

SB 338 Veterans Fees.pdf

Uploaded by: Bevan-Dangel, Jennifer

Position: FAV

February 2, 2020

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

To whom it may concern:

On behalf of Baltimore Animal Rescue and Care Shelter (BARCS), I applaud and urge your support for SB 338 Pets for Vets Act which would require an animal control facility operated by a county or municipality to waive adoption fees for a veteran to adopt a dog or cat and authorizes the shelter to limit the number of adoption fee waivers granted.

In appreciation of the service that our police, firefighters, active duty military and veterans provide the community, BARCS created a lifetime adoption program approximately ten years ago called "Companions for Heroes", where adoption fees are waived for the brave men and women who protect and save us. Waiving fees is not a cost burden to the shelter and in fact it is more cost effective to place them in a new home rather than provide the continued cost of care at the shelter. Furthermore, it is our way to give back to our first in line heroes who do so much for our communities.

The passing of SB 338 would support the goal of giving back to the men and women who risk their lives for our country, as well as providing homes for deserving shelter pets. There is proven research on the health benefits of the effects that pets have on military veterans including decreased anxiety, depression, PTSD as well as lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

BARCS is a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization operating Baltimore City's shelter and Maryland's largest animal shelter. We are an open-admission shelter, granting refuge to every abandoned, neglected, abused, lost or surrendered animal that comes through our door. A staggering 30 or more animals are surrendered to BARCS every day. No matter what the circumstances, we do not turn away any animal in need of shelter, food, medical care and a loving touch. Yearly, this equates to more than 11,000 dogs, cats, kittens, puppies, and even wildlife and exotic animals that need care and placement.

We support SB 338 and hope that you do too. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Brause
Founder & Executive Director
Baltimore Animal Rescue and Care Shelter, BARCS

SB338_fav_HSUS.pdf

Uploaded by: Bevan-Dangel, Jennifer

Position: FAV



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES**

February 2, 2021

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

SB338

***Local Government – Animal Control Facilities – Adoption Fee Waiver for Veterans
(Pets for Vets Act of 2021)***

FAVORABLE

The Humane Society of the United States, representing our members and supporters in Maryland, supports SB 338 introduced by Senator Simonaire to waive adoption fees for veterans at county and municipal animal shelters.

Studies have shown that many veterans struggle after leaving the military. As many as 20 percent of veterans suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder and feelings of isolation, anger or aimlessness are not uncommon. Many veterans consider obtaining a service animal to assist with their physical and mental ailments. Unfortunately, the average wait time for a service animal is eighteen months, and it can be quite a lengthy process.

Even without being trained service animals, there is huge value in the human-animal bond. Pet ownership has long been known to have a beneficial effect on people suffering from depression and other mental health issues, loneliness and even high blood pressure. While a companion animal cannot replace a service animal for specific medical needs, the healing power a pet can provide is immense.

Programs that support veterans in obtaining companion animals are based on the growing body of popular and scientific literature that generally confirms the link between animals' social support and improved human health and happiness. For all of us, veterans and non-veterans alike, the presence of animals in our lives brings myriad psychological, social and medical benefits. And petkeeping is all about loyalty and devotion, something that every veteran understands.

We support SB 338 and respectfully request a favorable report.

*For more information contact Jennifer Bevan-Dangel, Maryland State Director
jbevandangel@humanesociety.org | C 202-963-8446*

SB 338 Senator Bryan Simonaire_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Leber, Verna

Position: FAV

BRYAN W. SIMONAIRE
Legislative District 31
Anne Arundel County

—
MINORITY LEADER
—

Education, Health, and
Environmental Affairs Committee

Subcommittees

Chair, Alcohol

Health
—

Joint Committee on the Chesapeake and
Atlantic Coastal Bays Critical Area



James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 423
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3658 · 301-858-3658
800-492-7122 Ext. 3658
Fax 410-841-3586 · 301-858-3586
Bryan.Simonaire@senate.state.md.us

The Senate of Maryland
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Written Testimony in SUPPORT of SB 338

Chairman and members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, I am here to introduce and voice my support for Senate Bill 338 – *Local Government – Animal Control Facilities – Adoption Fee Waiver for Veterans (Pets for Vets Act of 2020)*.

Senate Bill 338 would require an animal control facility operated by a county or municipality to waive the adoption fee for a dog or cat for a veteran. It also authorizes an animal control facility to limit the number of adoption fee waivers granted to an individual to one dog and one cat within a 6-month period.

Local Government – Animal Control Facilities – Ado

Uploaded by: Radov, Lisa

Position: FAV



MARYLAND VOTES FOR ANIMALS

PO Box 10411
BALTIMORE, MD 21209

February 2, 2021

To: Senate Education, Health and Environment Affairs Committee
From: Lisa Radov, President and Chairman, Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc.
Re: Local Government – Animal Control Facilities – Adoption Fee Waiver for Veterans (Pets for Vets Act of 2021) SB 338- SUPPORT.

Chairman Pinsky, Vice Chairman Kagan, members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before to you today. My name is Lisa Radov. I am President and Chairman of Maryland Votes for Animals. We champion humane legislation to improve the lives of animals in Maryland. Speaking for Maryland Votes for Animals, our Board of Directors, and our members across Maryland, I respectfully request that the Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee vote favorably for Local Government – Animal Control Facilities – Adoption Fee Waiver for Veterans (Pets for Vets Act of 2020) - SB 338.

This bill would require animal control facilities to waive the adoption fee for a dog or cat adopted by a veteran provided that he/she provides proper identification of veteran status and subject to certain restrictions.

This bill is a win-win for the lucky cat or dog waiting in a shelter longing to find a loving home. Our veterans make incredible sacrifices for Marylanders and Americans. It is the least that we can do to provide them with companionship. Moreover, it is documented that pets have a distinct therapeutic effect on people suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, PTSD. The benefits to the animals, the veteran, and that veteran's family, which has also given up a lot as their family member has had to be away for long tours of duty, are compelling reasons to pass this bill.

In closing, I thank Senator Simonaire for sponsoring this bill, and urge a favorable report on SB 338.

Let Kindness Reign, Vote Humane

WWW.VOTEANIMALS.ORG

January 28, 2021

SB338_Simonaire_SmithBT.pdf

Uploaded by: Smith, Brian

Position: FAV

SENATE BILL 338 – SUPPORT

**Senate Bill 338 – Animal Control Facilities – Adoption Fee Waiver for Veterans
(Pets for Vets Act of 2021)
Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
February 2, 2021**

My name is Brian Smith. I am a Gulf War era, 100% service-disabled combat Veteran and am writing to offer my strong support for **Senate Bill 338**.

As you know, this bill directs county or municipality animal control facilities to waive dog or cat adoption fees for Veterans with their “Veteran” status denoted on their motor vehicle administration identification card. While this will slightly impact revenues for these facilities, it **can directly and dramatically assist in saving the lives of both our Veterans and the animals!**

Simply put, Vets save Pets, and Pets save Vets! This legislation is a win-win-win, it helps save animals from shelters, it helps our disabled Veterans cope with life’s challenges, and it helps free up space in our shelters to allow them to rescue more animals.

Our Veterans are facing unprecedented challenges in fighting the hidden war at home due to the physical and mental ravages resulting from our Nation’s longest war. In fact, nearly one in five of our post-9/11 Veterans suffer from PTSD. That’s nearly 540,000 Veterans! Indeed, dogs and cats can make a difference in such Veterans’ mental and physical well-being.

As the wonderful nonprofit, “Pets For Vets” notes:

Many brave troops return home with scars – both seen and unseen – that make it difficult to transition back to civilian life. At the same time, millions of wonderful companion animals wait in shelters for a forever home.

When a Veteran is matched with the right pet, both lives change for the better. The Veteran saves and welcomes the pet into a loving home. The pet provides the Veteran with unconditional love and support, easing stress, depression, loneliness and anxiety. **Together, they share a bond that provides them both with a whole new “leash” on life.**

As a disabled combat Veteran, I can attest to the incalculable value that Tommy, my rescue Beagle, has added to my life, as I faced the mental and physical challenges resulting from my service.

Our Veterans are living testaments to the ideals of honor, service, and sacrifice. They deserve to enjoy the freedoms that they purchased for all of us through their selfless sacrifice on behalf of our Nation.

Consequently, we must support measures that help our Veterans live their lives with dignity and fulfillment. It is important to have programs and services that support their ability to lead productive, independent lives. **The “Pets for Vets Act of 2021” provides just such a program!**

Save a Veteran, Save a Pet, and please move this important bill forward!

I respectfully request a favorable report for Senate Bill 338.