

PROPONENT TESTIMONY

December 1st, 2015

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Trooper's Law with Saving Trooper Group

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P.O. Box 461

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before the

Natural Resources Committee

of the Ohio Legislature

on

H. B. 276

Thank you Chairman Landis and Committee members for the opportunity to testify on behalf of HB #267 regarding deer rehabilitation and sanctuary.

I would like to start by addressing those that make up the majority of hunters in the State of Ohio. I am addressing you regarding a non-hunting issue or should I say an issue of confusion and misrepresentation. And although I personally am not a hunter, in fact I could never hunt and I wouldn't so much as kill a mouse, I am, however, a defender of the Constitution of the United States including the 2nd Amendment. I have a concealed carry license and deeply appreciate the diligent work of organizations such as Buckeye Firearms, Gun Owner's of America, Oath keepers and any other concerned parties with regards to the protection of our right to own and bear arms and to protect ourselves if an unfortunate situation was to present itself. I have multiple great grandfathers who have served in wars dating back to the American Revolution. Why am I telling you this? None of this is about me. I'm bringing it up because I want the State legislature to understand that Saving Trooper is made up of multiple types of people. We may not agree on everything but we do agree on one thing and that is the importance of the "individual" lives of the white tail deer and we agree upon the importance of doing the right thing.! We care about them. We have seen a side of them that many of you have not. We do not expect anyone at the ODNR to understand our position, just respect it. We are in support of compassion and life, not death. There is no one on earth who could possibly convince us that killing a baby animal is acceptable.

With regards to hunting, I do realize,that it is not the issue in this matter. But does everybody here realize it? Does everyone in this room understand what Saving Trooper and Trooper's Law is about? Before Trooper and his furry friends were pardoned, Carol Deyo and I spend a lot of time discussing ways to save "these animals." We went to a number of places and passed out flyers, answered questions and educated people as to what was really going on. I must say I was shocked by the support we received from hunters. You see, my area of reference with regards to hunters is the ODNR's DOW. And without going into detail, that is a horrible reference point and if i was a hunter

(which I am not), I would be very angry. In many of the normal human to human conversations I had with people who say they hunted, not one of them could kill a baby deer. In fact nearly all were repulsed by the mere idea.

As most of you know we have been fighting to make changes to the laws regarding wildlife here in our beautiful state of Ohio. We fought hard to save the lives of Trooper and Patch, two orphaned deer that the Ohio Department Of Wildlife (ODNR) wanted to shoot and throw into a landfill. Their crime? Trooper was injured after being run over by a sickle mower and lost his back leg. Patch's mother was hit by a car. He was found dehydrated and having seizures. Both of their mothers were dead and apparently a fawn should be killed simply because their mother already was! After a fierce and painstaking year long battle, we won! Trooper and Patch are alive and well, sharing their love with the community and daily teaching us about perseverance, trust and faith.

I am a born again Christian I love Jesus with all my heart. and I love respect his creation. I will follow God's law before man's law. When there is a conflict, there is a serious problem.

This problem is an ethical and a moral one. If a person finds an orphaned or injured fawn, the State expects them to call an official who will kill the animal. Or, the state expects them to walk away and let the animal die.

In so doing the State attempts to force the citizen to commit animal cruelty or become negligent of another one's need. To most people, these options are not acceptable.

Albert Einstein said it well, "Never do anything against conscience, *even if the state demands it.*"

Caring citizen are faced with a dilemma. They know that their actions will lead to life or death for a baby animal. They are going to chose life.

Again, this is HOW deer end up in homes.

One person may believe it's acceptable to kill an animal that could otherwise be saved. Most people do NOT believe this.

To many people, life is precious. Once it is here, it must be dealt with humanely.

For those who believe in the God of the Bible, caring for His creation is a requirement. We are not permitted to chose what to care for based upon a State's mandate or policy.

To force citizens to turn over their rescued animal for slaughter or to be killed whether it is a bird or a deer, is to deny that citizen of his or her religious freedom.

Proverbs 12:10, "Whoever is righteous has regard for the life of his beast, but the mercy of the wicked is cruel."

Exodus 23:5, "If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying down under its burden, you shall refrain from leaving him with it; you shall rescue it with him."

Proverbs 31:8, "Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute"

Job 12:7-10, "Ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds of the air, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish of the sea inform you. Which of these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In His hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind."

Billy Graham even said , "In fact, the Bible says we must never treat any part of God's creation with contempt. When we do, we are indirectly treating our Creator with contempt. Instead, God calls us to be stewards or trustees of His creation, and the Bible reminds us that we are responsible to Him for the way we treat it. We've often forgotten this — but it's still true, and when we ignore it we not only hurt God's creation but we also hurt ourselves."

In the summer of 2013 I briefly stopped into the physicians lounge to get something to drink and I saw it, the Mount Vernon Newspaper's front page when the the story broke about how a local woman fighting stage IV breast cancer had also been fighting the State of Ohio to keep her beloved rescued animals. A state department wanted to kill these beautiful tame deer. A sick feeling came over my heart, a sick feeling that would remain with me to this day. The problem has not been solved. The solution, however, is simple. Bordering states and various rescue groups across the country rehabilitate deer. The put tame or handicapped deer in sanctuary. Until 2009 when the State , for reasons not shared with the public, took deer rehab away and turned from saving the lives of baby deer to killing them, there was never a problem. People have been saving fawns for centuries.

In Kentucky, The Wildlife Center and rehab facility rescued approximately 100 fawns last year and they released all but 2 of them. There are fawn rescues all over the country and it works. for deer rehab and sanctuary. t afford it.

In answering a question about funding, I'm to understand that some of the committee members had a concern regarding funds and that at the time of the first hearing their concern was not addressed. Basically, those who wish to have a fawn rehab facility or sanctuary would be "self funded." These individuals would be 100% responsible for fees (factored in training, etc), food, nutrition, medical care, maintenance of proper facilities which would include proper shelter and space. Therefore, If a person desires to have a facility but cannot afford it, there is no state funding. They have 2 options. They can have fundraisers (even apply for a 501c3 if they wish) or they can realize that they cannot afford the facility.

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