

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF H.B. 2732

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Senate Committee on Judiciary

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Chair Prozanski and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for your careful consideration of H.B. 2732. This bill would bring Oregon in alignment with a growing number of states with protections for citizens who act to save children or pets from a dangerous situation.

Here in Salem, I've seen a number of dogs placed in danger on sunny days. One was last week, at the Fred Meyer parking lot on Commercial Street SE. The outside temperature was only in the low 70s, but a small, short-snout dog was closed inside a car that sat in the direct sun. I parked in the adjoining parking space to watch the dog and within a few minutes the temperature inside my own car was unbearable for me. The dog was panting and obviously quite uncomfortable, but still alert and moving normally. It wasn't an emergency yet. But I watched and worried: if the dog started to show signs of heat stroke, would I be able to get help in time? I waited more than 15 minutes, not knowing how long the dog had sat there before I arrived.

In studies cited by the American Veterinary Medical Association*, on a 70° day, the inside of a parked car is 99° in 20 minutes and 115° in under an hour. These are potentially lethal conditions for any dog, and most especially for short-snouted or heavy-coated dogs with less ability to cool their body temperatures.

Last summer, in the same parking lot, on a day with temperatures in the 90s, a very thick-coated large dog, a Chow Chow, was closed inside a black car with black interior. He was showing signs of serious

distress, and I called 9-1-1. Salem Police Department is always willing to respond to these situations, but on a busy summer weekend it took nearly 30 minutes for an officer to arrive. The dog's condition worsened during that time. The car's owner arrived at the same time as the officer and the dog finally got relief, but until that moment I was faced with a difficult situation. If I entered the car to save the dog, what consequences would I face?

I urge you to vote YES on HB 2732 to protect animals and children by freeing good Samaritans to act at a time when minutes are precious. Thank you for your service to Oregonians.

*<https://www.avma.org/public/PetCare/Pages/pets-in-vehicles.aspx>