



New York State Humane Association

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February 7, 2018
Testimony
New York State Humane Association

Re: The Impact and Implementation of the 2018/2019 State Budget for the Department of Agriculture and Markets.

Chairman Magee, and Members of the Assembly Standing Committee on Agriculture, the New York State Humane Association appreciates the opportunity to submit written testimony about the 2018-2019 State Budget for programs and initiatives related to agriculture and animal protection in New York State.

On October 29, 2015, Governor Andrew Cuomo signed into law **Bill #7207**, which was introduced by Assemblyman William Magee. This new law requires the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets to work with the Division of Criminal Justice Services to develop training and ensure that materials related to the animal cruelty statutes are made readily available to law enforcement agencies and District Attorneys statewide.

We would like to thank you and your colleagues for recognizing the importance of this issue by voting to pass this legislation. Now that this important measure has been signed into law, it is critical that the law is implemented as intended.

NYSHA urges you to please ensure that necessary resources are provided to the Department of Agriculture and Markets to develop and implement training for officers statewide. Pursuant to the new law, we respectfully request that **\$100,000** be allocated within the Department's budget for purposes of creating appropriate written and electronic educational materials and working with the Municipal Police Training Council to incorporate this information into the training curriculum for police officers statewide.

In addition to the training component, NYSHA also believes that an infrastructure must be established within the Department to provide police officers access to experts to assist them in managing these difficult cases. Assistance from private, local veterinarians to handle cases of animal cruelty is declining. Even with classroom education, officers still require experts for consultation, assistance with medical evaluation, animal removal and placement.

Currently, the Department of Agriculture and Markets is the greatest source of expertise to provide this type of assistance. We just need to bridge the gap between the Department and our law enforcement agencies to maximize resources and to best serve the people and animals of New York State.

Thank you again for allowing NYSHA to submit testimony regarding critical matters related to animal protection and for your consideration in allocating the funding needed to address this issue.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Legislation Committee