



# Kansas Pet Professionals

*Dedicated to Ensuring the Health of KANSAS Pets  
and the Humane Care of ALL Animals.*

March 11, 2022

Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources  
Senator Dan Kerschen and Committee Members

RE: Oppose Senate Bill 551

Dear Senator Kerschen and Committee Members,

The members of the Kansas Pet Professionals, highlighting the signed members below, ask that you oppose Senate Bill 551 and the intent to move the Animal Facilities Inspection Program to its own division.

This bill, along with other actions of Secretary Mike Beam and Governor Kelly, does not have the best intentions for the program and the animals within the state of Kansas. This bill was written by the Governor with assistance of the Humane Society of the United States and forcibly introduced by the Department of Agriculture. This alone causes a great concern to both the pet and livestock industry.

Currently, the program resides within the Division of Animal Health and the Animal Health Commissioner acts as the administrator of the program. Senate Bill 551 complicates the chain of command with the multiple exceptions, cooperation, and consultations the director must follow. This causes an unnecessary extra step to contact the Commissioner, who may not have current knowledge of a situation, to provide expertise. Currently, the program director is a licensed veterinarian *but*, there is no requirement for the director to hold a license when a vacancy occurs.

While the intent to allow trap spay/neuter and release programs is beneficial, these programs can cause many Kansas pets to become spayed or neutered without the consent of an owner. This bill does not define what a “feral cat” is thus, allowing any stray cat to be trapped and spayed or neutered against an owner’s wishes. Along with no definition, there are not guidelines for these programs to be efficiently and effectively run within this bill.

Moving this program does not provide extra credibility than what it already holds. Stripping the program from underneath the Division of Animal Health and the commissioner makes for less credibility and impacts the health, safety, and welfare of Kansas pets.

The program has successfully answered the recommendations of the 2017 audit. The goal of this program, the secretary, and the Governor should be to properly fund the program as it stands. This bill is unprecedented and unnecessary. We should allow the director, who just started a couple months ago, to learn the history, policy, and procedures of the program before allowing them to make final decisions.

Thank you for your consideration and we hope you vote to oppose Senate Bill 551.

[See following pages for support signatures]



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