



Oregon Veterinary Medical Association

**Senate Bill 6 C
Support**

Dear Representative,

Animal neglect and abuse has no boundary in our state. It exists in all 36 counties and affects nearly every animal imaginable, although most cases involve cats and dogs, horses, and, on occasion, cattle.

Veterinarians and their healthcare teams are at the forefront of treating neglected and abused animals, and we pretty much have seen it all: cats shot with arrows and buckshot, and other felines that have been tossed against walls; dogs beaten by sticks, burned by lighted cigarettes and, in one recent case, a canine that was shoved into a heated oven; and horses so malnourished they could barely walk and other equines whose legs were mired in muck and with festering wounds, parasites and infections.

The Oregon Veterinary Medical Association supports Senate Bill 6 because we believe it is reasonable and strengthens our animal welfare laws.

First, Senate Bill 6 sends a clear and strong message to animal abusers (especially repeat offenders):

- If you harm an animal to the point of serious injury or death, your actions not only won't be tolerated but your punishment will be measured against the seriousness of your offense.

Second, Senate Bill 6 provides important oversight of animal rescue groups.

- Earlier this year authorities confiscated 149 dogs from a rescue group in the Willamette Valley, where conditions of the animals were deplorable. There had been longstanding complaints and concerns about this rescue, but no action had been taken for nearly one year. Oversight under provision in SB 6 could have remediated these concerns sooner, and the dogs would not have languished in their neglected and abused state for as long as they did.
- Right now anybody can start a rescue group without any guidelines or expectations. This includes groups that are transporting dogs from other states into Oregon and then placing the animals in adoptive homes. This raises some serious concerns: Have these animals come into Oregon with the appropriate and required veterinary health certificates? Are dogs current on their rabies vaccination? Do they have illnesses or diseases that could pose a risk to other animals or the general public?
 - SB 6 would provide a check and balance for dogs being rescued in and imported into Oregon.
 - Licensure would be required. In addition, such groups (including humane shelters) would need to establish minimum recordkeeping to document the animals they are rescuing and record where the animals are placed.
 - Records could be inspected by a local enforcing agency, and an on-site investigation of the premises could occur if the agency determined there is reasonable cause for concern.

We are asking for your support of SB 6. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Todd

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