

**Date:** March 29, 2017

**To:** **House Committee on Judiciary**  
Representative Jeff Barker, Chair  
Representative Andy Olson, Vice-Chair  
House Democratic Leader Jennifer Williamson, Vice-Chair  
Representative Chris Gorsek  
Representative Mitch Greenlick  
Representative Ann Liniger  
Representative Bill Post  
Representative Tawna Sanchez  
Representative Sherrie Sprenger  
Representative Duane Stark  
Representative A. Richard Vial

**From:** Nicole Jergovic  
Attorney, Oregon State Bar Association

**Re:** House Bill 2637

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 are here today to ask for your support of HB 2637.**

A man screamed at his Chihuahua, grabbed the dog and pinned the dog down with his knees while he repeatedly punched the dog with closed fists. Blow after blow, an employee of a vet clinic who was prepping a patient for surgery watched in shock and horror. She ran outside to try to stop the man, even though she thought the little dog was probably already dead or too injured to save since the dog was no longer making any noise. The nearby construction worker had heard the commotion as well and he too went over to try to stop the beating. Both the construction worker and the veterinary assistant screamed at him to stop as they ran towards him. The man grabbed his little dog, and flung the dog like a limp sac of rice into the car, quickly got in and drove away.

Within the world of animal abuse investigation and prosecution, it is not unheard of to encounter a scenario like the one above. It is also not unheard of for an animal to suffer this kind of abuse without visible evidence such as broken bones or visible bruising. And sometimes, an abuser may be able to hide an injured dog from law enforcement, making it impossible to document the visible injuries.

The dog in the scenario described above was located within a few days and a full examination, including radiographs, was conducted. There was no visible sign of injury. Other animals do not

seem to sustain injuries in the exact ways that we would expect to see in a human of comparable size such as an infant or a child. And because many animals are covered with fur and have may have dark skin, bruises may be impossible to see. But unlike a human, you cannot ask the animal "on a scale of 1-10, how much did that hurt" or even if it hurt at all.

HB 2637 will close a loophole preventing people from abusing animals in such a way as described above.

Sincerely,

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