

Chairman Floyd Prozanski

Senate Committee on Judiciary

900 Court St. NE

Salem Oregon 97301

Re: SB 638 Support

Dear Chairman Prozanski and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written comments in support of SB 638 legislation, which would ensure that dogs and cats used for research are adopted into loving homes after their term in research.

As a college student many years ago, I worked at a university vet school as an animal caretaker. My job was to care for cats and dogs used in experiments. I worked as a team with other students, and can assure you that we did indeed form bonds with our charges. Aside from cleaning and feeding, we often went the extra mile to offer playtime and personal attention to the animals. For the most part, they were very receptive. In fact, once the research in which they were involved was concluded, it was not uncommon for some of us to adopt them and take them home with us. They made wonderful companions.

There were, however, some, especially dogs, who were so traumatized from experiments, our mere presence would send them into seizures. This was the case with one gentle, doe-eyed beagle. Beagles are often used in research because they are easier to handle than other breeds — often trusting and sweet, they do not fight back. It's a memory that haunts me to this day. But with enough love and patience, that beagle eventually became someone's companion.

Of course, the alternative to adoption for these wonderful, sentient beings is "sacrifice." It's an end that is so unnecessary when partnerships with rescue organizations and shelters could be formed to give the animals a chance at a loving home. Not only is euthanasia in these cases a waste of life, but a cruelty to those who work with these creatures.

Oregon has always been a leader in innovative ways of thinking, yet states such as California and New York have already passed legislation similar to SB 638. If the true measure of a society can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable members, by passing SB 638 we can remind the world just how great our state is. Please support SB 638.

Respectfully,
Rebecca Stone
Rose Lodge, OR