

Rep. John Siptroth
Judiciary Public Hearing on H.B. 2547
Oct. 15, 2008

(Appropriate Greetings)

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Chairman Caltagirone, and members of the Judiciary Committee, I would like to thank you for your consideration of House Bill 2547 and for allowing me to speak on the legislation today.

House Bill 2547 is aimed at granting limited immunity from civil action for damages to Humane Society Police Officers investigating and enforcing Pennsylvania animal protection laws.

Many other states already offer this type of civil immunity to HSPOs. In Pennsylvania, firefighters, EMT's and others already enjoy the protection of civil immunity and I think it is only fair that the same protection be offered to those working to protect Pennsylvania's helpless animals.

In recent years, Pennsylvania has grown a reputation as a breeding ground for puppy mills and various forms of animal cruelty.

It is due to the hard work and determination of HSPOs and other animal rights groups that this issue was brought to the forefront in Pennsylvania.

As a result, the legislature recently passed Dog Law reforms that call for strict regulations on breeders and kennels, create greater oversight of the breeding industry and provide protections for animals.

Due to the new provisions, HSPOs will have even more responsibilities and investigation tools, thus creating greater workloads.

House Bill 2547 would reduce interest costs and allow more HSPOs to be hired and operate in Pennsylvania by protecting them from the threat of frivolous lawsuits.

This is a common sense bill and I ask that you vote it out of committee so we can work swiftly to protect those that protect animals in Pennsylvania.

Thank you.