



**TESTIMONY ON MICHIGAN S.B. 990**  
**Presented by Vicki Deisner, Midwest Legislative Director**  
**Before the Michigan Senate Judiciary Committee**  
**Tuesday, September 30, 2014**

Chairman Jones, Majority Vice-Chair Schuitmaker, Minority Committee Chair Bieda and distinguished members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I am Vicki Deisner, the Midwest Legislative Director for the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). The ASPCA, founded in 1866, is the first humane organization established in the Americas and serves as the nation's leading voice for animal welfare. The ASPCA's mission is to provide effective means for the prevention of cruelty to animals throughout the United States. As part of our national effort to assist local anti-cruelty efforts on the ground the ASPCA provides grants to local communities. In fact, over the last several years we have awarded over \$600,000 to communities throughout Michigan. On behalf of our approximately 2.5 million members and supporters, including over 73,000 Michigan citizens, we **respectfully urge the Senate Judiciary Committee to vote YES on S.B. 990 – a bill that would allow for fighting animals deemed safe to be adopted, and the cost of care for such animals to be the responsibility of the owner.**

Animal cruelty cases can involve the seizure of dozens or even hundreds of animals. Providing care for the animals for lengthy periods of time for medical and psychological rehabilitation and/or pending trial can be financially devastating to county animal shelters, and to the well-being of these abused animals.

Cost of animal care legislation is good for animals, good for shelters, and good for taxpayers. Such laws can:

- Provide a hearing process so that anyone who has his or her animals lawfully seized due to suspected cruelty may be required to post a bond to pay for the animals' care or forfeit ownership of the animals.
- Relieve shelters, and be extension taxpayers, from incurring the entire cost of caring for neglected and abused animals who are lawfully seized.
- Allow the owner to request an expedited hearing to challenge the legality of the animals' seizure and the reasonableness of the bond requested.
- Prevent animal shelters from incurring huge costs so that they have the resources to help all animals in their community.

Senate Bill 990 mandates that the owner or possessor of an animal seized must post a security deposit/bond with the court, and if that security deposit/bond is not posted, the animal control shelter or protection agency, or law enforcement agency may dispose of the animal by adoption, transfer to another shelter or humane euthanasia. This legislation will indeed help shelters from incurring huge costs of animal care, but also provides shelters with the option of adopting out animals seized during cruelty investigations if the shelter deems the animal safe based on behavioral evaluation. This legislation is good for Michigan animals, shelters, and taxpayers.

For all of these reasons, **the ASPCA respectfully urges the Senate Judiciary Committee to support S.B. 990, a bill that would allow for fighting animals deemed safe to be adopted, and the cost of care for such animals to be the responsibility of the owner.**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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