

FROM THE DESK OF
Senator ALAN OLSEN

SB 1584 A – Sosha’s Law

Background

Gladstone resident, Patrick Clark, is a Marine veteran who served in Somalia and Desert Storm. Patrick and his lynx, Sosha, have been together for 16 years. He rescued the cat when she was 10 days old. Patrick suffers from PTSD following his military service, and Sosha is a physician-classified companion animal.

A 2009 law prevents the Department of Agriculture (“ODA”) from issuing permits to keep certain non-native animals after January 1, 2010. When it was recently discovered that this law does not allow Patrick to keep Sosha, the City of Gladstone gave him five months to find a legislative solution before enforcing the law.



Patrick Clark and lynx “Sosha”

Solution

Senate Bill 1584-A opens a limited-duration window in ORS § 609.341 to allow ODA to issue permits to a person who owned an exotic animal prior to January 1, 2010 but did not apply for a permit. This window closes December 31, 2014. The bill was amended to apply specifically to Patrick’s situation:

- (1) Applicant has a disability and
- (2) Physician recommends that keeping the exotic animal would benefit the applicant.

**Before January 1, 2010, ODA approved only 56 permits for exotic animals.*



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