

Dear Representative Hambley,

I am writing to you in support of HB 24. I personally witnessed an abuse of power, extreme greed, blatant dishonesty and the destruction of an animal rescuer that I volunteered with and have known well for years. This rescuer registered with the Ohio Department of Agriculture and followed all the rules as well as exceeded standards of care. Most importantly, I have witnessed her loving care of the animals, her thorough vetting and the complete adoption process. Her rescue animals were sought out by many. I believe she was seen as a threat because of her many successful adoptions and her ability to train and invest in each and every animal so it would be placed in a good, loving, forever home. .

Oversight is so needed over the local humane societies and animal control. They are given the power to seize property, obtain warrants, arrest and prosecute animal owners without having to answer for their actions. They exercise police powers with no law enforcement training. They demand money, however much they want, claiming it is to take care of the animals that they confiscate. In this particular case, they demanded \$17,400 per month or forfeit the healthy, completed vetted, highly adoptable animals. These animals did not even need to be seized in the first place. The word, extortion comes to mind. I know it did not cost \$17,400 per month to feed and care for these animals. The rescuer paid this for 6 months to a total of over \$100,000. The local humane society sold her animals, her supplies, kept the \$100,000 and also put out pleas to the community for donations! There is a huge financial gain for them to commit this type of crime. They also can get grants from different organizations, for seizing animals..

Many animal owner victims of this racket cannot pay the demanded money and they lose their property from the very beginning.

There was no law enforcement or veterinarian on site at the time of seizure.. Just a local humane society who was in deep financial trouble and saw an opportunity. Take this scenario with no oversight and a travesty of justice occurs which it did, in The Bright Futures Rescue case.

There were so many injustices with this case. The unscrupulous actions of this particular organization destroyed a law abiding, animal lover who contributed to society. I urge you to seriously pass this bill which would be a start to insure that the individuals in these types of positions maintain honesty and integrity and do not violate the rights of humans and truly protect the abused and neglected animals. Their positions should not be permitted to be a platform for personal gain and private agendas. The community and animal owners live in fear because of cases like this.

It is a sad commentary that there are some organizations that stoop to this type of activity. Left unchecked, this will become a favored type of fund raiser by more.

Sincerely,

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