



MARYLAND VOTES FOR ANIMALS

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February 9, 2024

To: Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
From: Lisa Radov, President and Chairman, Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc.
Re: Juvenile Law- Reform – SB 744 - Support with Amendment.

Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. My name is Lisa Radov and I am the President and Chairman of the Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc. We champion legislation to improve the lives of animals in Maryland. On behalf of our board of directors, as well as the thousands of members of Maryland Votes for Animals, I respectfully ask that this committee vote favorably for Juvenile Law – Reform – SB 744 with an amendment. We respectfully request that the committee amend page 3, line 7-8 to strike “Title 10, Subtitle 6” and instead insert “§10-606”.

This bill outlines many reforms to our current juvenile laws. Maryland Votes for Animals supports these improvements to the system to allow youths to be held accountable and get the support and rehabilitation that they need after committing a serious crime as outlined in the bill.

As an organization dedicated to improving the lives of animals in Maryland, we want to highlight our support for this bill as it allows 10-12 year olds to be charged with a list of serious crimes *including animal abuse*. We feel that this addition will make not only our animals, but also our communities, safer as these 10-12 year olds who are charged can get the support they need in the form of rehabilitation and go on to lead productive lives.

I would like to thank President Ferguson and Chair Smith for their sponsorship of SB 744 and urge a favorable report with the requested amendment.