



SB 641 Department of Agriculture - Spay/Neuter Fund
Maryland Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

February 15, 2024

Dear Honorable Chairman Feldmen, Vice-Chair Kagan, and members of the committee:

My name is Katie Flory, and I am the Community Care & Advocacy Director for the Maryland SPCA. I am writing on behalf of the MD SPCA and our support of SB 641 Spay/Neuter Fund. Thank you to Senator Brooks for sponsoring this important piece of legislation.

Many agencies and organizations around the state of Maryland have benefited from the MDA Spay Neuter Fund Program since its inception in 2013. The Spay and Neuter Fund Program is critical to controlling over-population in the state of Maryland and supporting our community. Since the passage of the 2013 bill, we have seen vet and surgical supply costs rise precipitously, which means that fewer animals can spayed or neutered through the program. In 2023 the MD SPCA did close 1,300 surgeries funded through the program, but our costs also rose by 17.5%. There is a huge need for these services, but cost prohibits the number of pets and people we can serve.

SB 641 would increase the fee to \$130 for those companies who have a gross income from the distribution of pet food products of more than \$500,000. It will also allow for voluntary donations to the fund, and the use of the fund for routine vaccinations at the time of the spay/neuter, plus mobile transportation services to bring animals to us from underserved areas. These changes are critical to our organization and the under resourced communities we serve.

In our opinion, this bill asking to increase fees based upon inflation and to expand the scope of the fund's uses are reasonable.

We respectfully ask for a favorable report on this bill.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Katie Flory
Community Care & Advocacy Director

