

Shelter Outreach Services of Ohio

3121 West Broad St, Columbus, Ohio 43204



Oral Testimony on House Bill 433
House Economic Development Commerce and Labor Committee
Melanie deHaan, DVM
Shelter Outreach Services of Ohio, Spay and Neuter Clinic
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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, the following is my testimony on HB433, a bill that will allow veterinarians to receive 2 CE credits per 4 hours of donated time performing spay and neuter surgeries for non-profit or animal sheltering organizations.

I am the founder and Medical Director for Shelter Outreach Services of Ohio, a Columbus based non-profit that provides HQHVSN (High Quality High Volume Spay and Neuter) services to the low income public, animal rescue groups, and high volume shelters. We currently operate a spay and neuter clinic on the West side of Columbus that performs over 10,000 discounted spay and neuter surgeries a year, 3000+ of which are performed on community cats (feral and free roaming cats). We also provide 2500-3000 spay and neuter surgeries/year to the Franklin County Dog Shelter, and have recently started a program at the county shelter called Snyp It, that will provide an additional 2000 surgeries to people on government assistance.

There is an enormous need for low cost spay and neuter services for the low income public that cannot otherwise afford veterinary care. Providing these services decreases the number of unwanted litters, and decreases the number of unwanted pets entering animal shelters and animal rescue groups.

With an estimated 500,000+ free roaming/feral cats living in Franklin County alone, there is an additional need for free spay and neuter services to be provided to these cats who do not have owners to pay for them. By providing sterilization services in the form of TNR (trap/neuter/return), we significantly decrease the amount of kittens entering local shelters, or dying on the streets from disease and starvation.

By encouraging veterinarians to reach out to local non-profits such as SOS of Ohio to provide donated time in surgery, it allows us to provide more subsidized care to those in need. It also provides those veterinarians with an opportunity to learn about programs (such as TNR) that they are not exposed to in private practice.

HQHVSN is a specialized form of veterinary medicine. High volume spay and neuter surgeons are

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skilled in certain techniques that allow for faster surgery times, and better tissue handling skills. These are good skills for all veterinarians to learn, and their donated time would be beneficial to them and their future patients.

I have trained many vet students and private practice veterinarians in high volume spay and neuter techniques. Every one of the veterinarians that I have trained learned skills that they took with them, and that helped them with technique and confidence that benefited all their subsequent surgical patients.

The benefits of passing this bill would be for both sides- the animal shelters that need the donated services, and the veterinarians that will be providing them. I strongly support the passage of HB 433.

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