

Chair Hoffman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Susan Hakes Kaufmann, and I am a foster, volunteer and board member for Unleashed Pet Rescue and Adoption in Mission, Kansas. I am also a resident of Fairway, Kansas. I am here today to support SB 47 with amendments added by the Senate Agriculture Committee. This bill passed out of the Senate 34-5 and has the support of the Department of Agriculture. These amendments close inspection loopholes by establishing a uniform, consistent and fair process of inspecting the premises of breeders and other licensees. Amendments include:

- Consistent application of the regulation that inspections be unannounced for *all* licensed facilities. Shelter inspections are unannounced, yet breeder inspections are frequently scheduled by appointment. This practice is unacceptable. Best practice would dictate that all inspections be unannounced. I have worked for several hospitals in my 27-year career as a healthcare administrator. At the beginning of my career, both Joint Commission and state inspections of hospitals were always announced. For the past several years, they have been unannounced, requiring hospitals to be at a constant state of readiness. Unannounced inspections have improved the quality of care at hospitals. Unannounced inspections have also improved the quality of care at shelters as well, and I am having difficulty understanding why our regulations are not consistently applied to breeding facilities in the same manner as shelters and rescues. As a board member of a shelter, it seems reasonable to me that all licensees be held to the same standards.
- Along the lines of being held to the same standards, no-contact inspections cost the department more than \$30,000 in 2016. Each licensee has a specified two-hour period a few days per week that they are available. They are also required to have a designee in case they cannot be available during the time reported.
- In addition, fees established for failed inspections and re-inspections incentivize compliance and defray costs of inspections.
- Licensees that continue to fail should have their licenses revoked after the third fail within 24 months, protecting other licensees and their reputations. The impact of Kansas being the 3rd worst state for puppy mills is felt every day in our Kansas community shelters and rescues. The the burden of cleaning up the tragic circumstances generated by puppy mills falls to shelters and rescues and can be overwhelming financially, emotionally and physically. We gladly fulfill our mission to show mercy to companion animals each and every day, but sometimes it feels like we are the little girl trying to hold back the flood when the dam breaks. Shutting down substandard breeding facilities or puppy mills would have an enormous positive impact in helping shelters and rescues accomplish our missions to find permanent and loving homes for homeless pets.
- Reduce charges for foster homes from \$30 to \$20 dollars. Shelters, rescues and fosters are already bearing extraordinary costs for vetting, food and shelter to save pets. We are already contributing the lion's share portion of licensing fees to fund the inspection program. We are providing a valuable service to our communities by caring for homeless animals as well as substantially contributing to our local economies by purchasing vet services, supplies, food, building materials, and other goods and services. I don't think it is appropriate to pile even more financial burden on shelters and rescues without asking substandard commercial breeders to pay their fair share.
- Allow Kansas inspectors to view animal health records of USDA licensed facilities.

The Senate amendments are badly needed. The financial drain from "no-contact" inspections and re-inspections makes fees charged for substandard performance necessary. We must address funding issues without over-burdening those licensees that are doing a good job.

Please let me know if you have any questions. I appreciate the opportunity to support SB 47 with amendments in our beautiful state of Kansas. And I very much appreciate your time today and your consideration for keeping the amendments to SB 47 intact.