



April 26, 2017

House Committee on Rules
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Williamson, Co-Chairs Rayfield and McLane, and members of the committee:

Fences For Fido is an award-winning Oregon-based nonprofit charity that builds fences at no cost to families so their dogs don't have to spend their days chained or tethered. To date, we have worked to free over 1500 dogs from a sad life at the end of the chain.

As a result of our work, we are also regularly involved in the rehoming of many dogs, and we work closely with the shelter and rescue communities to do so. The core principal guiding our work is more compassionate and responsible pet ownership. We are writing today to urge the committee to vote YES on HCR 16 to designate the rescued shelter dog as the official state dog of Oregon.

We know from firsthand experience that all dogs have value and deserve a life of kindness and love. HCR 16 shines a light on the dogs who, for whatever reason, find themselves in a shelter or rescue. Whether they are a pedigreed purebreds from a reputable and responsible breeder, or a "Heinz 57" whose greatest quality is simply the ability to be a devoted and affectionate member of the family. By designating the rescued shelter dog as Oregon's official state dog, we give these dogs increased value in the eyes of the public, encouraging Oregonians to look in a shelter first for their new family member, and discouraging the practice of buying pets from puppy mills and disreputable breeders who place profits above animal welfare.

We believe strongly in the mission of Oregon animal shelters and rescues and support the difficult, heartbreaking work of shelter professionals throughout our great state. HCR 16 recognizes the valuable role that rescues and shelters play in Oregon. Our state has always been a leader when it comes to companion animal welfare, and the adoption HCR 16 is a fitting tribute to the people who work every day to save lives, as well as a statement to the compassionate, independent heart of our people.

For the foregoing reasons, we at Fences For Fido urge you to vote YES on H.C.R. 16. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important legislation.

Michele Coppola, President
Fences for Fido