



# New York State Humane Association

PO Box 3068 Kingston, NY 12402 (845) 336-4514

[www.nyshumane.org](http://www.nyshumane.org)

January 28, 2016

**Re: The Impact and Implementation of the 2016-2017 State Budget for the  
NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets.**

Senator Young, Assemblyman Farrell, Senator Ritchie, and Assemblyman Magee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding the 2016-2017 Executive Budget for programs and initiatives related to agriculture and animal protection in New York State.

My name is Susan McDonough and I am Chair of the Committee relating to Animal Cruelty Issues for the New York State Humane Association (NYSHA).

I would like to begin by commending Assemblyman Magee, Senator Ritchie, and members of the Legislature for your leadership in passing critical legislation, A7207/S5320, last year. This important measure was signed by Governor Cuomo on October 29, 2015. This new law will require the Department of Agriculture and Markets to work with the Division of Criminal Justice Services to develop training and ensure that materials related the animal cruelty statutes are made readily available to law enforcement agencies and district attorneys statewide.

Passing this law was the first step in helping to improve outcomes and ensure that justice is served for victims of these crimes -- now implementation is critical. NYSHA respectfully requests that the members of the State Legislature pass a state budget that includes the resources necessary for the Department of Agriculture and Markets and the Division of Criminal Justice Services to develop and provide the training pursuant to the new statute.

In addition, we also feel strongly that this initiative should be expanded to include the training of Dog (animal) Control Officers. In 2013, both houses of the New York Legislature passed a bill (A1657-E/S3537-D) that would have required the State Department of Agriculture and Markets to establish and implement a training program for Dog (animal) Control Officers. Through this action, the Legislature acknowledged the importance of ensuring that these officers have the knowledge and skills needed to best perform what can be a challenging and dangerous job. As our police become more familiar with these statutes and how to investigate these crimes, it will be even more important that Dog Control Officers, who often assist in these cases, have the same familiarity with the law.

NYSHA respectfully requests that the Legislature includes in its state budget proposal, \$3 million dollars, allocated over two years, to train the over 62,000 police officers and 600 dog (animal) control officers in New York State.

Our office receives calls every day regarding cases of dangerous dogs that have harmed humans or other animals, as well as instances of animal abuse, cruelty, and neglect. Implementation of this new law will help ensure that these cases are properly and appropriately handled by our law enforcement professionals. Please provide the resources needed to ensure implementation and help to protect the citizens and animals of New York State.

Respectfully Submitted

Susan C. McDonough *scm*  
New York State Humane Association Legislative Committee