



**HUMANE SOCIETY
LEGISLATIVE FUND
OF KANSAS**

Testimony in Support for Senate Bill 117

Date: Feb. 12, 2019

To: Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee

From: Terry Humphrey, Humane Society Legislative Fund of Kansas

Senator Kerschen and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of Senate Bill (SB) 117. My name is Terry Humphrey, and I represent the Humane Society Legislative Fund of Kansas (HSLFKS), a nonprofit advocacy organization dedicated to companion animal welfare.

SB 117 represents a critical step forward and will relieve a significant burden on shelters and rescues. For many years animal advocates have requested that the Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA) amend the Kansas disease law to permit the adoption of Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) positive, non-symptomatic cats. The KDA responded to these requests by agreeing to permit FIV cat adoption through an update to the Kansas Pet Animal Act - Rules and Regulations. However, in the end the KDA did not follow through, citing the livestock disease law as the barrier to a regulatory fix.

Currently, Kansas is the only state in the United States that does not permit adoption of FIV cats. There are more than 74 million cats in the United States, and about 2 million of them are FIV positive. Animal experts agree that FIV positive, non-symptomatic cats can live long, comfortable lives without endangering other cats.

However, Kansas shelters and rescues cannot legally adopt out FIV positive cats. The emotional and financial burden of having to euthanize thousands of cats of ever year is taking an enormous toll on shelters, rescues and pet owners across Kansas.

Knowing that the Rules and Regulations approach has been unsuccessful to resolve the FIV problem, we believe this statutory change will provide much needed and lasting results.

Further exempting dogs and cats from the livestock disease law makes an important update by recognizing cats and dogs as companion animals and not livestock.

In closing, thank you again for the privilege of presenting this testimony and please support SB 117.