

Written Testimony in Support of SB 551

To: Chairman Kerschen, and members of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee

From: Terry Humphrey, Lobbyist for Stray Dog Policy

RE: The creation of the Pet Animal Facilities Inspection Division at the Kansas Department of Agriculture

Date: March 17, 2022

Stray Dog Policy (SDP) supports SB 551 establishing the Pet Animal Facilities Inspection Division within the Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA) to ensure that the program has the staff and resources needed to operate effectively and address the significant and long-standing deficiencies identified in a 2018 Legislative Post Audit (LPA) report.

Stray Dog Policy is a nonpartisan organization committed to elevating pet animal standards of care in Kansas by advocating for policies and legislation that improve the lives of pet animals in Kansas.

Pet Protection Creates Economic Opportunity

Over the past 25 years, a significant cultural shift in attitudes about pet animals has led to an economic explosion in the pet industry. Consider the following:

- The pet industry has grown from \$17 billion in 1994 to \$103.6 billion in 2020 (American Pet Products Association).
- 72% percent of Americans who own a pet consider their pets to be family (EY-Parthenon).
- These trends will only continue and accelerate as research reflects that 75% of millennials in their 30s have dogs (Mintel 2018).
- In its [2020 Kansas AgGrowth Report on the Pet Food Sector](#), the Kansas Department of Agriculture identified a Growth Objective to “Establish Kansas as the pet food capital of the world by increasing support of the pet food industry, attracting new businesses to the state and expanding opportunities for existing companies to increase sales and profitability.”

As the Pet Industry responds to the public’s growing focus on pet health, the state’s ability to leverage economic opportunity increasingly depends on its commitment to public policies that promote pet animal health and quality conditions in licensed facilities that offer pets for sale or adoption.

Now is the perfect time for Kansas to respond to this opportunity by creating a Pet Animal Facilities Inspection Division. Separating pet animals and livestock recognizes their inherent different purposes and allows those with the expertise in pet animals to focus on operating the division effectively and elevating the pet animal industry in Kansas.

Stray Dog Policy urges you to support SB 551. Thank you for your consideration.