



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY  
OF THE UNITED STATES**

**FY 2026 BUDGET TESTIMONY  
AGRICULTURE AND MARKETS/PARKS AND RECREATION  
Brian Shapiro, NYS Director for the Humane Society of the United States**

**January 27, 2025**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today on issues pertaining to the care and treatment of our state's homeless, stray and neglected companion animals. I'm presenting today on behalf of the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and our many members and supporters in New York State.

As a state director for the HSUS, I frequently speak with colleagues from across the country, all of whom are impressed and, quite frankly, in awe of the many accomplishments we've seen in New York aimed at providing care and resources for our state's sheltering system and the animals and people they serve. For that, we would like to express sincere appreciation and gratitude.

We would like to thank the Legislature, Governor and Department of Agriculture and Markets for supporting the Companion Animal Capital Fund (CACF), which has been a lifesaver, providing \$38M since 2017 to help over 70 New York animal shelters maintain and improve their facilities. These investments not only strengthen the mission of our shelters, the CACF helps make for better, safer communities.

The HSUS respectfully requests continued support from the Legislature for FY26 in the form of a \$5M allocation to match the \$5M contribution made by the Governor, for a total of \$10M. It's worth noting that the Animal Care Standards Act of 2022 goes into effect this year, requiring all shelters and rescues to be licensed by the Department of Agriculture and Markets, ensuring that New York State's homeless companion animals will receive proper treatment, nourishment, and veterinary care. A \$10M appropriation will help bolster the Standards Act when it becomes law just months from now.

Additionally, the HSUS supports the creation of an "Animal Crimes Fund," as detailed by the New York State Animal Protection Federation (NYSAPF). When animal abuse and cruelty cases are prosecuted, the victims (companion animals) are often held as live evidence during the proceedings, which may go on for months or even years. While the existing security bond process provides some relief for shelters, it is often complicated and inadequate and fails to meet needs.

There are no comparable examples where maintaining and caring for live evidence in criminal cases becomes the sole responsibility of community based non-profits. That's just not right and it's certainly not fair. Therefore, we support the New York State Animal Protection Federation's forward-thinking request to establish a non-capital \$2.5M Animal Crimes Fund in the FY26 budget to help offset the costs of caring for live evidence in animal cruelty cases.

Thank you again for the opportunity to share this information today and for your dedication and commitment to the people and companion animals of New York State.

**Brian Shapiro**

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