



February 16, 2024

Chairperson Warren and Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to express my full support for the proposed legislative change known as Bowie's Law. As a law enforcement professional who values the welfare of animals, I believe that this amendment is a crucial step towards ensuring the protection and well-being of our non-human companions.

In January of 2020, during below freezing temperatures, Bowie the dog, who had been starved to more than half of his normal body weight, was locked inside a kennel and placed in a commercial trash dumpster. If Bowie had not been found by coincidence, he would have died. The person who starved and confined Bowie in a way that would most assuredly lead to his death has been charged and convicted of a misdemeanor. Bowie's Law is being offered to ensure clarity for prosecutors and Law Enforcement that the confinement or restraint of an animal in a way that is likely to lead to their death is included within the scope of KSA 21-6412(a)(1).

The inclusion of "maliciously" in the provision concerning the abandonment of animals elevates the offense to a felony. This substantive change is essential in addressing the gravity of intentional harm or cruelty inflicted upon animals through abandonment.

Bowie's Law acknowledges the importance of holding individuals accountable for their actions, particularly when it comes to intentional harm inflicted upon animals. This amendment reflects a commitment to creating a legal framework that aligns with the values of compassion and empathy that society holds for its non-human members.

Furthermore, the addition of "maliciously" to the statute sends a strong message that cruelty towards animals will not be tolerated, and those who engage in such actions will face severe consequences.

I urge you to consider and support Bowie's Law as it represents a progressive and compassionate step forward in animal welfare legislation. By strengthening the legal protections for animals, we are not only safeguarding their rights but also contributing to the creation of a more compassionate and ethical society.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Joseph P. Sullivan
Chief of Police
Wichita Police Department