

July 23, 2015

Dr. James Averill
State Veterinarian and Director, Animal Industry Division
Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development

Dr. Averill:

We the undersigned, all licensed veterinarians in good standing in the state of Michigan, support legislation to end the use of gas chambers to euthanize dogs and cats in Michigan animal shelters. Therefore we support and endorse the passage of Senate Bill 403 (Grant’s Bill), with the caveat that the following language be removed from the language of the bill:

(2) The requirements of this section do not apply to a veterinarian licensed under part 188 of the public health code, 1978 PA 368, MCL 333.18801 to 333.18838.

It is our position that there is no need to include an exemption for veterinarians in this legislation. In fact, if it is left in it could allow gas chambers to continue to be used in animal shelters in our state, as it has in the states of Illinois and West Virginia.

The language of S.B. 403 is very specific and does not affect our work in private veterinary practice. It states clearly that it pertains only to dogs and cats—not wildlife or exotic animals—that are physically located in an animal control shelter and are not located in a private veterinary practice. It is also clear that it addresses only the use of euthanasia by a humane injection of cats and dogs in animal control shelters, and does not impact the use of isoflurane or other inhalants in shelters or in our private veterinary practice. In case of natural disaster or other state of emergency, there are alternative methods that may be used in accordance with AVMA standards.

Nor does the bill (without the veterinary exemption) hinder in any way our ability to assist animal shelters who request that we provide humane euthanasia injections for animals in their facilities, as some of us currently already do.

Therefore, we ask that your agency recommend to Senator Knollenberg that he recognize and respect the support by the Michigan veterinary community of his bill, and that he amend the bill to remove section (2) at his earliest convenience so that it can move forward. We look forward to the day when this legislation reaches the Governor’s desk, and the state of Michigan enacts a uniform standard of humane euthanasia for all of its animal shelters.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Signature

_____, DVM, _____, Michigan
Print Name Practice City

Signature

_____, DVM, _____, _____, Michigan

Signature

_____, DVM, _____, _____, Michigan