

# OHIO VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION



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Ohio House Criminal Justice Committee

House Bill 350

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Written Proponent Testimony offered by the Ohio Veterinary Medical Association

2/26/2020

Chairman Lang, Vice-Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Leland and members of Criminal Justice Committee, on behalf of the over 3,000 members of the Ohio Veterinary Medical Association (OVMA), thank you for the opportunity to offer proponent testimony on HB 350, which would re-enact provisions of law governing animal fighting and bestiality.

In addition to animal fighting being an obvious affront to animal welfare, typically, animal fighting is often done in connection with other crimes. Furthermore, we whole heartily agree with Representative Hoops' statement in his sponsor testimony, "Not only is bestiality abhorrent and cruel, often resulting in serious injury to or the death of the animal, it is also a red flag for the likelihood of violence against individuals because of its resemblance to human sexual assault in that it involves pain, coercion, and lack of consent." Passing this common-sense legislation will not only protect animals but will also protect humans.

Animal fighting and bestiality are horrendous, and as the professionals entrusted by society to provide medical care for animals, we applaud Representative Hoops in introducing this legislation to ensure animal cruelty statutes are consistent throughout Ohio.

Should anyone on the committee have questions or would like to discuss this bill further, OVMA stands ready to assist in passing this critical bill. Thank you for your time and consideration.