



January 13, 2022

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

HB191

Department of Agriculture - Spay/Neuter Fund - Extension and Report

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 HB191.

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 Sponsor and the legislature for proactively 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 also appreciate the report required in this bill, which would look at potential fee increases and ensure that the program is funded at a level that is functioning at full capacity. Such an analysis would provide this committee with the data we need to determine a fee structure for legislative action in future years.

This is a life-saving and valuable bill that will position legislation next year to ensure the fees are structured at the optimal level. We urge a favorable report and look forward to working with this committee next year to right-size the fees.

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