

Sayers, Margery

From: Feldmark, Jessica
Sent: Monday, July 09, 2018 3:00 PM
To: Sayers, Margery
Subject: FW: Humane Society of the United States - support for CB39-2018
Attachments: Howard County CB39-2018 - Humane Society of the United State letter of support.pdf

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From: Emily Hovermale [mailto:ehovermale@humanesociety.org]
Sent: Monday, July 09, 2018 11:18 AM
To: Weinstein, Jon <jweinstein@howardcountymd.gov>; Ball, Calvin B <cball@howardcountymd.gov>; Terrasa, Jen <jterrasa@howardcountymd.gov>; Sigaty, Mary Kay <mksigaty@howardcountymd.gov>; Fox, Greg <gfox@howardcountymd.gov>
Cc: Feldmark, Jessica <jfeldmark@howardcountymd.gov>
Subject: Humane Society of the United States - support for CB39-2018

Dear Howard County Council Members:

Attached please find a letter of support from the Humane Society of the United States in reference to CB39-2018 as amended by the sponsor. On behalf of our members and supporters in Howard County, we respectfully urge passage of this important animal welfare bill.

Please let me know if I can answer any questions or provide any additional information. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

My best,
Emily

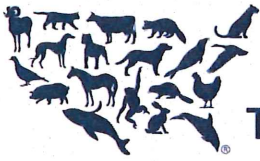
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The Humane Society of the United States is the nation's most effective animal protection organization, fighting for all animals for more than 60 years. To support our work, please make a [monthly donation](#), give in [another way](#) or [volunteer](#).





**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES**

**Support of Amended CB39-2018
Presented to the Howard County Council
July 9, 2018**

Emily Hovermale, Maryland State Director, Humane Society of the United States

On behalf of The Humane Society of the United States and our members and supporters in Howard County, thank you for the opportunity to submit this letter in support of CB39-2018 as amended by the sponsor, legislation to limit tethering and create additional protections for dogs who are kept outdoors.

Experts have long agreed that tethering is not conducive to the health and welfare of dogs. It is common for continuously tethered dogs to endure physical ailments as a result of being continuously tethered. Their necks can become raw and sore, and their collars can painfully grow into their skin. They are vulnerable to insect bites and parasites, and are at high risk of entanglement, strangulation, and harassment or attacks by other dogs or people.

Back in June of 1996, the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued a statement against tethering: "Our experience in enforcing the Animal Welfare Act has led us to conclude that continuous confinement of dogs by a tether is inhumane. A tether significantly restricts a dog's movement. A tether can also become tangled around or hooked on the dog's shelter structure or other objects, further restricting the dog's movement and potentially causing injury." And the Association of Shelter Veterinarians in its 2009 Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters said: "Tethering is an unacceptable method of confinement for any animal and has no place in humane sheltering. Constant tethering of dogs in lieu of a primary enclosure is not a humane practice."

Tethering a dog during extreme weather is particularly inhumane, since chained dogs are unable to find sufficient shelter during inclement weather. Pets left outside in extreme temperatures, especially without food and shelter, are at risk of hypothermia, frostbite, heatstroke and even death. It is a common misconception that dogs' fur enables them to withstand extreme cold better than humans. In fact, dogs exposed to cold for long periods of time often suffer from hypothermia or death. Exposed skin like the nose, ears, and paw pads are highly susceptible to frostbite and can be permanently damaged. The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) recommends that dogs, even thick-coated arctic breeds, should never be left outside during below freezing weather – and especially not without shelter that allows the dog to maintain normal body temperature. Including specific prohibitions on unattended dogs being outdoors during these extreme weather conditions allows animal control officers to intervene and assist animals *before* an animal becomes severely ill or injured rather than waiting until a dog is suffering and seriously ill.

Dogs are naturally social beings who need interaction with human beings and other animals. A dog kept chained in one spot for hours, days, months or even years suffers immense psychological damage in addition to being at risk for severe physical damage. An otherwise friendly and docile dog, when kept continuously chained, becomes neurotic, unhappy, anxious and often aggressive.

Tethering is not only bad for dogs—it is a high risk factor in serious dog bites and attacks. Dogs unable to retreat from perceived or real threats can act out aggressively when approached. Dogs feel naturally

protective of their territory; when confronted with a perceived threat, they respond according to their fight-or-flight instinct. A tied dog, unable to take flight, resorts to fight, attacking any unfamiliar animal or person who unwittingly wanders into his or her territory.

The American Veterinary Medical Association has been quoted as saying: "Never tether or chain your dog because this can contribute to aggressive behavior." The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) concluded in a study that the dogs most likely to attack are male, unneutered, and chained. The CDC found that chained dogs are 2.8 times more likely to bite than non-chained dogs. That number increases to 5.4 times more likely to bite children under the age of 12 who are less likely to be aware of the risk of engaging with a strange dog. And the scientific study "Which Dogs Bite? A Case Control Study of Risk Factors" is just one of many studies which demonstrate that "chained dogs account for a substantial portion of serious and fatal bites.

Chained dogs are also often the source of nuisance complaints, impacting the quality of life for community residents. It only makes sense that a dog tethered alone in a yard with nothing to muffle its sound is more likely to engage in nuisance behaviors like barking than a dog inside a house. Good tethering policies, which prevent dogs from living their lives on chains, are not only good for dogs, they are good for people.

The vagueness of the current law creates difficulty for officers who want to take action *before* a dog has suffered an injury or death due to living outdoors with inadequate shelter. Well-defined terms establishing minimum standards of care are essential to combatting animal suffering. These provisions serve as an educational tool which informs pet owners of the minimal level of care they must provide. This bill is not simply an effort to punish violators, but also to provide officers the ability to take proactive steps to *prevent* animal suffering and issues for citizens.

This bill is an important protection for dogs and people in Howard County. The Humane Society of the United States respectfully urges a favorable vote on CB39-2018 as amended by the sponsor.