



HUMANE VOTERS | OREGON

Testimony of Humane Voters Oregon on House Bill 2804
House Committee on Business and Labor

March 19, 2019

Chair Barker and Members of the Committee:

Humane Voters Oregon (previously known as Humane Oregon) is a nonprofit organization that works in Oregon's political process and elections to promote humane treatment of animals. We have board members from several different animal welfare organizations but are not affiliated with any other state or national organization.

Humane Voters Oregon supports House Bill 2804. With the proposed -6 amendments, the bill would prohibit a retail pet store (“a retail establishment open to the public that sells or offers to sell domestic animals”) from selling dogs or cats. However, the bill would make clear that retail pet stores can partner with shelters and rescues to make dogs and cats available for adoption at their locations.

We support HB 2804 primarily because it would help find homes for more dogs and cats that don't have one – i.e., dogs and cats at shelters and rescues. If dogs and cats are not sold in retail pet stores, more people will turn to adoption alternatives, including adoption events at the stores. This would be a good thing because, at least on a nationwide basis, there are still many more dogs and cats than there are homes for them.¹

HB 2804 also would help reduce the demand that fuels inhumane mass breeding operations (aka “puppy mills”). Our understanding is that these operations sell to retail pet stores while responsible breeders do not because responsible breeders want to meet their purchasers and therefore sell directly to purchasers without using a retail storefront.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Brian Posewitz

Brian Posewitz
Board Member/Administrator

¹ The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals currently [estimates](#) that, nationwide, “[a]pproximately 3.2 million shelter animals are adopted each year (1.6 million dogs and 1.6 million cats),” while “approximately 1.5 million shelter animals are euthanized (670,000 dogs and 860,000 cats).” (The national statistics are relevant because Oregon's shelters and rescues frequently receive animals from other states.) We are not aware of any state statistics but, assuming Oregon adopts and euthanizes proportionally to its population, that would suggest approximately 40,000 adoptions and 19,000 animals euthanized (though anecdotally we believe Oregon does a better job of finding homes for rescue and shelter animals). The Oregon Humane Society for 2017 [reported](#) adoptions of approximately 10,500 dogs and cats, which it said was a 99 percent adoption rate for dogs and a 97 percent adoption rate for cats (implying that it euthanized about 200 dogs and cats). Multnomah County Animal Services for FY 2017 [reported](#) adoptions of 888 dogs and 1,339 cats, while euthanizing 111 and 230, respectively – continuing a trend toward dramatic reduction in the number of animals euthanized each year.