



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES**

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February 14, 2022

RE: Proponent Testimony, Amended Senate Bill 164

Chairman Schaffer, Vice-Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Fedor, and members of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee:

My name is Corey Roscoe, the Ohio state director for the Humane Society of the United States. We advocate for better laws to protect animals and communities, provide direct care to animals during emergency rescue, and train animal care professionals and law enforcement officials.

On behalf of my organization and our supporters in Ohio, we testify today in strong support of Amended Senate Bill 164. The HSUS previously testified on the as-introduced version. Since the last bill hearing in October 2021, changes to the bill were proposed, and we were involved in multiple stakeholder discussions. The HSUS has reviewed the language shared with us by Senator Hottinger's office. We support the changes and modifications to the bill.

We think these changes strike a balance between the original intent of the bill and stakeholder concerns. Overall, we feel the bill will add clarity and reduce subjectivity for those tasked with enforcing and prosecuting state animal cruelty laws, thus allowing for a more equitable application of the law throughout the state.

The amended version of the bill addressed a concern in our original testimony: making the ban on gas chambers a strict liability offense.

Additionally, the HSUS strongly supports the provision under the bill that classifies felony and other high-level convictions of animal cruelty as violent acts. We believe that this provision reflects the values of most Ohioans and is vital to public safety. Classifying acts of animal torture as "offenses of violence" can show the perpetrator's history or pattern of violence and support agencies investigating other criminal cases.

We appreciate your time and attention to this legislation and ask for your support in passing it out of committee.