

**NCOVAA\_FAV\_SB 814**

Uploaded by: Doherty, April

Position: FAV

Bill Number: SB814

April Doherty, Paralegal, Baltimore County State's Attorney's Office, Animal Abuse Unit  
President, Maryland Animal Cruelty & Animal Fighting Task Force  
Co-Chair, National Coalition on Violence Against Animals  
Law Enforcement Trainer, Humane Society of the United States  
Graduate Student, University of Florida, Veterinary Forensic Medicine  
Support

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF APRIL DOHERTY**  
**IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 814 HUMANE SOCIETY AND ANIMAL CONTROL**  
**OFFICERS—EDUCATION AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

I write in support of Senate Bill 814, Humane Society and Animal Control Officers—Education and Training Requirements. This Bill is essential in providing a foundation of education, as well as continuing education for an officer of a humane society and an animal control officer (hereinafter “HSO/ACO”). SB814 is important as many HSO/ACOs are investigating crimes against animals, including misdemeanors, felonies, and civil citations. Furthermore, by having a fundamental education, they will also be able to recognize and cross-report crimes of family violence that may be co-occurring and observed during investigations.

Before a police officer graduates into field training, there is a rigorous course schedule to prepare them for patrol. This Bill establishes similar guidelines for HSO/ACOs. While HSO/ACOs are typically unarmed, they are tasked with similar duties of investigation for a variety of incidents and crimes.

A baseline criminal law education requirement would ensure that officers are well versed in 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment searches and seizures, chain of custody procedures for evidence, and interviewing techniques. These are potential areas where issues may arise with an untrained HSO/ACO that the prosecutor may have to address with the Court.

Some states, including Texas, Michigan, and Virginia, to name a few, already require mandatory training and continuing education for their HSO/ACOs. Virginia specifically requires the education, along with training to recognize child abuse and neglect. The Virginia HSO/ACOs work very closely with the Virginia Attorney General's Animal Law Unit, where over 1,450 matters have been recorded in reference to animal abuse.

As of October 1, 2017, Maryland became a mandatory reporting state requiring veterinarians to report suspected animal abuse. As more veterinarians report their suspicions, the HSO/ACOs must be prepared to complete reports, as well as package any evidence that may be necessary for the investigation.

Continuing education requirements provide for the advancement of skills in the field, to be informed of the most recent and up-to-date information, and also issues or challenges that others may be experiencing.

In 2016, the FBI began recording data through NIBRS (National Incident-Based Reporting System) animal abuse, deemed a “crime against society.” This is essential for animal control officers to be familiar with as the data must be reported by police agencies. Many animal control officers are under different agencies, and it is essential for the relationships to be established between HSO/ACOs and law enforcement. This can be supported through this Bill's education requirements. I urge a favorable report of Senate Bill 814.

# **Humane Society of the US\_FAV\_SB 814**

Uploaded by: Hovermale, Emily

Position: FAV



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY  
OF THE UNITED STATES**

March 3, 2020

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1255 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, NW  
Suite 450  
Washington, DC 20037

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P 202-452-1100  
F 202-778-6132

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[humanesociety.org](http://humanesociety.org)

Judicial Proceedings Committee  
Maryland Senate  
11 Bladen St Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support for SB 814

Chairman Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Humane Society of the United States and our members and supporters in Maryland, thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 814 to require training for animal control officers in Maryland.

The state federation of animal control agencies and shelters, the Professional Animal Workers of Maryland, has requested SB 814 in order to ensure their members are adequately equipped for their roles to keep the community safe and protect animals.

While these officers do not have the same powers as sworn officers, like to arrest or detain individuals, they are enforcing certain laws. It is important for public confidence, safety of officers and animals, and for officers to be valued as professional public servants that these officers are adequately trained.

Eleven states – Arkansas, California, Colorado, Indiana, Minnesota, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington –currently have a statutory requirement for training of animal control officers.

There are different options that exist currently for training, and importantly, SB 814 allows each individual county agency to decide where to send their officers for training based on each agency's individual budget, staffing and needs. An organization that offers one such online training program, the National Animal Care & Control Association is a non-profit organization that is committed to setting the standard of professionalism in animal welfare and public safety through training, networking, and advocacy. The American Animal Cruelty Investigations School also offers a variety of courses both for new animal control officers and for continuing education training. Additionally, the East Coast Animal Control Academy offers a comprehensive two weeks of face to face training at the MD Police Training Facility as a result of more than a decade of collaboration between Carroll Community College and state and local humane and law enforcement agencies.

Requiring training for animal control officers is a sensible public safety measure designed and is supported by the agencies charged with animal control enforcement. For these reasons, we respectfully request a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Emily Hovermale  
Maryland State Director  
[ehovermale@humanesociety.org](mailto:ehovermale@humanesociety.org)  
240-708-6899

# **MoCo\_Morningstar\_FAV\_SB 814**

Uploaded by: Morningstar, Sara

Position: FAV



# Montgomery County

## Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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ROCKVILLE: 240-777-6550

ANNAPOLIS: 240-777-8270

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**SB 814**

**DATE: March 3, 2020**

**SPONSOR: Senator Waldstreicher**

**ASSIGNED TO: Judicial Proceedings**

**CONTACT PERSON: Sara Morningstar (Sara.Morningstar@montgomerycountymd.gov)**

**POSITION: SUPPORT (Montgomery County Department of Police, Animal Services Division)**

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### **Criminal Law – Humane Society and Animal Control Officers – Education and Training Requirements**

Senate Bill 814 would require humane society officers and animal control officers to take 80 hours of animal care and control training within the first 12 months of their employment. Additionally, these individuals would be required to take at least six hours of continuing education each year. Montgomery County Department of Police, Animal Services Division, supports this legislation.

This is the first step in establishing training for officers enforcing State and county laws and regulations that support public safety efforts and compliance with basic standards of care for animals in our community. There are both State and national basic training programs for new officers, but unlike our neighbors in Virginia, Maryland has no requirement for animal control officers to receive the very important and informative training that covers animal laws, enforcement techniques, animal health related issues, and species-specific behaviors and/or tendencies.

Continuing education requirements are also key to the ongoing development and knowledge of officers working in the field. Changes in legal requirements, techniques, and methods are constantly occurring and keeping up with the latest updates is very important to the success of the enforcement of the laws and regulations that these officers provide to our community.

Senate Bill 814 would take an important step toward setting the standard of professionalism in animal welfare and public safety through education and training requirements. The Montgomery County Department of Police, Animal Services Division, supports this bill and urges the Committee to adopt a favorable report.

# **Maryland Votes for Animals\_FAV\_SB 814**

Uploaded by: Radov, Lisa

Position: FAV



## MARYLAND VOTES FOR ANIMALS

PO Box 10411  
BALTIMORE, MD 21209

March 3, 2020

To: Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
From: Lisa Radov, President & Chairman, Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc.  
Re: Criminal Law – Humane Society and Animal Control Officers – Education and Training Requirements - SB 814 - SUPPORT

Chairman Smith, Vice Chairman Waldstreicher, members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee, thank you for the opportunity to share this testimony with you today. My name is Lisa Radov. As the President and Chairman of Maryland Votes for Animals, I respectfully ask that the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee support Criminal Law – Humane Society and Animal Control Officers – Education and Training Requirements - SB 814.

This bill would add training and continuing education requirements for animal control and humane society officers. Currently, there is no training requirement in Maryland. While most agencies that handle animal control offer training for their animal control officers, it is not mandatory.

The Professional Animal Workers of Maryland (PAWS) requested this legislation in order to ensure that all animal control officers have training that is approved by their county. This will benefit the public as animal control officers, while not empowered to make arrests, do have the ability to seize animals and issue citations. They are enforcing the animal laws of their court, and of the State of Maryland.

As the owner of Gebco Insurance Associates and a licensed Maryland insurance agent for over 30 years, my agents and I had to pass a test to be licensed property and casualty and life and health agents in the State of Maryland. Every two years, we were required to complete 24 hours of state-approved continuing education. In short, I think that most Marylanders would say that having a trained animal control officer who knows what to do in a dangerous dog situation is, if not more important, is at least as important as getting a binder number from your insurance agent so that you can drive your new car off the lot.

I would like to thank Vice Chairman Waldstreicher for his sponsorship and ask that the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee give SB 814 a favorable report.

*Let Kindness Reign, Vote Humane*

WWW.VOTEANIMALS.ORG





**PAWS\_FAV\_SB 814**

Uploaded by: Swanson, Jen

Position: FAV



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

**PO Box 1143  
Easton, Maryland 21601**

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**SB0814 Humane Society and Animal Control Officers- Education and Training  
Requirements  
Maryland Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
Tuesday March 3, 2020**

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**Dear Honorable Chairman Smith and members of the committee:**

Professional Animal Workers of Maryland, the state organization comprised of animal control agencies and humane societies unanimously stands in unanimous support of SB0814. We believe this bill is long overdue and in the best interest of public safety.

There currently are no educational requirements for those entering the role of Animal Control Officer in Maryland. While numerous agencies have internal requirements for training, there are those enforcing state and local laws with little to no formal training. This bill, while requiring 80 hours of initial training within the first 12 months of employment in the position of Animal Control Officer, and 6 hours annually of continuing education, allows for the details of the training to be determined by the agencies.

SB0814 will raise the professionalism of the field of Animal Control and support our continuing efforts for public safety and best practices in the field.

Professional Animal Workers of Maryland respectfully requests a favorable vote on SB0814 Humane Society and Animal Control Officers- Education and Training.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

***Patty Crankshaw-Quimby***

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

President: Professional Animal Workers of Maryland