

# **DEFENDERS OF ANIMALS, INC.**

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**February 1, 2026 In Favor of H-7194**

House Judiciary Committee Members  
RI State House  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear committee Members:

On behalf of the members and board members, I am respectfully requesting that you support House Bill H-7194 that pertains to the Domestic Violence Prevention Act.

"As experts have pointed out for years, abusing animals is part of a larger cycle of abuse, and is often a precursor to violence towards humans and a larger cycle of fear and dominance. Perpetrators often use pets as tools of control; they may hurt, threaten to hurt, or even kill animals to intimidate victims and enforce dominance. If we are to address domestic violence effectively, we must confront animal cruelty as a critical part of the problem.

Moreover, acts of animal cruelty are increasingly being reported in children, particularly those who grow up in households where domestic violence occurs. Children who witness such violence—often perpetrated by a mother's intimate partner—can suffer significant emotional damage."

Please vote in favor of H-7194.

Very truly yours,  
*Dennis Tabella*  
Dennis Tabella  
Director