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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 2745

Chairman Witt and Members of the Committee

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 2745.

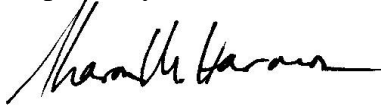
On a daily basis the Investigations Department at the Oregon Humane Society sees the impact that county budget cuts are having on abused and neglected animals in Oregon. Counties that formerly had officers dedicated to the investigation of animal crimes now defer to OHS on their website as the contact for reporting animal cruelty. Cases involving deceased animals languish in overwhelmed and understaffed district attorney offices while the statute of limitations lapses. Adding animal crimes to the list of criminal activity that the community can monitor will provide another avenue to save suffering animals and hold the owners accountable.

An animal owner pursued under this law would not be absolved of any criminal conduct that stemmed from their "nuisance." Providing the community a means of exposing an animal cruelty situation can aid law enforcement in establishing their probable cause and ultimately seeking prosecution of violators.

As the sponsoring organization of Oregon's specially commissioned animal cruelty investigators, OHS has a vested interest in improving the lives of mistreated animals in this state. Any tool that works in tandem with us to that end should be supported by a legislature who has a history of taking a strong stance on an issue that is close to the hearts of many of its constituents.

We urge you to vote yes on HB 2745.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sharon Harmon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Sharon Harmon
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