



MARYLAND VOTES FOR ANIMALS

PO Box 10411
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January 21, 2020

To: Senate Judiciary Proceedings Committee

From: Lisa Radov, President & Chairman, Maryland Votes for Animals

Re: Vehicle Laws – Cats and Dogs left Unattended – Authorized Removal - SB 127 –
SUPPORT.

Chairman Smith, Vice Chairman Waldstreicher, members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee, thank you for the opportunity to share this testimony with you today. Speaking for Maryland Votes for Animals, our Board of Directors, and our thousands of members across the State of Maryland, I respectfully ask that the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee support SB 127.

This bill allows a citizen who believes that a cat or dog is in imminent danger to use reasonable force to rescue that animal, provided that he/she contacts law enforcement, the fire department, or 911, leaves contact information, and remains with the animal until emergency services arrive.

In Maryland, it is illegal to leave a cat or dog unattended in a standing or parked vehicle in a manner that endangers the safety of the cat or dog. Only law enforcement or designated first responders are permitted to use reasonable force to remove the animal from the vehicle. Eleven states: New York, Massachusetts, Vermont, California, Ohio, Tennessee, Colorado, Florida, Wisconsin, Arizona, and Indiana have Good Samaritan Laws that allow citizens to break a car window to save a cat or dog in distress.

The problem with the current law in Maryland is that in the time that it takes for a citizen who sees the cat or dog in extreme distress to dial 911, give the report to the dispatch, and wait for help to arrive can be the difference between life and death for that cat or dog who is having a seizure, in danger of suffocation with hyperthermia on a hot day, or in danger of freezing to death with hypothermia in frigid weather. This law would allow responsible citizens to take life-saving action take action to save the animal if it is in distress but gives them easy steps to follow and places limits on what they can do.

Maryland Votes for Animals would like to thank Senator Reilly for his sponsorship and ask that the Senate Judicial Proceeding Committee give SB 127 a favorable report.

Let Kindness Reign, Vote Humane

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