



**To: Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee**

**From:** Kevin Campbell, Executive Director  
Oregon Association Chiefs of Police

**Date:** February 22, 2012

**Re: Support for HB 4021-A**

Chair Prozanski and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

On behalf of the over 200 members of the Oregon Association Chiefs of Police, please accept this letter of support for HB 4021-A.

The Oregon Association Chiefs of Police recognizes the valuable expertise and many decades of law enforcement service provided by animal cruelty experts at the Oregon Humane Society. For nearly 100 years, Oregon Governors have empowered the Oregon Humane Society to provide limited police service which is narrowly focused on animal cruelty cases. As you know, these humane special agents are DPSST Academy trained and certified (paid for entirely by the Oregon Humane Society). These officers work in close relationship with local police departments and sheriffs' offices in a program paid for entirely with private funds. They have specialized training and are able to partner with veterinarians on staff at the Oregon Humane Society to build compelling criminal cases.

We fully support HB 4021-A because it places Humane Society officers under the authority of a statewide policing agency where both accountability and coordination is insured. Since these officers are available to assist municipal and county police agencies throughout the state, the Oregon State Police is the logical place for these officers to reside.

**HB 4021-A is carefully crafted to insure that:**

The superintendent has the authority to insure that the hiring of humane special agents moving forward continues to include proper hiring precautions including the appropriate background checks, etc. and allows the Superintendent to make a determination regarding the possession of a firearm by these humane special agents while engaged in the enforcement of animal welfare laws. The measure also provides that these humane agents serve at the pleasure of the OSP

Superintendent and authorizes the Superintendent to remove the commission of an officer for good cause.

The Humane Society agrees to hold the state harmless and indemnify the State of Oregon against any tort claim that relates to the work of the humane agents and agrees to secure and furnish all necessary tort claim insurance.

The Humane Society continues to fund all costs involving the humane special agents including hiring, salary, equipment and training.

The authority of the humane special agents is limited appropriately to enforcement action relating to crimes where animals are a feature of the crime.

During a time where law enforcement resources are strained throughout Oregon and where expertise in crimes related to our animal cruelty laws is limited, we believe that HB 4021-A will help insure that humane special agents continue to be a resource to our police agencies within the oversight of the Oregon State Police.

We encourage your support for HB 4021-A