

Testimony in support (with amendments) of H7545: Cruelty to Animals

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Date of Hearing: February 11, 2026

To: Chair McEntee and the Honorable Members of the House Judiciary Committee

Though I greatly appreciate the sentiment expressed in this bill, I believe it is too restrictive and should contain the following amendments:

- 1) On page 1, lines 9-11 the killing or maiming of the pet must occur in the owner's home or under the owner's control of the pet. This should be revised to include anywhere maiming or killing occurs, whether in the owner's presence or not. For example, in DV situations an offender may steal a pet and injure or kill it after taking it from the owner. Offenders have thrown pets out of a car window after taking them, poisoning them, etc. and such acts should be included in this bill.
- 2) Pets are not just cats and dogs, the noneconomic value of any pet should be considered equally, regardless of the species. Maiming or killing any pet, e.g. birds, hamsters, reptiles, etc. should not be diminished by not including them in this bill. Their pain from injury/maiming is no less than that of cats and dogs. Their loss by killing them is no less to their family member. Please revise this to include "any pet".
- 3) On page 2, lines 8-12 are confusing.
- 4) Does page 2, lines 20-22 negate the ability for someone to sue a governmental employee when such rights do exist elsewhere if negligent, injurious actions to their pet are claimed by the owner?
- 5) Page 2, lines 20-22 exempts not-for-profit entity employees from liability for neglectful actions they take resulting in death of a pet. Liability should not be waived when neglectful actions are taken by professional staff, especially when their actions cause the death of a pet. Liability for injuring a pet by such staff is not waived, so why should it be for death?