



New Hampshire
Society for the
Prevention of
Cruelty to Animals

February 2, 2026

Dear Members of the Environment & Agriculture Committee:

Ref: HB 1766

On behalf of the Board and staff of the New Hampshire Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (NHSPCA), I want to submit testimony to *oppose* House Bill 1766 as presented.

I want to note that this bill, as currently written, does not compare to current law making some of the changes invisible. This includes the removal of Humane Agents of duly licensed humane societies who responded to 800 calls involving over 5600 animals last year, and their ability to be the first line of defense in protecting animals that are suffering. They have been doing this for more than 150 years. These agents are all certified to investigate and retired law enforcement.

In the past year, they have also been called upon by 82 towns and the State Police to assist in investigations as experts in the field. They work full-time on animal welfare issues and have direct access to additional animal care staff and medical teams to provide expertise that the police departments rarely have.

The 800 complaints received involved over 5600 animals and of those, almost 2000 were equines and livestock. The Police seized a total of 4 animals while 207 were voluntarily surrendered. The change in law would potentially put thousands and thousands of animals at risk of suffering and dying because of the inability to assist when called.

Historically, when we receive calls, they are investigated by us, local Animal Control Officers and Police Departments. The goal is education, guidelines and resources when needed and protection only in emergent situations. We believe strongly that people want to do what is best but at times, sadly, individuals are no longer capable of providing lawful care.

Furthermore, eliminating staff from humane societies participating in anything more than housing animals in cruelty cases, signing nondisclosures, and the inability to fundraise to care for the animals during the 6-month lag it takes to get

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approval from Cost of Care, would be tragic for the animals, community members and those who rely on us to protect animals.

In addition, changing who makes a determination in seizing an animal, from requiring a "licensed veterinarian" to our "State Veterinarian (or their designee)", further limits the ability to take action resulting in prolonging suffering or worse.

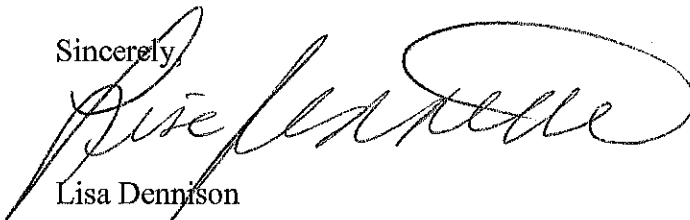
Unintentional neglect often requires police to make the decision to seize an animal and cruelty charges may not be the correct action. The law would require it.

Finally, to change the penalties a court can impose if someone is convicted of Cruelty to Animals, puts animals once again at risk from the hands that perpetrated them in the first place.

For these reasons, the **New Hampshire SPCA urges you to oppose House Bill 1766**. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Please feel free to contact me for any clarification or to answer any questions. I can be reached at 603-772-2921 ext. 107.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa Dennison", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Lisa Dennison
President & CEO