



**County  
Commissioners  
Association of Ohio**

*Serving Ohio Counties Since 1880*

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June 9, 2015

To: Members of the House Agriculture and Rural Development Committee

From: John Leutz, CCAO Legislative Counsel

Re: House Bill 60 - Companion Animal Abuse Bill – prosecution by humane societies

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Chairman Hill and members of the House Agriculture and Rural Development Committee, CCAO wishes to indicate our support for the proposed amendment to limit the ability of humane societies to prosecute violations of ORC 959.131 companion animal abuse.

Humane societies currently have the authority under ORC 2931.18 to initiate and employ private counsel to prosecute certain violations of law dealing with cruelty to animals outside the purview of the prosecuting authorities. Furthermore, these attorneys are paid out of the county treasury. CCAO has for a number of years supported the elimination of this mandate.

CCAO does not believe that it is appropriate for a non-profit agency, whose board members are not subject to elected official oversight, to be permitted to continue to prosecute animal cruelty cases without county or municipal prosecutor oversight.

We believe this amendment is a step in the right direction to assure more appropriate accountability and oversight regarding the financing and prosecution of animal cruelty cases in Ohio.



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