

Submitter: Kelsey Nightingale
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure: HB3214

House Judiciary Committee Members,

As a dedicated advocate for animal welfare, I implore you to vote NO to House Bill 3214. Oregon already has extensive animal cruelty and welfare laws including ORS Chapter 167, titled Offenses Against General Welfare and Animals. Enforce those current laws!

It seems HB3214 lacks research. For example, the bill would ban educational programs including any tortoise or monitor lizard; some species weigh less than one pound as adults for both groups of reptiles. There certainly is no public safety concern and if animal cruelty is happening, then current laws can be enforced. The bill uses undefined terms that leave law interpretation open to enforcement officers to cite good citizens providing important conservation and education outreach. If this bill passes, legislative intent is gone! It is written poorly and rife with overreach. The fact is that this legislation is unnecessary. Punish the “bad actors” and the criminals. No new law is needed to protect animals as Oregon can already prosecute animal abusers.

Superfluous and ambiguous laws are becoming commonplace. Tax dollars and legislative resources are continually being wasted to propose duplicative laws. Even worse, collective punishment is becoming an accepted practice in our government. Instead of focusing on criminals, many new laws instead punish good citizens because everyone is assumed to be guilty of criminal activities.

Among other overreaching measures, this bill bans many educational outreach programs before school students and Scout troops, classifying such beneficial programs as inherently cruel. Those who would travel with their animals to teach school children about tortoises, certain lizards, and many other animals will be made into criminals! These very programs which would be made illegal under this law are the ones that fueled my love and passion for conservation as a child.

This bill is far-reaching and rife with unintended consequences, including making criminals out of those dedicated individuals who responsibly conduct educational programs with animals. Thank you for your time and consideration on this matter. Please realize that HB3214 is illogical and unjust. Have a good day.

Sincerely,
Kelsey Nightingale