



**BALTIMORE ANIMAL RESCUE & CARE SHELTER, INC.**

December 6, 2013

President and Members  
of the City Council  
409 City Hall

Dear President and City Council Members:

The Baltimore Animal Rescue and Care Shelter, Inc (BARCS) supports Bill 13-0131R. The purpose of this bill is for the City to discuss improving the BARCS facility and report on findings from a needs assessment, feasibility, and building program study conducted for a new facility.

BARCS is a nonprofit shelter that accepts and cares for all animals in need and promotes responsible pet ownership for a more humane community in Baltimore City. BARCS serves over 620,000 residents with more than 350,000 companion animals. Since its inception in 2005, BARCS significantly increased the number of animals saved from 240 dogs and cats in 2005 (under the City) to 7,500 dogs and cats saved in 2012.

BARCS is the largest companion animal shelter in Maryland, taking in 12,000 dogs and cats and approximately 1,000 exotic, wildlife, and other small mammals each year; an average of 35 new animals enter the shelter daily. BARCS serves as a resource to the community for citizens and their animals in need. The shelter's services include: providing housing and lifesaving care to homeless animals, public education and outreach, tracking lost and found pets, offering low cost vaccinations and microchips, pet licensing, and providing low cost basic dog training classes. BARCS also provides families the opportunity to adopt a loving companion animal that is spayed or neutered and vaccinated at BARCS.

In 2008, the City commissioned a Needs Assessment, Feasibility & Building Program Study for BARCS in anticipation of the shelter requiring a new building due to the development of the casino and surrounding property and because the antiquated facility is no longer suitable for the citizens and the homeless, neglected and abused animals it serves.

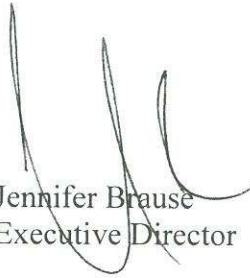
The current BARCS facility is housed on only three acres and is at capacity at all times—kennels filled with 110 dogs, 110 cats plus over 700 animals in foster care at any given time.



To best care for our homeless animal population and provide better services to the citizens of Baltimore City, BARCS desperately needs a new facility. The assessment conducted outlines the shelter's needs based on the demographics of the City of Baltimore and best practices for efficient operations and humane housing and care. The current facility is outdated with inefficient designs, costing more money. Furthermore, BARCS has outgrown the space for the insurmountable numbers of animals surrendered, office space for employees, and storage space for animal care supplies. There is not enough parking for the staff members and volunteers or the hundreds of citizens that come to the shelter daily to utilize its services.

A new state-of-the-art facility would create a more efficient operation, a healthier environment, and a more feasible and pleasant space to serve the public. We support Council Bill 13-0131R in order to move forward in providing better services to the public and creating a more humane Community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jennifer Brause', written over a printed name and title.

Jennifer Brause  
Executive Director