

2/20/24

**Jasmine Kyle – Director Southeast Kansas Humane Society
Support In-Person Testimony – HB 2794**

To: Adam Smith and Members of the Committee

From: Jasmine Kyle, Director of the Southeast Kansas Humane Society

Re: Testimony as a proponent for HB 2794

Date: Tuesday, February 20th

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. My name is Jasmine Kyle, the Director of the Southeast Kansas Humane Society. I am speaking on behalf of our organization and a coalition of animal welfare supporters in Southeast Kansas who stand in support of HB 2794.

As an employee with 6 years of service at a Kansas based animal shelter, I have seen firsthand the challenges that these organizations face in providing care for the animals they rescue. We rely heavily on donations to cover expenses; we currently do not receive any funding from the State, our County, nor the City in which we reside. Our operations are solely based on monthly mail-in donations and memorials. When those donations average between \$5 - \$20 and don't come on a regular basis, shelters and rescues struggle throughout the year to maintain operations, especially when times of high overflow happen or emergency situations, including assisting on animal cruelty cases or to assist with an injured animal for an expensive surgery. Sadly, many people are under the belief that shelters and rescues operate on grants and that simply is not the case. These grants are highly competitive and usually range across several states meaning only 1-3 out of thousands get picked and usually those grants are for community programs, not for everyday shelter needs like assistance with supplies, medical costs, and more.

Most of these shelters and rescues are already non-profits and are struggling to get by. They provide safe havens for Kansas dogs and cats that have been abused, neglected, or abandoned, and work tirelessly 365 days a year to get them medically treated and put into their loving forever homes. However, the cost of caring for animals in a shelter environment is incredibly high, especially with the cost of living increasing in just the past few years since the pandemic. With the constant need for food, supplies, and medical care, these organizations are struggling to make ends meet. We sadly saw several close their doors in the past 3 years due to denied financial aid. And when one shelter closes, that area's animals in need then move onto the shoulders of another overworked and overburdened shelter.

We cannot allow this domino effect to continue in our State. By exempting shelters and rescues from sales tax, the State of Kansas can help ensure that more of those shelter funds can go directly towards its animals, community education, and support for supplies.

In closing, we ask that you pass HB 2794 as it provides a direct line of support for its State's animal shelters and rescues. We can come together as a State to help alleviate some of the financial burden that these organizations face to allow them to focus their resources to provide the best possible care for their shelter animals. I'd be happy to answer any questions the Committee has.

Sincerely,

Jasmine Kyle
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