



Oral Testimony on House Bill 433
House Economic Development Commerce and Labor Committee
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Chair Young, Vice Chair Riedel, Ranking Minority Member Lepore-Hagan, and members of the House Economic Development, Commerce, and Labor Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB433. This bill will allow a licensed veterinarian to receive continuing education credits every two years, for performing free spay and neuter services.

I am the Executive Director for the Licking County Humane Society. We are a private, nonprofit, 501(c)(3) agency organized under Ohio Revised Code 1717, and as such, are also authorized to appoint humane agents who enforce Ohio's animal protection laws. Each year, we intake approximately 1,900 animals into our facility, which contributes to us touching the lives of approximately 5,000 animals and 10,000 people through our various programming and services.

Like most humane societies in Ohio, we do not have a veterinarian on staff. We utilize a local veterinary practice to treat our animals, including spay/neuter services. Although they provide us with generous discounts, we are responsible for the cost of these procedures for the animals in our care. Last year, LCHS spent \$79,000 on spay/neuter services alone. As a non-profit organization, our expenses are met primarily through fundraising and donations.

I am also the President of the Ohio Federated Humane Societies. Speaking from that perspective, there are many humane societies in Ohio who are far less fortunate. Some shelters struggle to provide for the basic needs of the animals in their care. HB433 could encourage veterinarians to provide this community service at no cost to their local shelters, which would ease some of the financial burden experienced by shelters. The legislation would most certainly strengthen the partnerships between veterinarians and animal welfare organizations in Ohio. It could also provide a future benefit to Ohio's Humane Societies in reducing the number of animals who enter their care. Each pet that is spayed or neutered is adding money to the FUTURE budgets of our shelters.

In conclusion, I want to acknowledge the veterinary community for all that they are doing for animals and animal welfare in Ohio. Many vets already donate time, provide discounts and share expertise with us. We are profoundly grateful for their support of our mission and hopeful that the passing of this legislation will deepen these important relationships.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak and for your consideration of this important issue.