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OREGON  
HUMANE  
SOCIETY

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**Date:** April 16, 2013

**To:** **Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee**  
Brad Witt, Chair  
Sal Esquivel, Vice-Chair  
Caddy McKeown, Vice-Chair

**From:** Sharon Harmon  
Executive Director, Oregon Humane Society

**Re:** HB 3408

Established in 1868, the Oregon Humane Society is the state's largest and oldest animal welfare organization with over 50,000 supporters statewide. We are not affiliated with any local or national organization.

**We urge you to vote yes on HB 3408.**

The animal forfeiture provisions in place in Oregon are used to ensure that abused and neglected animals are not returned to the situation where they were subjected to cruelty. As it is written now, ORS 167.348 does not defer to the expertise of animal care agencies in placement of these aggrieved animals but rather undoes any protection afforded by the forfeiture statutes, making animals vulnerable to future mistreatment or exploitation.

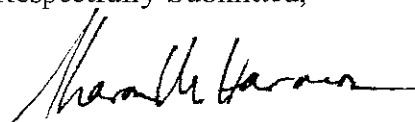
In many ways animals are comparable to children; they are vulnerable, they are dependent and they are often silent victims. Often it behooves us to equate them when drafting protection laws, however there is an important distinction to make in this context—animals can be a lucrative business. Rarely are family and friends of a convicted animal offender oblivious to the cruelty that took place, and rarely do they sever ties with that person as a result. In fact, in cases where animals are being used as commodities in a business, family and friends often already have a financially motivated interest in the animals. Animals are not returning to the loving arms of a sympathetic person they know, they are being turned over to people who either failed to protect them in the first place or who seek to continue to profit off of them.

Obviously family and friends are directly connected to the defendants in these cases. The law does not prevent family or friends from allowing defendants access to the animal they were convicted of abusing, it merely prohibits possession. If an animal care agency is forced to give preference to family and friends when adopting out victim animals, the likelihood that animal will have the horrific experience of encountering their abuser on multiple occasions is nothing short of a guarantee.

Animals who are victims of cruelty can have special needs stemming from the neglect or abuse they endured. The Oregon Humane Society has trained adoption counselors on staff to find appropriate forever homes that are capable and excited to facilitate the new chapter in the lives of these animals.

**We urge you to vote yes on HB 3408.**

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sharon Harmon", written in a cursive style.

Sharon Harmon  
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