



February 11, 2022

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in support of House File 208 and Senate File 73 to create a Companion Animal Board within the state of Minnesota to provide leadership in guiding advocacy and legislation for the growing pet population and those who care for these pets.

As a clinical social worker and mental health therapist, I see the impacts of companion animals on the lives of the individuals, families and communities with whom I work. An elderly individual's relationship with her cat brings her out of isolation, giving purpose and meaning to her day. A man who suffers from panic attacks and crippling anxiety, can experience symptom interruption and relief with the simple touch of his dog's fur or the weight of his dog's body. Families experience deep and profound grief when they lose a beloved family pet at the end of their life.

The emotional, mental, and physical impacts of the human animal bond can also be found in the research conducted at the Human Animal Bond Research Institute. These life changing impacts include reduced blood pressure, healthier blood flow, decreased risk of obesity and a decreased risk of childhood allergies, as well as reductions in feelings of depression and anxiety. The body of research on how the human animal bond impacts both people and pets continues to grow, and with the creation of a Companion Animal Board, state government can rise to meet this growing and changing need in our community.

There is currently no place in state government that can adequately and thoroughly house companion animal legislation. The Companion Animal Board would provide an opportunity to bring together veterinarians, shelters, rescues, community members and others to facilitate a coordinated and collaborative response to companion animal issues with a dedicated place for response and action at the legislative level.

I urge you to pass HF 208 and SF 73 to create a Companion Animal Board on behalf of all those who care for pets in our state. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Colleen Crockford, MSW, LICSW
C | 612.251.6741
E | Colleen@crockfordconsulting.com

