



MARYLAND VOTES FOR ANIMALS

PO Box 10411
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January 29, 2021

To: House Environment & Transportation Committee
From: Lisa Radov, President and Chairman, Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc.
Re: Department of Agriculture – Spay/ Neuter Fund Extension and Fee on Commercial Feed – HB 146 -Support with amendment

Chairman Barve, Vice Chairman Stein, members of the Environment & Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before to you today. My name is Lisa Radov. I am the President and Chairman of Maryland Votes for Animals. Speaking for Maryland Votes for Animals, our Board of Directors, and our members across Maryland, I respectfully request that the Environment & Transportation Committee vote favorably for Department of Agriculture – Spay/ Neuter Fund Extension and Fee on Commercial Feed – HB 146 with an amendment.

Maryland Votes for Animals worked on the legislation that passed in 2013 establishing The Spay and Neuter Grants Program. The goal of the program is to reduce shelter intake and euthanasia rates in Maryland. Using fees collected from pet food companies doing business in Maryland, the program provides competitive grants to local governments and non-profit animal welfare organizations for spay and neuter services of dogs and cats owned by low income residents and for colonies of feral cats.

The sunset for this program is September 30, 2022. First and foremost, Maryland Votes for Animals would like to ensure that this lifesaving program continues without interruption. We would like to have as many funds as possible to approve even more grants. However, as a member of the Spay and Neuter Advisory Board representing Maryland Votes for Animals, I participate in the process to approve grants and respectfully recommend that this bill be amended to allow the Maryland Department of Agriculture, the agency that administers the program, to include their data and input from the years that the program has been in force to evaluate the future schedule of fees charged to pet food companies.

Maryland Votes for Animals respectfully requests the following amendment that we have shared with the sponsor:

Strike the new language page 4, lines 24 – 28

Add at the end of the bill the following language:

AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, that, on or before October 1, 2021, the Department of Agriculture shall report to the General Assembly with a program evaluation identifying any significant programs that are currently not funded, the market capacity to further increase the fees, and a recommendation for the fee structure over the next 5-10 years of the program that would enhance the revenue generated to the Fund.

I want to thank Delegate Lehman for her commitment to this program and ask for a favorable report of HB 164 with the requested amendment.

Let Kindness Reign, Vote Humane

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January 27, 2021