



THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

January 18, 2022

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

SB206

Department of Agriculture - Spay/Neuter Fund - Extension

FAVORABLE

The Humane Society of the United States, on behalf of our members and supporters in Maryland, urges a favorable report and speedy action on SB206.

This committee should be proud of its work to create the Spay/Neuter Fund, which provides a national model for how to raise revenue for this critical, lifesaving work. We are grateful to the Administration for looking to renew the Fund and to ensure that it continues to operate. Since the Fund was established in 2014, euthanasia of companion animals across the state have decreased 55% and overall animal intake has dropped 17%. It is estimated that spaying and neutering just one male and one female cat can prevent more than 2,000 unwanted births over four years! The Spay/Neuter Fund is one of the most effective and cost-effective tools existing today for supporting pet owners, easing the burden on our shelters, and improving the lives of companion animals.

We do want to flag for this committee that there is a related bill in the House that is not a strict cross-file. Delegate Lehman has introduced HB191, which mirrors the extension provisions of this bill and also requires a report from the Department to ensure that the funding is adequate for the need. We support both bills and would encourage this committee to work proactively to conform the bills so that they can move together. It would be a tragedy for this critical program to end simply because of the vagaries of the bills not being strict cross-files.

This is a life-saving and valuable bill. We urge a favorable report and look forward to working with this committee to ensure that this bill and HB191 can move together.