



Yamhill County Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Tim Svenson

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"Excellence in Service"

The Honorable Floyd Prozanski, Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary
Oregon State Senate
900 Court St. NE, S-413
Salem, Oregon 97301

February 17, 2023

Chair Prozanski,

I am writing to express the support of my Office for Senate Bill 696 sponsored by Senator Manning Jr. at the request of the Oregon Humane Society.

As Sheriff of a county that mixes agriculture, rural, and urban, there are unfortunately a myriad of ways that animal cruelty can exist here. In part because of the wide variety of potential situations, my office has historically utilized the knowledge and services of the Oregon Humane Society in assisting us not only with identifying cases of cruelty or neglect, but in successfully treating and rehoming animals subject to such treatment. But removing animals from such situations cannot be the only action taken. We must also be able to hold those responsible accountable by successfully prosecuting cases of egregious misconduct.

Since 2013, Yamhill County has called on the assistance of Animal Cruelty Deputy District Attorney (AC-DDA) Jake Kamins to properly identify, charge, and prosecute those cases. In addition to the knowledge sharing and training opportunities AC-DDA Kamins has provided, he has been appointed to assist in several large animal neglect / animal cruelty cases in our county.

For the most recent large case, which occurred in February 2021, Kamins was appointed by the Yamhill County District Attorney (YCDA) on behalf of the State of Oregon in the case of *State of Oregon vs Susan Kay Swango (21CR13243)*, who was indicted on 55 counts of Animal Neglect in the Second Degree, a Class C Felony. This case has not yet gone to trial, but Kamins has been diligent in ensuring that it does not fall through the cracks. Two years after the grand jury indictment, Kamins has participated in multiple hearings, kept track of several events, and handled delays.

But this is just the type of service we have come to expect from him and from the Animal Cruelty Prosecutor since he began in 2013. In his first year, he assisted YCDA in *State of Oregon vs Lelani L Folden Kamins (13CR07764)*, which resulted in conviction on three counts of Animal Neglect in the Second Degree. Kamins was appointed and successfully prosecuted *State of Oregon vs Nicole Erica Wood (16CR75692)*, which resulted in conviction of two counts of Animal Abuse in the First Degree. In 2018, Kamins again provided support and assistance to YCDA in *State of Oregon vs Esteban Patricio Diaz (18CR45696)*, which resulted in two counts of Animal Neglect in the Second Degree. In 2020, Kamins successfully prosecuted *State of Oregon*

vs *Steven Louis Hess (20CR56630)*, in which the jury found the defendant guilty of Animal Neglect in the Second Degree.

This issue is important, and it takes well-informed, well-supported individuals to conduct the work. AC-DDA Kamins has been repeatedly successful in holding individuals accountable for the welfare of the animals in their charge, and SB696 will allow the Criminal Justice Division to continue to employ individuals who can provide this kind of specialized support to agencies across the state. I believe that the proposed Senate Bill appropriation is a significant step forward for Oregon and support its approval.



Tim Svenson
Sheriff

cc: Sharon Harmon, CEO, Oregon Humane Society