

March 20th 2024
Senate Judiciary Committee
Re: SB 503

Chair and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today regarding SB 503. My name is Nika Orebaugh and I have over 20 years of experience in animal welfare.

As the supervisor of an animal control agency in one of the most populous counties in Kansas I have seen more than my fair share of animal cruelty. From neglect to horrific acts of malice I am, unfortunately, frequently startled at the new and unique ways people continue to abuse their animals.

Unfortunately, a great number of these cases are treated as misdemeanors. Dogs that end up on trash trucks after being thrown away. Dogs that are too weak to stand and fished out of compactors by kind hearted trash workers. Cats that are left in sealed containers in fields, basements, garages, and cars. Left behind; left to starve and suffer alone. These are all being, currently, prosecuted as misdemeanors and, in my humble opinion, that is wrong.

It's important to look at these grievous infractions and be able to charge individuals that perpetrate the crimes appropriately. The change in the law will help do that. Please support SB 503.

I would be happy to answer any questions to the best of my ability.

Sincerely,

Nika Orebaugh

12406 W. Cornelison

Wichita, KS 67235

316-208-9688