



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

**PO Box 1143  
Easton, Maryland 21601**

---

**HB 1179 Housing and Community Development - Pets in Housing Developments  
Maryland House of Delegates Environment and Transportation Committee**

**March 1, 2024**

**Dear Honorable Chairman Korman, Vice Chair Boyce and members of the committee:**

Professional Animal Workers of Maryland (PAWS) the state organization comprised of animal control agencies and humane societies unanimously supports and encourages a favorable report on HB 1179.

It may seem trivial to some, but the love many have for their pets is deep and significant. When faced with economic hardship and housing instability, families are often forced to make a choice between homelessness or surrender of their pets. When owners do find pet friendly housing it is often restrictive due to pricey up-front pet deposits and/or monthly pet rent charges.

***Currently in Maryland one of the top 3 reasons for surrender of owned pets to our shelters is lack of pet friendly housing.*** In 2023 shelters required to report to the Maryland Department of Agriculture reported a marked increase in the number of animals entering our care- more than 76,800 animals- the highest number since 2019. It should also be of no surprise that those residents who rely on subsidized or low-income housing are disproportionately affected and make up a greater number of these surrenders.

In Addition, every animal entering a municipal or contracted shelter has a cost associated and that cost increases every day the animal resides in the shelter. Funds that could be better used to support pet owners in the community keep their pets verses paying to house, feed and provide veterinary care to the thousands of animals relinquished due to lack of pet friendly housing in Maryland.

Professional Animal Workers of Maryland believes the passing of HB 1179 is an important bill necessary to keep otherwise healthy and loved pets out of our shelters and keep people and their pets together in Maryland.

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

Sincerely,

***Patty Crankshaw-Quimby, CAWA***

Executive Director/Chief Animal Control Officer: Talbot Humane/ Talbot County Animal Control

President: Professional Animal Workers of Maryland