



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES**

1255 23rd Street, NW
Suite 450
Washington, DC 20037

P 202-452-1100
F 202-778-6132

humanesociety.org

HB 253 Interested Party
February 5, 2020

House Commerce and Labor Committee

Chair Manning, Vice Chair Dean, Ranking Member Lepore-Hagan and members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee, my name is Corey Roscoe the Ohio Director for the Humane Society of the United States, the nation's most effective animal protection organization. I appreciate the opportunity to testify as Interested Party to the provision in House Bill 253 that would legalize consumer discharge of 1.4g fireworks.

Around every Independence Day and New Year's Eve there is a spike in missing pets directly attributable to fireworks. Pet owners are responsible for ensuring their animals are both confined within their property and microchipped or wearing tags. However, when an animal feels threatened, they can become extremely motivated to escape and will often take any extraordinary opportunities to do so such as digging under and climbing over fences or breaking through gates, screens, and doors.

When successful, they become at risk of never being found, or hit by a vehicle. If they are picked up by local animal control, they become an additional burden to already overcrowded animal shelters and understaffed government employees. Even when pets don't escape the home, fear induced by fireworks can cause animals to become aggressive, harm themselves, eliminate inappropriately, vomit, or go into hiding.

Pet owners do have options to comfort their pets during fireworks shows such as thunder jackets and medication and can plan for predictable events like a 4th of July celebration, however, since HB253 allows for 1.4g fireworks to be purchased and discharged any time of year, it will leave many pet owners uneasy about when the next loud boom will happen.

Responsive governments should consider the impact on pets, their owners, animal control officers and shelters caused by fireworks. They should also consider the risk to wildlife caused by the same.

Thank you for your time and consideration.