



MARYLAND VOTES FOR ANIMALS

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February 27, 2025

To: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
From: Lisa Radov, President and Chair, Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc.
Re: Research Facilities and Testing Facilities That Use Animals - Adoption and Reporting Requirements – SB 537 – Support

Chair Feldman, Vice - Chair Kagan, members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. My name is Lisa Radov. I am the President and Chair of Maryland Votes for Animals. We champion humane legislation to improve the lives of animals in Maryland. Speaking for Maryland Votes for Animals, our Board of Directors, and our members across Maryland, I respectfully request that the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee vote favorably for Research Facilities and Testing Facilities That Use Animals - Adoption and Reporting Requirements– SB 537

Applying certain provisions of law regarding the adoption of dogs and cats used for scientific research purposes to testing facilities; requiring certain research facilities and testing facilities to submit to the Department of Agriculture certain information regarding dogs and cats on or before January 31 each year; and requiring a school or an institution of higher education that uses animals for certain purposes to submit a report on the results of certain inspections to the General Assembly on or before December 31 each year.

This bill is an update to the very popular “Beagle Bill” also known as “Beagle Freedom Act” Maryland State legislators passed overwhelmingly in 2018. The goal of that legislation was to allow healthy dogs and cats used in research who had paid their debt to society to be adopted by a loving family. The only problem with that bill was that it did not have any mechanisms to ensure that best practices were being followed regarding the goals of that law.

What this bill does is simply hold those institutions conducting research on cats and dogs accountable by submitting information to the Maryland Department of Agriculture. This would include the number of cats and dogs owned and used by the research facility and the number of dogs and cats released to animal rescue organizations after testing has concluded and the names of those animal rescue organizations and that such information about the compliance with that law is available on the Department of Agriculture website. Any school or an institution of higher education that conducts research on animals would submit a report on the results of inspections by the Department of Agriculture to the General Assembly on or before December 31 each year.

The goal of this bill is to ensure that our research institutions, testing facilities, and institutes of higher education are allowing as many healthy dogs and cats, who have endured so much suffering in these experiments, to finally be adopted into loving homes.

In closing, I would like to thank Senator Kramer for his sponsorship of SB 537 and ask the committee to give this bill a favorable report.