

Dear Pet Care & Humane Treatment Study Committee,

Thank you in advance for taking the time to read my concerns and mostly for forming this important committee. The State of South Carolina profoundly needs help when it comes to animal reform. It is time for us to come out of the ranks of the 47<sup>th</sup> in the nation when it comes to animal welfare policies.

### TRACK ANIMAL ABUSERS

Recommend the ability to track and cross report animal abusers, similar to the sex offender registry. Request offenders in a neglect/abuse case where animals were found in horrific condition, to ban them from owning, harboring or having any future contact with animals. 30 states have future ownership bans or restrictions for convicted offenders.

### ILL-TREATMENT OF ANIMALS - GET A CONVICTION

Give abusive owners in South Carolina longer jail time and require them to pay higher fees if convicted of hurting their animals. The rules won't change if we don't have tougher cruelty laws. Get rid of the loopholes and exemptions, too much ambiguity as to the definition of "ill-treatment", example, Is it legal to shoot an animal in South Carolina? Particular magistrate's view, "it was just a dog."

As time goes on, more and more animals suffer. I recently was in a poverty stricken area with high crime, working to educate people about spay and neuter, and offering free services for spay/neuter. This particular home had 5 pit bull dogs separately tied up on a short chain. Red, a female pit bull, I was able to pet, had no water. The temperature had reached high 80s. She clearly was over bred. The owners felt breeding the dogs was an income. Who knows where the dogs will end up, shelter, fighting dogs, bait dogs, or just left to live life out on a short chain. The mother with a child walking barefoot through the yard, glass throughout, walked over to a baby kitten and pulled the kitten up by his ears. The mother laughed...if only we could reach the children in school before the cycle continues to repeat itself.

Thank you so very much for forming this board. SC looks forward to the changes and this could reshape South Carolina and align with others in our country for passionate animal humane welfare. We don't want to be known for ranking in the bottom five of our nation when it comes to animal cruelty laws. Please stop the angels from crying over South Carolina.

Respectfully,

Lori Raymond-Vogt  
404 Crossvine Way  
Simpsonville, SC 29680  
864.313.8326

## Senate Agriculture Committee

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**From:** Any Gutierrez <AnyMiko@live.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 29, 2016 12:02 PM  
**To:** Senate Agriculture Committee  
**Subject:** "PCHTSC"

Honorable Members of the Committee,

I would like to first thank you so much for listening to the many animal welfare issues and concerns that need to be addressed concerning the state of South Carolina. I have only recently become aware of your committee and to be honest I have much to learn but feel I must get involved. I am not knowledgeable enough about our laws as of yet but I do know that we MUST do better. I thank you for forming this committee and although I am not able to attend this meeting I would like to share some of my concerns with you.

- 1) It is my understanding that there are animal cruelty laws already in existence but they need to be enforced and the perpetrators must be prosecuted. In the years that I have lived in SC it is difficult not to notice the many stray animals, inhumane forms of treatment, starvation, chaining, dog fighting, so many mistreated pets etc. and yet nothing is done about the perpetrators of these atrocities. There must be stricter enforcement and sentences instead of dismissing cases. These animals have no voice, they cannot control their destiny. This needs to change. Please it is time for a change. Not only for the benefit of these innocent animals but also the image of this state.
- 2) In the short time that I have been volunteering fostering and have become more involved with the shelter and rescues in this area I see so many animal lovers in the state that are trying to make a difference. But I also have come to realize that just fostering/rescuing is not enough. As much as the shelters/rescues/volunteers are trying to do there are too many animals in need. We must address the real issue of over-population and the neglect. This is due to laws and regulations concerning responsible pet care ( spaying and neutering).
- 3) We need continued access to free and low cost spay/neuter, vaccinations and other veterinary care. It is critical to animal welfare in this state. Legislation that impacts the availability or cost of these services in a negative way should be stopped.
- 4) Another issue is breed discrimination in housing. It is one of the main causes that people surrender or abandon their pets. Please help insure that SC families are able to keep their beloved pets that they have adopted. The legislation needs to be looked at concerning this.
- 5) Please set basic requirements for adequate humane care in both city/county shelters, boarding kennels, non-profit rescue facilities, pet shops, etc. This addresses many issues that we see with puppy mills, abuse & neglect in both for profits and non-profits shelters, etc. There are also still counties that have no animal shelter available. Please require that each county open a municipal shelter or work with a local rescue to help run a local shelter for animals in their county.

I would like to sincerely thank you for your time and opportunity to share some of my concerns. I thank you for your attention to these very important issues. I am hoping for positive changes in the animal welfare in this state.

Sincerely,  
Any Gutierrez  
Pet Owner and Animal lover  
Concerned citizen of South Carolina and Volunteer for Fostering in SC

## Senate Agriculture Committee

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**From:** Rita Morris <ritaamorris8@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 29, 2016 12:22 PM  
**To:** Senate Agriculture Committee  
**Subject:** PCHTSC

Dear Committee Members,

As a person involved in animal rescue, I support :

- strict enforcement of CURRENT laws for animal abuse
  - this also means requiring the institutions, such as courts and magistrates, to enforce them
- writing the laws in a way that the average person can understand them, and publish them in places that are easily accessible - many people do not know the laws, understand the laws, or act on them because it is too confusing and they do not know where to find them
- STRONGER laws against animal abuse
  - including chaining/tethering of animals
  - including abandonment of animals - when people move and leave an animal behind, there should be an investigation to find the persons responsible and charge them with a crime
  - better definitions for each type of abuse
    - including neglect - leaving an animal with water and shade should not be the only criteria, especially in the south where it is extremely hot
- STRONGER laws against dog fighting and cock-fighting AND PUPPY-MILLS, including selling of animals at flea markets and in parking lots
- CROSS-REPORTING of animal cruelty between state, county and city organizations, and also to include the FBI's national database
- statewide EMERGENCY PLAN that includes pets, so that they can go to shelters with their humans
- the continuing effort to save animals lives by sending them from full and/or kill-shelters to other shelters, including out of state rescues
- having Animal control officers, law enforcement personnel, prosecutors and judges go through standardized animal cruelty training
  - preserve evidence at the scene
  - When animal is found dead under suspicious circumstances authorities should conduct a necropsy in the same way an autopsy is done on victims of homicide
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- changing the law to recognize animals as sentient beings instead of property (from Webster's Dictionary: A *sentient* being is one who perceives and responds to sensations of whatever kind - sight, hearing, touch, taste, or smell.)
- required counseling for animal abusers
- shelter OVERSIGHT AND REGULATIONS, so all can be working from the same guidelines and using the same procedures & processes
- not passing laws that hinder low-cost or free spay/neuter or basic pet care to all
- a budget from the State of South Carolina which includes monies to support these suggestions, to be shared equally across the State to cities, towns, counties and municipalities

Thank you SO MUCH for your interest in animal welfare and for spending your time & efforts on this committee!

Rita A. Morris  
Forest Acres, SC

## Gene Hogan

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**From:** Barbara Nelson <ceo@letlovelive.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 30, 2016 7:50 AM  
**To:** Gene Hogan  
**Subject:** Public Comment re PCHT Study Committee

Hi Barbara,

I have been meaning to bring this up about the SC animal laws. A lot of us who are involved in the various hunting dog rescues think that hunting dogs should not be exempt from the SC law that makes it illegal to abandon a dog in this state. I am unclear as to why hunting dogs should not have the same protections as any other dog, and too many times animals are found that appear to have been turned out to fend for themselves when their useful days are over -- this may be a common practice and one that will be difficult to end, but I can see no legitimate reason for it to be legal.

Is there anything that can be done about this? See Section C.

**SECTION 47-1-70.** Abandonment of animals; penalties; hunting dog exception.

(A) A person may not abandon an animal. As used in this section "abandonment" is defined as deserting, forsaking, or intending to give up absolutely an animal without securing another owner or without providing the necessities of life. "Necessities of life" includes:

(1) adequate water which means a constant access to a supply of clean, fresh, and potable water provided in a suitable manner for the species;

(2) adequate food which means provision at suitable intervals of quantities of wholesome foodstuff suitable for the species and age, sufficient to maintain a reasonable level of nutrition to allow for proper growth and weight;

(3) adequate shelter which means shelter that reasonably may be expected to protect the animal from physical suffering or impairment of health due to exposure to the elements or adverse weather.

(B) A person who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not less than two hundred nor more than five hundred dollars or imprisoned not more than thirty days, or both. Offenses under this section must be tried in the magistrate's or municipal court.

(C) A hunting dog that is positively identifiable in accordance with Section 47-3-510 or Section 47-3-530 is exempt from this section.

Thanks and keep up the good work.

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