



Sen. Dan Kerschen
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources
Judy.Marks@senate.ks.gov
VIA EMAIL

March 6, 2018

Chairman Kerschen and Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Midwest Alliance for Animals (MAA), a coalition of Kansas animal shelters that provide services to local communities. Together, our organizations care for over 29,146 animals annually and approximately 1.16 million people in Southern, Central, and Northeastern Kansas. Our combined budgets total over \$12.8 million annually, funded by local government partners, private donations, and program services, and we employ hundreds of Kansas residents.

We support HB 2477 as amended by the committee of the whole in the House because we want to see the Animal Facilities Inspection program fully funded.

A substantive amendment for discussion is that foster homes shall not be licensed or charged a fee by the Department of Agriculture, but rather maintained on a list by the sponsoring shelter. The Kansas Administrative Regulations take that instruction a step further and require animal shelters, and any subcategory of animal shelter, to perform an initial on-site inspection of the home, an annual inspection, ensure that the home complies with the Kansas Pet Animal Act and all regulations, develop a veterinary care plan, and evaluate the animal in the home every 180 days. In addition to all of these regulations that our members are required to do, our members support the Department's ability to inspect any licensee's foster homes particularly when a complaint about a foster home is received.

Unannounced inspections are the gold standard of any agency charged with ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of the public. Some licensees are not present on the premise during business hours, but the concern of an inspector traveling to a premise only to have no one present is alleviated by K.A.R. §9-18-2(d) "*if the owner or operator of the premises is not routinely available between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., the owner or operator shall designate a representative who will be present while the inspection is conducted and shall notify the commissioner in writing of the name of the designated representative.*" In an application for any license under this act, the applicant is required to provide name and contact information of a designee. Not only that, but there is a required field for "preferred hours of inspection." Surely these safeguards are enough to ensure someone is present for any unannounced inspection.

Finally, our members support the additional fees for those inspections where no one is present and when a re-inspection is required.

We urge you to support HB 2477 as amended.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Katie Barnett".

Katie Barnett
Animal Welfare Counsel