

March 16, 2023

To: House Committee on Judiciary

From: BJ Andersen, Oregon Humane Society

Re: HB 3571

Chair Kropf, Vice-Chairs Andersen and Wallan, Members of the Committee:

My name is BJ Andersen, and I am writing to you today in support of HB3571, a bill that will close a critical gap in animal welfare protections for stray cats in our state. As the director of volunteer engagement for the Oregon Humane Society and a long-time advocate for animal welfare, I have seen firsthand the challenges faced by stray cats and the limitations imposed on our ability to care for them.

As you may know, the law regarding property and the value of cats is unclear and open to interpretation, creating difficulties for those of us who work with stray cats in our state. In my previous role as executive director of the Willamette Humane Society, we took in almost 3,000 cats and kittens in our last year alone, placing 94% of them in homes after an average stay in shelter of between 10 and 14 days. However, if we handle stray cats according to lost property rules, we would have been required to hold them for at least 90 days before they were available for adoption. With limited kennel space available, this would have drastically reduced the number of cats we could take in and care for over the course of a year to a mere 4 cats per kennel per year as opposed to 26 cats per kennel per year with a 3–5-day stray hold.

This is why I am urging you to support HB3571, which will give registered animal rescue entities with shelters accessible to the public the option of receiving stray cats and a uniform way of posting stray cats for the public to find their lost pets, the same way shelters handle stray dogs. This bill will close the gap in animal welfare protections for stray cats in our state, and it will do so at no cost to the government or taxpayers. This bill does not **mandate** the care of stray cats, rather it **allows** shelters to provide critical and humane care to these cats.

In my 18 years of experience working in animal welfare and serving the pets and people of the mid-Willamette valley, I have seen the incredible impact that animal rescue organizations can have on the lives of animals in need. With the passage of HB3571, we will be able to help even more cats in our state find their way to loving homes and families.

Thank you for your time and consideration and I hope you will join me in supporting this important piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

BJ Andersen, CAWA  
Director of Volunteer Engagement  
Oregon Humane Society

There are 365 days in a year, so the number of 12-day periods in a year is  $365/12 = 30.42$  (rounded to two decimal places). This means that each kennel can be used to house about 30 cats per year ( $365/12 = 30.42$ ).

With a 2 week stay, each kennel can be used to house about 26 cats per year ( $365/14 = 26.07$ ).

If held 90 days, it means that each kennel can be used to house about 4 cats per year ( $365/90 = 4.06$ ).