

Chair Hoffman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jennifer Burns and I have a municipal animal control officer in Kansas for 19 years. I also serve on the board for the Kansas Animal Control Association. I am writing you to you in opposition to HB 2477, which significantly increases licensing fees on shelter's under the Kansas Pet Animal Act.

The City of Newton contracts with a private shelter in Harvey County. This shelter, Caring Hands Humane Society, bears the financial responsibility for veterinary care, sterilization, and housing for any stray or relinquished animal in Harvey or Marion County. The City of Newton brings over 500 animals into Caring Hands every year and we are just a fraction of the intake for the shelter. The fees for these organizations should not be increased. They are providing a service to our community that our municipality cannot provide. Creating additional financial stress to their limited resources limits the services this organization can provide to improve animal welfare in our community.

This bill also does not address the lack of consequences for facilities that fail inspections or no show inspections. These facilities should be charged a re-inspection fee to offset the man hours and resources they utilize. There are no consequences for these non-compliant behaviors. Enforcement penalties are necessary for an effective inspection program.

There is currently a legislative post audit being conducted on the Animal Facility Inspection program. This report will be available in June 2018. The audit will determine if the program is being funded appropriately as well as managed effectively to carry out its purpose. Legislative action should wait until this audit is complete and legislators have had a chance to view it.

In closing, please oppose HB 2477, and postpone any legislative action until you have studied the Legislative Post Audit report. Thank you.

Sincerely

Jennifer Burns

Animal Control Officer

Kansas Animal Control Association