



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR
Terrence Murphy

Senator Murphy: Animal Abusers Barking Up The Wrong Tree

TERRENCE MURPHY June 11, 2018

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Albany, NY - Animal abuse is a people problem. Research has shown that over 1 million animals are abused each year. A startling number of offenders charged with crimes against animals move on to commit other violent offenses against humans. To help curb cruelty to animals, hold abusers accountable, and break the link between animal abuse and violence directed at human beings, Senator Terrence Murphy has sponsored S299, which increases the penalty for multiple convictions of torturing, killing or failing to provide sustenance to an animal to an E felony. The measure applies to abusers who have been convicted of an act of cruelty within the past five years.

"Raising the penalty to a felony for subsequent acts of cruelty that occur within five years of

a conviction will help law enforcement curb animal abuse and allow for lengthier periods of court supervision or imprisonment," said Senator Murphy. "Cruelty toward animals has been linked to future violence toward human victims, particularly vulnerable people such as domestic partners and children. Treating repeat offenses of animal cruelty as felonies will ultimately prove to be an effective deterrent."

Shannon Laukuf, Executive Director for the SPCA of Westchester stated, "The SPCA of Westchester is very grateful to Senator Murphy for the recent passage of Animal Cruelty Bill S299. Raising the penalty so that repeat offenders can now be charged with a felony will help to prevent further abuse of innocent animals who have no voice. We applaud Senator Murphy for his dedication to making our community a safer, more compassionate place for animals and humans."

"This bill proposed by Senator Murphy finally addresses the repeat offender of cruelty to animals," said Chief Ken Ross of the Putnam County SPCA. "Recidivism exists and is a major problem that we encounter enforcing the animal cruelty statutes. Senator Murphy's bill is a much-needed addition to the existing law and will aid in our ability to prevent and address the repeat offender. The Putnam County SPCA fully supports this bill and Senator Murphy's commitment to stopping animal cruelty."

The New York State Senate recently passed a package of measures in recognition of Animal Advocacy Day that strengthen protections from harm and abuse for animals and their owners. The bills eliminate the predatory practice of pet leasing, strengthen Buster's Law, crack down on animal fighting, and toughen penalties for theft of companion animals, among other measures. Senator Murphy's bill was included in the package, passing 60-1, and has been sent to the Assembly.