

Chair Kerschen and Members of the Committee

My name is Jennifer Burns and I am a municipal animal control officer in Newton, Kansas. The City of Newton employ's one animal control officer and contracts with the only humane society in Harvey County, Caring Hands. Caring Hands utilizes foster homes to assist with shelter over flow. I have been a foster home for the shelter and would like volunteer to do so again in the future. The citizens in our community who open their homes up foster animals are volunteers themselves. They do not profit from fostering animals. It is simply a way to save another life until a forever home is found. Shelters rely heavily on fosters for sick or unsocial animals that become more stressed in the shelter environment. The City of Newton brings over 500 animals into Caring Hands every year and we are just a fraction of the intake for the shelter. The city will house the animal's we bring in for 3 days and then the expense falls on the shelter. We would like to encourage foster homes to continue to work with shelters so they can help rehome the animals our community.

I ask you today to move **SB 47** forward to the full house with amendments that would address the following:

- Make licensees accountable and charge a fee for re-inspections, no contacts or refusal visits and failing an inspection.
- Licensees should not be notified of an inspection unless they have not failed inspections for three years.
- Licensees that fail 3 inspections in 24 months should have their license revoked.
- Amend the \$30 for fosters to \$20. These are individuals helping shelters and rescues across the state and tripling their fee seems excessive.

The following changes in the bill will have a great impact on animals, shelters and rescues in our state:

1. **Access to medical records:** It is of critical importance that we provide Inspectors for the Department of Agriculture the appropriate tools to perform their jobs. Inspectors should have access to all medical records for pets in the possession of all licensees. Currently in the KPAA, Inspectors do not have access to medical records for USDA licensed facilities. Such records are essential for Inspectors to ensure that animals on premise are receiving adequate and appropriate medical care. Failure to allow Inspectors access to medical records for USDA licensed facilities costs the state, the department and our constituent's money.
2. **Premise inspection schedule:** The change in language in section 8 (b) from "may" inspect to "shall" inspect is a critically important improvement to the law. Defining the frequency schedule of inspections in the statute, based on performance history of a premise, will give the department the ability to devote their time and resources where they are most needed.
3. **Offsite Adoptions:** Adoption events off of the premise of shelters and rescues is critical in getting animals adopted into permanent loving homes.