

House Finance

03/24/2025 01:30 PM

HB25-1299 Animal Protection Fund Voluntary Contribution

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
<p>Roland Halpern For Colorado Voters for Animals</p>	<p>My name is Roland Halpern, and I am the executive director of Colorado Voters for Animals, an all-volunteer nonprofit organization representing over 45,000 Coloradans from across the state who support sensible animal welfare and protections laws.</p> <p>In 2024 Colorado passed HB 1458, establishing the first in the nation Division of Animal Welfare, an entity tasked with promoting domestic animal welfare, providing education and outreach; creating voluntary programs; and awarding grants including an equine specific welfare grant.</p> <p>At about that same time CSU published a study entitled Animal Abuse Investigations: Challenges and Recommendations to Improve Animal and Human Welfare. The study focused on efforts by Colorado's BAP, or Bureau of Animal Protection meaning the studies involved livestock, primarily in rural areas of the state.</p> <p>The recommendations from that study included creating more temporary homes for rescued animals, providing better training for workers, and hiring special investigators and mental health experts. All things that the Division was arguably created to manage.</p> <p>While there is no question we need the Division, as with many laws, there needs to be sufficient funds to properly implement programs, and the proposed tax checkoff bill is one step in assuring a portion of the much needed funds will remain available.</p> <p>These funds come from public citizens who graciously give all or a portion of their own money via tax returns because they believe in, and see the value of supporting Colorado's commitment and reputation, not only for the fair treatment of our animals but also to address many of the mental health issues facing farmers and ranchers in our rural communities.</p> <p>The anticipated revenue from the check off far exceeds the administrative costs that are taken from those revenues. That is what in business we would call a good return on investment, and I would ask for your "yes" vote on this bill.</p>

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