

Senate Agriculture Committee

From: Tracy Weaver <tracywweaver@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 04, 2016 11:56 AM
To: Senate Agriculture Committee
Subject: PCHTSC

Dear Committee Members,

Thank you for forming this committee and for listening to the concerns of the community. As an active member of the animal welfare community, I have several concerns that I would like to voice to the committee. I am a volunteer at Greenville County Animal Care and a member of Speak for Animals, PETA and the Humane Society of the United States. Through my work with local organizations, I often see horrible cases of abuse and neglect, as well as the effects of not spaying or neutering animals in the community. Animals in our state deserve better. I have outlined my concerns below.

There are laws in place to deal with those who neglect or abuse animals; however, the majority of the time, the offender gets off with nothing but a slap on the hand, if that. This is unacceptable. We need to improve the lives of animals in our state and enforcing stricter penalties would facilitate that goal.

Continued and increased access to low cost and free spay/neuter and other veterinary care to decrease overpopulation and euthanasia rates in SC is imperative. Many low income people in SC can barely provide for themselves, much less provide adequate veterinary care for their pets. Without low cost and free spay/neuter programs, the problem only gets worse as their pets breed and end up in the shelter, most of the time to be euthanized.

Many of the animals we see at the shelter are there due to breed discrimination in housing. People should not be forced to give up their pets because they are of a certain breed. Unless the dog has exhibited aggressive behavior (as can happen with any breed of dog), tenants should be able to keep their pets. Breed discrimination results in an undue burden on the shelters and is unnecessary.

I think my concerns are very common in the animal welfare community. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to voice our concerns. We hope something can be done to address these issues in our state.

Sincerely,
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