

I strongly oppose HB 1766 because it would require that all people who have animals seized, regardless of unintentional neglect or specific cruelty, be charged with animal cruelty. This means that even those with dementia, in financial distress or other compromised situations would be required to be charged or any duly licensed humane society would not be able to help their animals.

HR 1766 would switch the responsibility for establishing probable cause to confiscate equines and other livestock from a licensed veterinarian to our State Veterinarian. Given the already pressure of time, the animals would continue to suffer instead of receiving immediate care that would be provided by licensed humane societies.

Our Humane Societies play a vital role in the rescue, rehabilitation and hope for second chance at a better life. We need these organizations like NHSPCA to be allowed to contribute their assistance in the process of determining temporary protective custody, discussions about seizure and would be forbidden from taking part in or be present during any investigation in a complaint.

HB 1766 seeks to reduce the role of duly licensed humane societies to little more than organizations that have facilities to house confiscated animals. Further they will be required to sign binding nondisclosure agreements relative to their knowledge of cruelty cases and are prohibited from soliciting donations based on any specifics or likeness of cruelty cases eliminating the ability to soliciting donations for their cost of care.

HB 1766 eliminates the list of penalties offered to the court which could be imposed upon convicted offenders including: restrictions from possessing animals, engaging in employment in the care of animals and other prohibitions necessary to protect animals from these same people in the future. Having this language removed dilutes the power of the court thereby enabling future abuses to potentially continue.

Animals have rights and we need to protect them for cruelty, neglect and exploitation.

Abraham Lincoln quote: **"I am in favor for animal rights as well as human rights. That is the way of the whole human being. "**