

I am Dori Villalon, Executive Director of the Lawrence Humane Society. I have directed animal shelters for the past 25 years, including major organizations in San Francisco, Colorado, and Ohio. I joined the Lawrence Humane Society 18 months ago and am a founding Board Member of the newly formed Pet Animal Coalition of Kansas, a federation of State-wide shelter professionals.

I recently started attending meetings of the Kansas Pet Advisory Board and while my colleagues and I are pleased overall with updates reflected in SB57, there are five Amendments we would like to encourage you to support.

One: Licensed facilities, including animal shelters, breeders, and pet shops, should be inspected by the Department of Agriculture on an annual schedule. When non-compliant facilities are finally shut down due to public complaint, it is the nonprofit organizations, not the State, that end up rescuing the abused and neglected animals. We recommend that every licensed premise is inspected for two consecutive years and those that pass are then inspected every 18 months. Inspectors need to focus on those who are not in compliance. PACK, the Pet Animal Coalition of Kansas, is willing to help the Department of Agriculture with initial inspections by ensuring our colleagues are educated and by encouraging compliance.

Two: I am unclear why the Secretary of Agriculture wants to appoint new members to the Kansas Pet Advisory Board, especially since the Governor appoints most boards and commissions and has historically appointed members to this Board. We are recommending that the Governor retains this important responsibility.

Three: Animal shelters and rescue organizations make up 65% of the licensed facilities in Kansas, but only ten percent of the Kansas Pet Advisory Board. We are recommending that two additional members from licensed nonprofit animal shelters/rescues be added to help equal out our industry's representation on the Board.

Four: As the Director of an open-admission animal shelter that accepts every animal in need, including newborn animals and rescued animals requiring long-term rehabilitation, I can tell you that foster homes save lives. Foster Care is a simple concept: volunteers take special-needs animals into their homes until the animals are old enough and strong enough to return to the shelter for adoption. The majority of our Foster Home Volunteers are families with young children who want to get involved but don't have time to work at the shelter, and KU students. Last year, because of Foster Care, we saved 87 percent of the animals that arrived to our shelter. Kansas currently charges volunteers \$10 per year for a family or student to obtain a Foster Care License. Raising this fee to a possible \$50 annual, non-prorated charge, while initially may generate a small amount of revenue for Kansas, has the greater long term potential to threaten the budgets and life-saving efforts of nonprofit animal welfare organizations while discouraging, or even preventing, volunteers from participating in programs aimed at promoting responsible pet ownership and community engagement. Please do not raise the cap on Foster Care Licensing.

Five: Nonprofit animal shelters pay \$300 for an annual operating license. SB57 is recommending a cap increase of up to 150 percent, far more than any cap increase recommended for the for-

profit animal businesses also licensed by the Pet Animal Act. Nonprofit animal sheltering license fees should cap at \$500 and, ideally, be a percentage based on an organization's annual operating budget.

Again, I appreciate the time and effort that goes into the regulation of animal-related industries in Kansas and am honored to be able to offer my expertise and opinion on how we can move forward to help make Kansas a leader in the industry of Animal Welfare.