



TO: Special Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources
FROM: Jennifer Stone, DVM, Medical Director
DATE: January 20, 2015
RE: Support for HB2030: Updating the Kansas Pet Animal Act (KPAA)

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee:

I am the Medical Director at the Lawrence Humane Society, and have been since 2011. Before that, I was the Medical Director for The Animal Foundation in Las Vegas, the largest intake animal shelter in the country. I am a member of the American Veterinary Medical Association and the Association of Shelter Veterinarians. My career has always centered on Shelter Medicine and I am an expert on cat and dog housing and care standards and herd health management. I am writing today as a representative of the Lawrence Humane Society, the Pet Animal Coalition of Kansas, and most importantly, an individual who has dedicated her career to veterinary medicine and the humane treatment of animals.

As a shelter veterinarian, I would like to speak to a few items found in this bill. These items are very important to ensure that all animals in the State of Kansas receive adequate care. In addition, these changes will help Kansas catch up with the majority of other states that have upgraded their animal welfare legislation to become more in line with current best practices in animal care in this country.

1. A clean water supply is critical to the health of all animals. A vast array of medical problems can occur secondary to dehydration. Animals in a crowded environment can sometimes become dehydrated due to limited fluid intake from stress alone. For this reason, animals in breeding facilities, pet shops, and animal shelters should be provided with fresh potable water at all times.

I support the proposed changes to Section 3, part b of the KPAA, to ensure adequate water is available to every animal as is appropriate for its species.

2. It is very important that the Department of Agriculture be able to access USDA records of medical inspection in order for them to have a full picture of overall care that animals are receiving at the facility they are inspecting. Sharing data between these two agencies will ensure better communication, prevent duplication of services, and ensure compliance with both National and State laws.

I support Section 3, part cc (1) of the proposed changes to the KPAA that allows USDA-licensed facilities to utilize their USDA veterinary care forms to meet the veterinary care requirements of the KPAA and also allows the Department of Agriculture to request and view said forms.

3. Carbon Monoxide chambers are dark and terrifying and animals often take minutes to die. They are frightening and some animals survive the experience only to be put back into the chamber for a second time. Euthanasia by injection by contrast takes only about 3-5 seconds and can be performed in a calm and humane manner reducing stress for the animals selected for euthanasia.

There are also some misconceptions about these gas chambers that must be dispelled. Animals selected for euthanasia must not only be transported to the chamber but must also be forced into the euthanasia chamber. This is clearly a danger to animals' handlers especially if these animals are already fractious. In addition, it has been shown that operation of these chambers is more expensive than euthanasia by injection when they are maintained properly. When poorly maintained, carbon monoxide chambers are not only lethal to the animals contained within the chamber but can be harmful and even fatal to operators. There are many documented cases of beings being harmed or killed by faulty gas chambers.

The use of these chambers is absolutely inhumane and is condemned by the HSUS, the ASPCA, the NACA, the American Humane Association and the Association of Shelter Veterinarians and has already been banned in all but 10 states. Kansas needs to follow suit and do away with archaic and inhumane method of euthanasia through House Bill No. 2030.

I support Section 12, part a of HB2030 banning the use of carbon monoxide chambers for euthanasia.

I want to thank each of you for your service and dedication to Kansas, and your consideration of HB2030 as a means to allow our state to join the majority of United States which have responsible and enforceable pet animal care acts. The proposed changes to the KPAA are the result of hard work and compromise, and reflect the consensus of the Kansas Pet Animal Advisory Board, the Kansas Department of Agriculture, and has the support of many animal organizations and businesses in the State.

I am happy to answer any questions or provide any additional information that you may require.

Thank you,

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