



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY  
OF THE UNITED STATES**



**January 31, 2023  
Judiciary Committee**

**HB 131**

***Criminal Law - Unnatural or Perverted Sexual Practice – Repeal***

**LETTER OF INFORMATION**

On behalf of The Humane Society of the United States and Maryland Votes for Animals, we wanted to provide the committee with brief informational testimony on HB 131, *Criminal Law - Unnatural or Perverted Sexual Practice – Repeal*.

In 2019, this committee passed comprehensive legislation that added animal sexual abuse prohibitions as a stand-alone section of the felony animal cruelty statute. As a result, the animal abuse language that would be struck by HB 131 in Section 3-322 is duplicative, and we do not have any concerns with its deletion. In addition, by adding “any other sexual conduct that is a crime” to Sections 3-602 and 3-604 of the code, the changes proposed in HB 131 could potentially increase the ability to hold animal abusers accountable.

While we are not officially taking a position on HB 131, we do encourage this committee to consider the bill without any fear of undermining the hard work you did in 2019 and urge you to consider this legislation as potentially enhancing our anti-abuse statutes.

We thank this committee again for your leadership in the passage of that important 2019 legislation to define animal sexual abuse and prohibit it in all its forms.

We hope this information is helpful as you consider HB 131.

*Jennifer Bevan-Dangel, Maryland State Director  
The Humane Society of the United States  
www.hsus.org  
jbevandangel@humanesociety.org  
410-303-7954*

*Lisa Radov, President and Board Chair  
Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc.  
www.voteanimals.org  
radovlisa@gmail.com  
443-286-5457*