

Dear Co-Chair Coleman, Co-Chair Fox, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee,

Please accept this as my testimony (for public hearing held on 4/5/13) in **SUPPORT of HB 6690**, AAC Court Proceedings and the Protection of Animals.

Animal cruelty is directly related to the mental and emotional state of the perpetrator and to public safety. Cruelty to animals is a red flag not to be ignored.

The following study highlights the direct correlation between animal cruelty and violent behavior.

The Chicago Police Department studied 322 animal cruelty arrests and discovered that **seventy percent of those arrested had other felony charges**, including homicides; eighty-six percent had multiple arrests; seventy percent had narcotics charges; sixty-five percent had been charged with violent offenses; twenty-seven percent had previous firearms charges; thirteen percent had been arrested on sex crimes charges; and fifty-nine percent were alleged gang members. *Chicago Police Department Statistical Summary of Offenders Charged with Crimes against Companion Animals, July 2001-July 2004*, Chicago Police Department (Illinois 2008).

I sincerely hope you will give animals the voice they deserve in our court system by **supporting HB 6690**.

Sincerely,

Lori Nicholson

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