



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES**



**February 1, 2023
Judicial Proceedings Committee**

**SB 54
Criminal Law - Unnatural or Perverted Sexual Practice – Repeal
LETTER OF INFORMATION**

On behalf of The Humane Society of the United States and Maryland Votes for Animals, we wanted to provide the committee with brief informational testimony on SB 54, *Criminal Law - Unnatural or Perverted Sexual Practice – Repeal*.

In 2019, this committee passed comprehensive legislation that added animal sexual abuse prohibitions as a stand-alone section of the felony animal cruelty statute. As a result, the animal abuse language that would be struck by SB 54 in Section 3-322 is duplicative, and we do not have any concerns with its deletion. In addition, by adding “any other sexual conduct that is a crime” to Sections 3-602 and 3-604 of the code, the changes proposed in SB 54 could potentially increase the ability to hold animal abusers accountable.

While we are not officially taking a position on SB 54, we do encourage this committee to consider the bill without any fear of undermining the hard work you did in 2019 and urge you to consider this legislation as potentially enhancing our anti-abuse statutes.

We thank this committee again for your leadership in the passage of that important 2019 legislation to define animal sexual abuse and prohibit it in all its forms.

We hope this information is helpful as you consider SB 54.

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