

Testimony in Support for HB 2302
The Cost of Animal Care under Ks Animal Cruelty Statute
Kansas Senate Judiciary Committee
By Midge Grinstead – Senior State Director Ks - HSUS
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Senator Wilborn and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to give written testimony on House Bill 2302, a bill to add to a legal process so that anyone who has had his or her animals lawfully seized due to cruelty may be required to pay for the animal's care-- saving county resources and taxpayer dollars. In particular, adding 2/3's of Ks shelters to this law.

One of the greatest obstacles that prevents law enforcement from enforcing Kansas's animal cruelty laws is the debilitating cost associated with caring for abused and neglected animals. Municipal agencies in our state are often forced to house and care for seized animals for months and even years at significant cost to taxpayers and the animals. When the agencies do provide long term care, without the ability to recover costs, they have fewer resources to help ensure public safety and provide other services to their communities. It is unfair Kansas municipal shelters to have to pay the cost of caring for seized animals when it is the owner's responsibility. Of the 273 shelters in Kansas, two-thirds are municipal shelters.

This legislation is fair to the owner. Any animal seizure must be based on evidence of illegal animal cruelty, and the owner can challenge the legality of the seizure and the reasonableness of the bond requested at the bond hearing. If the owner refuses or is unable to pay for the care of his or her animals, it is only appropriate that his or her animals have the opportunity to be placed in a new home. Our communities shouldn't have to pay the price because of a few bad actors.

This legislation relieves Kansas counties and municipal shelters, and by extension taxpayers, from incurring the entire cost of caring for neglected and abused animals who are lawfully seized. It is meaningful, sensible legislation that brings our state in line with numerous other states across the country that have cost of animal care laws. HB 2302 is good for counties, taxpayers and ALL animal shelters. This is a common sense measure, based on the principle of personal responsibility, serves as a win-win for the state, its taxpayers, and animals in the most

difficult of circumstances—those of cruelty cases. It is for these reasons I stand with our Shelter and rescue partners who wholeheartedly support and endorse HB 2302

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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