

Ohio Senate Agriculture Committee
SB 232, Veterinarians Continuing Ed for Neutering
Services

Proponent Testimony by Beth Sheehan
February 6, 2018

Good afternoon, Chair Hackett, Vice Chair Hoagland, Ranking Minority Member O'Brien, and distinguished members of the Ohio Senate Agriculture Committee.

I am Beth Sheehan, a Hamilton County resident, who stands before you today, representing a broad, grassroots coalition of dog and cat advocates and engaged, Ohio voters – AARF Radio Ohio; Ashtabula County Animal Protective League; The Black Dog Food Pantry; Fairfield County CARES (Citizens for Animal Rights and Ethical Standards); Family Puppy Boycott-Puppy Mill Awareness of NW Ohio; Hartman's Hounds; Joseph's Legacy; Justice for Herbie; Kecia Mathys; Max's Animal Mission; National Animal Shelter Volunteers; Nitro's Ohio Army; North Coast Boxer Rescue; Ohio American Eskimo Rescue; Ohio Coalition of Dog Advocates; Our Mission Dog Rescue; Paws and the Law; Pawz 2 Adopt, Austintown; Peppermint Pig Animal Rescue; A Perfect Match; Ross County Humane Society; Safe Harbor Animal Rescue, Vermillion; Save Ohio Strays; Soul Connections of Central Ohio; 911 Dog Rescue, Inc. / Amy's Adoptables; TNR of Warren, Inc.; Tuscarawas County Humane Society; Underdog Society of Knox County; and Vote 4 Animals Help Chained Dogs, Dayton, who enthusiastically support the passage of SB 232, Veterinarian Continuing Ed for Neutering Services.

SB 232 gives veterinarians the OPTION (not mandate) of receiving up to 2 Continuing Education Units (CEU), out of 30 needed biennially for license renewal, for performing up to four hours of free spay-neuter surgeries.

Why is this a significant bill? Cat and dog population explosion is exponential. Over 70,000 puppies and kittens are born in the U.S. every day. Some 6.5 million healthy and treatable cats and dogs enter shelters across the nation each year. About half of them are euthanized, many for space.

One cat can have three litters of kittens per year, with an average of four kittens per litter. One indoor cat, living to 15-years-old, could produce up to 180 kittens during her lifetime.

One dog can have up to three litters in a year, with an average of seven puppies per litter. One female and her babies can create 67,000 puppies in six years.

Spaying-neutering pets not only saves lives, but protects against pet, health problems, reduces some behavior problems, and also saves taxpayer money.

Spaying eliminates the risk of ovarian and uterine cancers and infections, and substantially decreases the risk of mammary cancers. Neutering prevents testicular cancer, and reduces the risk of prostate problems. Unfixed pets may mark their territory by spraying strong smelling urine throughout their homes or digging under fences to meet a mate in heat, only to become a county, stray dog.

County governments are more efficient and save taxpayer dollars with fewer animals in their shelters. Many shelter costs will significantly decrease with a smaller animal population – the animals' cost-of-care, the shelter employees' wages, the euthanization expenditures, the price to incinerate their bodies, and the fees to haul their corpses away. Additionally, fewer animal remains will be deposited in the local landfill.

On average, communities spend approximately \$8 per capita for animal shelters, handle 30 animals per 1,000 people, and euthanize about 12.5 animals per 1,000 people.

Everybody pays, whether he owns an animal or not. There are additional costs in time, money, and resources to our police, fire, and health departments, hospitals, prosecutors' offices, and courts with an overflow of animals. The abundant dogs and cats are involved in cruelty and neglect cases, animal fighting rings, car accidents, stray dog bites, spread of disease, neighborhood disturbances, and violations of local ordinances and state laws.

With the passage of SB 232, we recognize the compassionate, generous work of our veterinarians; we hasten fiscal efficiency of our county governments; we attain a higher standard of humanity for ourselves.

I appreciate the openness of the leadership and members of the Senate Agriculture Committee to learn more about this critical bill. I am pleased to answer your questions.