



Representative Tom Brinkman  
Ohio's 27<sup>th</sup> House District

Chairman Koehler, Vice Chair Smith, Ranking Member Brent, and members of the House Agriculture and Rural Development Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 145, which would require the Attorney General to establish an animal abuser registry.

The fact of the matter is that those who are willing to harm animals often do not stop there. Too many times, the abuse of animals is a sign of future violence toward others. Certain infamous examples come to mind such as Ted Bundy and Jeffrey Dahmer, however, we have more recent examples in those such as Devin Patrick Kelly, killer of 26 people at the First Baptist Church in Southerland Springs, Texas in 2017.

Several studies show similar, heartbreaking issues. A survey of pet-owning families with substantiated child abuse and neglect, conducted by DeViney, Dickert, & Lockwood, found that animals were abused in 88 percent of homes where child physical abuse was present. Further, a 1997 study by the Massachusetts SPCA and Northeastern University found that animal abusers are in fact five times as likely to also harm other humans. Even more recently, a 2013 study found that 43% of those who commit school massacres also committed acts of cruelty to animals – generally against cats and dogs.

This bill, along with House Bill 146 which I will testify on after, seeks to make these abusers more readily known to police, animal shelters, pet stores, breeders, etc. to prevent them from obtaining their next victims. The cost of this cause is something I would like to address also. I will be submitting an amendment to the budget asking for the initial \$125,000 in FY 2020 to establish the registry and the \$20,000 in FY 2021 to continue its upkeep. Based on what we know statistically, this increased scrutiny is warranted as a preventative measure to protecting law-abiding citizens of our state. Thank you for your time and I would be willing to answer any questions.