



New York State Humane Association

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Written Testimony of Susan C. McDonough

Re: The Impact and Implementation of the 2021/2022 State Budget for the Department of Agriculture and Markets.

On October 29, 2015, Governor Andrew Cuomo signed into law bill #7207/S5320. This law requires the Department of Agriculture and Markets to work with the Division of Criminal Justice Services to develop training and ensure that materials related to the animal cruelty statutes are made readily available to law enforcement agencies and District Attorneys statewide.

Pursuant to New York State Agriculture and Markets Law (Article 26-371), the police are mandated to investigate and arrest for animal cruelty crimes. Therefore, we respectfully request that the necessary resources are provided to the Department of Agriculture and Markets to develop and implement training for officers statewide. Pursuant to this law, we respectfully request that **\$250,000** be allocated within the Department's budget for purposes of hiring staff to implement and maintain provisions under the law and to create the appropriate written and electronic educational materials so that the New York State Police can incorporate this information into their training curriculum.

In addition, we also feel strongly that moving forward, an infrastructure must be established within the Department of Agriculture and Markets to provide our police offices access to experts to assist them in managing these challenging cases. Although law enforcement is mandated to investigate such crimes, they have no resources or ability to handle or seize injured, sick or dead animals. When it comes to issues of animal welfare, the Department of Agriculture and Markets has the most knowledgeable veterinarians in the state; they have the connections to farmers, Humane Societies and other organizations who are often required to assist with these cases. A mechanism needs to be put in place to ensure that police have access to needed assistance.

These cases often lead to crimes against children and the elderly. We must bridge the gap between the Department and our law enforcement officers and agencies to maximize resources and to best serve the people and animals of New York State.

Thank you again for allowing me to submit my testimony and for your consideration in allocating the funding needed to address this issue.

Respectfully Submitted,
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