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Delaware House of Representatives
411 Legislative Avenue
Dover, DE 19901

Re: House bill 238

Dear Representatives,

We are writing together, as local, regional, and national animal welfare organizations to oppose HB238. This bill will diminish the great work that started in the 19th century when the rabies vaccine was created and later organized in the 1930's when the use of the vaccine in the United States became more prevalent. Previously, more than 100 Americans died each year due to rabies. Today only one or two lives are lost annually to this deadly virus.

According to the World Health Organization, "rabies elimination is feasible through vaccination of dogs and prevention of dog bites." The implementation of effective policies and programs that focus on *coordinated* vaccination campaigns and raising public awareness of the dangers of the rabies virus are of the highest import as we continue to suppress this threat to public health.

HB 238 will also create an undue burden on veterinary hospitals, clinics, and animal shelters, part of whose purpose is to protect public health through the routine vaccination of *thousands* of companion animals each year.

In 2017 alone, over 10,000 wayward pets passed through the doors of Delaware's animal shelters. In the processes prior to adoption, each of these pets would have received a rabies vaccine if age appropriate. To require the practice of documenting a Vaccine Risk Assessment form for each animal who is eligible to receive a rabies vaccine would add an unnecessary administrative hardship that will impede our ability to save lives. The resources that it would require to document, process, and file this paperwork alone would dramatically take away from the true lifesaving efforts our organizations champion and that our communities need.

We believe with continued and concerted vaccination and education efforts the rabies virus can be defeated and that HB238 would create needless administrative burdens on Delaware's shelters and veterinarians.

Thank you for noting our united and resolute opposition of HB238.

Sincerely,

Adam Lamb
CEO, Brandywine Valley SPCA

Jane Pierantozzi
ED, Faithful Friends Animal Society

Patrick Carroll
ED, Delaware Humane Association

Felicia Cross
Founder, Forgotten Cats

Lee Greenwood, Esq.
Best Friends Animal Society