

March 9, 2020

The Honorable Mike Freiberg
Chair, Minnesota House Committee on Government Operations
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Chair Freiberg,

The Minnesota House Committee on Government Operations is scheduled to consider House File 3584, on Tuesday, March 10th. This bill would establish a Companion Animal Board (CAB) which would provide expertise and oversight of companion animal issues in Minnesota. We urge you to support this bill and have attached for your information a handout which provides additional background on this bill.

We have received considerable feedback about this bill and positive support. We are excited to speak with members on Tuesday.

In preparation, there has been considerable conversation around this bill and we would like to highlight two provisions in the bill that have caused some confusion.

Board membership The Board is made up of 13 members and members would have substantial expertise in companion animal issues. For instance, two of the Board members must be accredited, licensed veterinarians who practice veterinary medicine in Minnesota, one member must be from the College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Minnesota, two members represent Minnesota animal shelters, one member must be employed by the Board of Animal Health and one member must be a companion animal breeder, and others. This board has been created to reflect a wide range of views and experience in all aspects of companion animal health and wellbeing.

Responsibly for statewide disease control Under MN Chapter 35 the Board of Animal Health has the responsibility to protect the health of all Minnesota domestic animals. Under the proposed CAB bill that responsibility, including the responsibility over companion animal diseases, **remains** with the Board of Animal Health. It is important the Board of Animal Health retain its authority to safeguard the health of all Minnesota animals and this bill leaves that responsibility with them.

We believe creating a Companion Animal Board that has specific expertise to address and respond to all current and emerging companion animal issues is important. We urge you to support House File 3584. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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