



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

**PO Box 1143
Easton, Maryland 21601**

**HB 281 Humane Society and Animal Control Officers- Education and Training Requirements
Maryland House of Delegates Environment and Transportation Committee**

January 27, 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 unanimously stands in unanimous support of HB 281. 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, we see officers sent into some of our communities to enforce state and local laws with little to no formal training. This bill is unanimously supported by the members of our organization which is comprised of 85% of the animal control units and contracted shelters in MD. 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, the bill as written allows for the details of the training to be determined by the agencies and their unique needs across the state.

HB 281 will raise the professionalism of the field of Animal Control and support our continuing efforts for public safety and best practices in the field of animal control and humane law enforcement.

Professional Animal Workers of Maryland respectfully requests a favorable vote on HB 281 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