



MARYLAND VOTES FOR ANIMALS

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January 29, 2021

To: House Environment and Transportation Committee
From: Lisa Radov, President & Chairman, Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc.
Re: Criminal Law – Humane Society and Animal Control Officers – Education and Training Requirements - HB 281 - SUPPORT

Chairman Barve, Vice Chairman Stein, members of the Environment and Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to share this testimony with you today. My name is Lisa Radov. As the President and Chairman of Maryland Votes for Animals, Inc., I respectfully ask that the Environment and Transportation Committee support Criminal Law – Humane Society and Animal Control Officers – Education and Training Requirements - HB 281.

This bill would add training and continuing education requirements for animal control and humane society officers. Currently, there is no training requirement in Maryland. While most agencies that handle animal control offer training for their officers, it is not mandatory.

The Professional Animal Workers of Maryland (PAWS) requested this legislation in order to ensure that all animal control officers have training that is approved by their county. This will increase public confidence in these officers and the policies of local animal control because, while they are not empowered to make arrests, animal control officers do have the ability to seize animals and issue citations as they enforce the laws pertaining to animals in their county and of the State of Maryland.

As the former owner of Gebco Insurance Associates and a licensed Maryland insurance agent for over 30 years, my agents and I had to pass a test to be licensed property and casualty and life and health agents in the State of Maryland. Every two years, we were required to complete 24 hours of state-approved continuing education. In short, I think that most Marylanders would say that having a trained animal control officer who knows what to do in a dangerous dog situation is at least as important as getting a binder number from your insurance agent so that you can drive your new car off the lot.

I would like to thank Delegate Chang for his sponsorship and ask for a favorable report on HB 281.

Let Kindness Reign, Vote Humane

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