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Testimony of Humane Oregon on House Bill 3283 (2017)
Senate Committee on Judiciary

May 19, 2017

Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, and members of the Committee:

Humane Oregon is a bi-partisan, non-profit organization formed in 2014 to help advocate for animal welfare in Oregon's political process and elections. We are a moderate but progressive animal welfare organization, with board members from many different parts of Oregon's animal welfare community.

Humane Oregon supports HB3283, which would help strengthen both animal law and animal rescue entities.

HB3283 would increase, from five years to 15 years (with a possible reduction for people who complete mental health treatment) the time for which a person convicted of felony animal neglect is prohibited from possessing the same animals or other domestic animals. To be convicted of a felony rather than a misdemeanor a perpetrator must already have taken the crime of animal neglect to an extreme. Felony offenders have proven that they are unfit to care for animals; Oregon law should recognize this and extend the time for which they are prohibited from possessing animals.

HB3283 would also clarify that people, agencies and organizations caring for impounded animals may mitigate the costs of the care and treatment through funding that is separate from, and in addition to, any recovery of reasonable costs that a court orders a defendant to pay. Separate funding, such as funding from charitable donations, should not reduce the financial responsibilities of the defendants who created the need for third-party animal care.

In summary, Humane Oregon supports HB3283 because it promotes justice for animals and financial fairness for animal rescue entities.

Thank you for considering our comments.

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