

While I can't attend the hearing, I am submitting a statement of support for HB 277 on behalf of Ohio Alleycat Resource (OAR), a cat shelter and spay/neuter clinic in Cincinnati, OH with 30 employees and over 300 active volunteers. OAR adopts out about 1500 cats every year and spays or neuters over 11,000 annually. We also work with a coalition of animal groups in the Greater Cincinnati and Dayton area, meeting monthly to discuss animal issues. In our own experience and through talking with others in the coalition, we have found that a frequent reason for pet surrender is loss of pet-friendly housing or inability to pay the extra monthly fee for a pet or the pet deposit. Not only does this cause a great burden on the Ohio county shelter system, but it also is a distressing situation for pet owners who must choose between personal housing and their beloved pets. While we work with cats, we are very familiar with the current crisis in dog overpopulation in shelters both locally and nation-wide. It costs taxpayers money to house or even, sadly, to euthanize these dogs.

We support HB 277 because it creates a win-win situation for pet owners, for landlords, for shelters, and even for the counties, which won't have to spend so much money on handling animals in their county shelters. Ohio could be a leader in compassion for animals and their people by passing this bill. We wholeheartedly support this bill and believe that its passage would be a very positive development in animal welfare in Ohio.

