



Good Morning Chairwoman Anielski and members of the House State and Local Government Committee. My name is Matt Granito and I am here today, on behalf of the Geauga County Dog Warden's Office and the Ohio County Dog Warden's Association, in Support of HB 552.

I have been working in Shelters in Lake, Cuyahoga and Geauga County for the past 27 years. I have been President and currently the treasurer of the Ohio County Dog Warden's association for the past 11 years. Our association currently represents 60 counties in the State of Ohio.

This Bill is very important to the safety of all the citizens in the state and furthermore provides humane methods to reduce abuse and sometimes death of animals in our community. First off, is the safety of our community. Currently, we have methods to capture animals from using treats to unfortunately using lethal force depending on the dog. Although I carry a firearm, I have not had to use this type of force on an animal in my career. I am fortunate to have tools such as treats, traps, snares, and catch poles. Unfortunately, that has not always worked on the dogs. Back in the 90s, we had the ability to use tranquilizer guns to safely capture aggressive dogs. The current law prohibits us from using that method unless a veterinarian is present. We cannot afford that luxury. We must respond quickly. This bill will allow us to have that tool available when the situation presents itself. This method has been proven effective and eliminates using deadly force on the animal. Thus, increasing the safety for the community and also increasing the safety for the animal. Capturing the dog safely and without injury is a priority in Animal Control.

Secondly, this bill allows for humane treatment of animals when it is decided a dog is unfit to be placed back into the public. These dogs are scared and frightened and some, very aggressive. HB 552, allows us to have the ability to sedate the animal prior to euthanasia. Not only does that create a very humane environment for the dog but it reduces the risk of staff being bitten by the dog. I have seen staff bitten by dogs because we have not been able to properly sedate them. This is not always the dogs fault. They are scared and don't want to be confined.

We hope that you understand how important this bill is for the State of Ohio, the citizens safety and the humane treatment of the dogs. This bill will make for a safer and better place for our children.

I thank you for your time and will take any questions that you may have concerning HB 552. Thank you.

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