licensed animal shelters” to the type of licensees exempted from a boarding and training facility license.

Many animal shelters across the state of Kansas are following animal sheltering trends and recommendations for reducing animal intake and keeping pets with their families. A program that accomplishes both of these goals is when an animal shelter temporarily houses animals for owners who are in a housing crisis. The precipitous effect of a program like this is remarkable: animals are not permanently impounded and burdening an overcrowded animal shelter, people are getting housed quicker, and families are able to seek temporary shelter, all without having to surrender their pets. Grants for these programs are rapidly evolving alongside the growing need for temporary boarding services. Lawrence Humane has temporarily housed over 240 animals for owners in crisis since 2020.

Animal shelters also perform temporary boarding services for local domestic violence shelters, though under current law, must have a separate boarding license for this practice. For nearly 20 years, Lawrence Humane has facilitated protection of an average of 7 pets annually for survivors of domestic violence through varying means of care.

Today, we respectfully request this Committee’s consideration in amending page 15, Section 10, of HB 2542 to include exempting animal shelters/pounds from needing an additional boarding license, and offer our support for the entirety of amendments in the bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

/s/ Katie Bray Barnett
Katie Barnett, Animal Welfare Counsel

/s/ Shannon Wells
Shannon Wells, Executive Director

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