



MARYLAND VOTES FOR ANIMALS

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January 20, 2021

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 159 - 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 159.

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 increase public confidence in these officers and the policies of local animal control because, while they are not empowered to make arrests, animal control officers do have the ability to seize animals and issue citations as they enforce the laws pertaining to animals in their county and of the State of Maryland.

As the former 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 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 159 a favorable report.

Let Kindness Reign, Vote Humane

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