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THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

January 20, 2021

Judicial Proceedings Committee

SB159

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

FAVORABLE

The Humane Society of the United States, on behalf of our members and supporters in Maryland, urge a favorable report on SB159, 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 SB159 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, SB159 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. It is worth highlighting, given our current limitations on in-person meetings, that these trainings could be performed virtually if conditions still require it when this bill takes effect.

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 on SB159.

*For more information contact Jennifer Bevan-Dangel, Maryland State Director
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SB0159 Humane Society and Animal Control Officers-

Uploaded by: Crankshaw-Quimby, Patty

Position: FAV



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

**PO Box 1143
Easton, Maryland 21601**

**SB 159 Humane Society and Animal Control Officers- Education and Training Requirements
Maryland Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee**

January 18, 2021

Dear Chairman Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher and members of the committee:

Professional Animal Workers of Maryland, the state organization comprised of animal control agencies and humane societies stands in unanimous support of SB 159. 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 based up the unique needs of the jurisdiction and their population.

SB 159 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 SB0159 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

SB 159 - MoCo - Animal Services (GA 21).pdf

Uploaded by: Morningstar, Sara

Position: FAV



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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SB 159

DATE: January 20, 2021

SPONSOR: Senator Waldstreicher

ASSIGNED TO: Judicial Proceedings

CONTACT PERSON: Sara Morningstar (sara.morningstar@montgomerycountymd.gov)

POSITION: SUPPORT (Montgomery County Office of Animal Services)

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

Senate Bill 159 establishes training requirements for animal welfare professionals employed to investigate and enforce State and local laws and regulations. Currently, many animal control officers throughout the State operate without the benefit of formal standardized training by experts in criminal investigations, enforcement, animal care and handling, and humane education because these training opportunities are considered optional and not required.

There are opportunities for animal control training both in the State and nationally; however, in Maryland, there are currently no requirements for animal control officers to attend this training. Senate Bill 159 would correct this and ensure future animal control officers receive this much needed professional training. Our neighboring state, Virginia, requires all of its Animal Control Officers to receive standardized training through a state approved training program. Virginia recognized that animal control officers greatly benefitted from standardized training given the variety of animals they may encounter, particularly those that may be subject to potential abuse, neglect or cruel treatment. Senate Bill 159 will help professionalize animal control as a career and help support local government's continuing efforts to employ best practices when responding to violations of laws and regulations.

Senate Bill 159 will require 80 hours of initial training within the first 12 months of employment in the position of animal control officers, six hours annually of continuing education, and allows for the details of the training to be determined by the agencies.

The Montgomery County Office of Animal Services supports Senate Bill 159 and would urge the adoption of a favorable report by the Committee.

Criminal Law – Humane Society and Animal Control O

Uploaded by: Radov, Lisa

Position: FAV



MARYLAND VOTES FOR ANIMALS

PO Box 10411
BALTIMORE, MD 21209

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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