

**Testimony Concerning H.B. No. 5707**  
**Environment Committee, March 20, 2015**  
**Victoria Sklepinski**

I would like to thank the Environment Committee for the opportunity to express my support of H.B. No. 5707, "AN ACT REQUIRING CERTAIN HIGHER EDUCATION FACILITIES THAT CONDUCT RESEARCH USING CATS OR DOGS TO OFFER SUCH CATS OR DOGS TO ANIMAL RESCUE ORGANIZATIONS PRIOR TO EUTHANIZING ANY SUCH CAT OR DOG AND PROVIDING FOR THE PROPER SHELTERING OF DOGS."

I feel that it is my moral obligation to speak up for these animals. These non-human companions, are really an extension of who we are! Despite that cats and dogs are our cultures favored species, they end up being euthanized or spend their lives in dire suffering. As a society and especially as a community, we have the power to change these circumstances. Animals have always been a part of my life, and they mean the world to me. They deserve to be placed into warm and loving homes and this bill has the utmost potential to help these animals.

Being actively involved in my community is crucial to making a difference for animals. Whether it is a means of handing out leaflets to educate the public, which I was a part of for the organization Evolve for Animals, or attending a lecture or forum at a public library or University. With a little dedication, as Margaret Meads puts it, "never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

As an individual who has been involved with a local no-kill animal shelter for almost a year now, I have witnessed first hand the fear that these animals experience after being rescued. I have become very emotionally involved with these animals, and at times, it can be very emotionally draining, but they deserve a chance, because we brought them into this world. Empathy and compassion drives me in continuing this work. I help these animals because I know deep within my heart that with time, and some patience, these cats, in due course, will end up thriving and finding their forever homes.

I am willing to do what it takes to be a voice for these animals. Whether its through education, volunteer work, financial aid. Animals, our non-human companions are curious, intelligent, sentient, beings and have a right to live and be a part of this world.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to testify and I do hope you will strongly support this important piece of legislation.

Thank you,

Victoria Sklepinski  
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"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated." Mahatma Gandhi