



**Maryland's Association of Animal Care and Control
Agencies and Humane Societies**

**PO Box 1143
Easton, Maryland 21601**

**HB 81 Unattended Dogs in Extreme Weather Conditions
Maryland House of Delegates Environment and Transportation Committee
January 11, 2021**

Dear Honorable Chairman Barve, Vice Chair Stein and members of the committee:

Professional Animal Workers of Maryland, the state organization comprised of animal control agencies and humane societies stands in support of HB 81. This bill is placing safety as a priority by requiring dog owners within Maryland to fulfill minimum standards of care at all times; including during extreme weather- when temperatures fall below 32 degrees Fahrenheit or over 90 degrees Fahrenheit or during a verified weather emergency.

The bill as written is not requiring more than what is expected as minimum care standards for dogs during extreme weather by national organizations such as American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS). Per the AVMA: "Generally, for dogs and cats, the ambient temperature should be kept above 50 degrees Fahrenheit (10 degrees Celsius), and below 80 degrees Fahrenheit (26.6 degrees Celsius), and the relative humidity should range from 30 to 70%. Animals should be protected from extreme temperatures so as to maintain their health and render their environment comfortable. When climatic conditions pose a threat to the animal's health or well-being, taking into consideration its age, breed, overall health status, and acclimation, then appropriate measures must be taken to alleviate the impact of those conditions."

Requiring dog owners, regardless of the breed, age, size, of their dog to ensure their animals have safe and appropriate shelter in all weather conditions in MD state law is creating a more humane environment across the state. While it is true several counties and jurisdictions have created their own extreme weather ordinances in response to the absence of such regulations at the state level, there are still many areas across Maryland lacking any ordinances or laws which give agencies the teeth to protect the most vulnerable animals in our communities.

Our organization stands unanimous support of HB 81 in an effort to provide a safe environment for the animals served by our agencies and organizations across Maryland. This addition to the law is long overdue and necessary.

Thank you for your time. Please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Patty Crankshaw-Quimby

Executive Director/Chief Animal Control Officer: Talbot Humane/ Talbot County Animal Control

President: Professional Animal Workers of Maryland