

OREGON HUMANE SOCIETY

Date: February 22, 2023

To: **Senate Committee on Judiciary**
Senator Floyd Prozanski, Chair
Senator Kim Thatcher, Vice-Chair
Senator Sara Gelser Blouin
Senator Dennis Linthicum
Senator James Manning Jr.

From: Chris Allori, Chief of Humane Law Enforcement, Oregon Humane Society

RE: **Senate Bill 696**

Good afternoon, Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher and members of the committee.

For the record, my name is Chris Allori and I work for the Oregon Humane Society (OHS) in the role of Chief of Humane Law Enforcement. Prior to my employment with OHS, I was employed by the Oregon State Police for 26 years spending most of my career enforcing Oregon's wildlife laws. As a humane special agent, I have been enforcing Oregon' animal welfare laws for just under 3 years.

I am here today to ask you to support SB 696.

Each year, the Oregon Humane Society receives thousands of reports concerning animal welfare offenses occurring throughout the state of Oregon. I have personally investigated numerous cases of animal abuse, neglect, and abandonment since my employment with OHS.

I have learned in order to successfully prosecute an animal welfare offense; police officers and prosecutors must first be able to understand and navigate the nuances of Oregon' animal welfare laws.

During my employment with OHS, I have had the opportunity to work with the current State of Oregon animal cruelty deputy district attorney on several occasions. I have found the animal cruelty attorney has been an invaluable resource to help me understand the animal welfare statutes and in assisting other prosecutors with their respective county's animal welfare prosecutions.

The animal cruelty attorney has also aided with the pre-trial forfeiture of animals in cases he has prosecuted. Pre-trial forfeiture of animals is important because it can allow animals to be adopted to their next home and reduce their housing and care cost. I have personally seen the great expense that can quickly incur with the care and feeding of seized animals pending the prosecution of a case. The cost can quickly run into the thousands of dollars and can be an expense not allocated within animal welfare organization and police agency budgets. Having someone familiar with the pre-trial forfeiture statute and procedures can assist with the filing of the necessary court paperwork, which

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can result in saving agencies and animal welfare organizations thousands of dollars when animals can be quickly adopted.

Currently, I am aware the current Oregon animal cruelty prosecutor is grant funded. I am also aware that grant funding can be unpredictable or may sunset without renewal and leave a funding gap resulting in the potential elimination of a position. Having a dedicated state funded animal cruelty-focused attorney within the Department of Justice Criminal Justice Division will provide more financial stability and provide additional support and state resources to this position.

If this bill is passed, the animal-cruelty focused attorney position will strengthen Oregon's animal welfare statutes by providing a dedicated state level prosecutor to focus on holding those people who abuse and neglect animals accountable. This position would be a resource that all Oregon law enforcement agencies can utilize and rely on knowing it is fully supported by the State of Oregon.

Sincerely,



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