

February 13, 2026

The Honorable Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chair
The Honorable Cheryl Kagan, Vice Chair
Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment
Maryland Senate
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Subject: SB 422, Research Facilities and Testing Facilities That Use Animals – Adoption and Reporting Requirements.

Dear Chairman Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan & Members of the Committee on Education, Energy, & the Environment:

I write on behalf of the Animal Health Institute (AHI) in strong opposition to SB 422 and respectfully urge an unfavorable report. (I also write as a lifelong resident of Maryland, who currently lives in District 9.) AHI is the U.S. trade association for research-based manufacturers of animal health products – the medicines that keep pets, service animals, and livestock healthy.

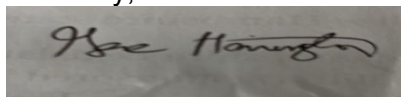
In 2018, Maryland enacted legislation codifying what many entities conducting research on cats and dogs in Maryland were already doing: facilitating the adoption of such animals – if deemed appropriate by the attending veterinarian – either directly to employees or through relationships with animal rescue organizations. Instead of helping retired cats and dogs, SB 422 seeks to hinder research facilities with burdensome reporting requirements.

The absurdly broad reporting requirement will mandate any entity conducting research, education, testing, and experimentation on live animals to submit annual reports to the Department of Agriculture, even if their work doesn't involve dogs and cats. Having to aggregate the submitted information into an annual report will drain the Department's precious resources.

Moreover, since the terms "research" and "education" are not defined, this would impose arguably the broad animal reporting requirement in the country and perhaps the world. Frankly, it seems possible that the legislation would require an elementary school using a terrarium to educate its students on a caterpillar's metamorphosis into a butterfly to submit a report to the Department, albeit with zero information other than its address and other identifying information. Furthermore, any entity submitting a report could be identified through a public records request, possibly subjecting it and their employees or students to harassment and violence.

In short, SB 422 is unworkable, unnecessary, and could lead to harassment and violence. As such, AHI respectfully requests an unfavorable report on SB 422. I appreciate your time and attention and encourage you to contact me at gharrington@ahi.org or (202) 549-5934 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A rectangular area containing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature appears to read "Gene Harrington".

Gene Harrington
Senior Director, State Affairs
Animal Health Institute