



March 15th 2022

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY FOR MARCH 17TH 2022
PROPONENT FOR SB 551 WITH AMENDMENTS**

To Senator Kerschen and Members of the Committee,

My name is Vanessa Cowie, I am the Executive Director of the Prairie Paws Animal Shelter in Ottawa KS. I am writing in support of SB 551 with amendments. The efforts being considered to elevate the Pet Animal Facilities Inspection Program to a division of the Department of Agriculture managed by a Director has the full support of our organization.

However there are aspects of this bill that concern me which is why I cannot support the bill in its entirety and I hope you will consider some amendments. The language that requires TNVR plans to be approved by the commissioner increases the burden on state employees and licensees, and is unnecessary to achieve your goals. TNVR programs are already regulated at the local government level, and are overseen by a licensed Veterinarian who is further regulated by the Kansas Board of Veterinary Examiners. To add another layer of regulation is excessive and a poor use of the resources that you are working so hard to collect and manage. Our shelter processes between 500 and 600 TNVR cats annually for our surrounding communities and the surgeries are performed by Kansas State Shelter Medicine faculty and students. If the commissioner is going to review and approve these plans I would like to see the criteria that will be used to make these decisions as well as the appeal process.

I hope that with the AFI running with appropriately allocated funding, and with a dedicated Director it will get the focus it deserves and we will soon see the Pet Animal Act updated to reflect best practices.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Vanessa Cowie", written over a horizontal line.

Vanessa Cowie
Executive Director