



F R O M	Name & Title	Oxiris Barbot, MD Commissioner 	Health Department MEMO	
	Agency Name & Address	Health Department 1001 E. Fayette Street Baltimore, Maryland 21201		
	Subject	Council Bill 11-0667: Health – Animal Control and Protection		

To: President and Members
of the City Council
c/o 409 City Hall

March 17, 2011

The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) supports Council Bill 11-0667. The purpose of the bill is to authorize the Health Commissioner to deny or revoke a cat or dog license or animal facility license, if the applicant, licensee, or agent of either, has been convicted of animal abuse, cruelty, or neglect.

It is estimated that Baltimore City has approximately 355,000 domestic pets in its jurisdiction. Unfortunately, there are large numbers of animals that are neglected and/or abused. This bill strengthens the City's initiative to address and reduce animal abuse, cruelty, and neglect by refusing convicted animal abusers the right to own an animal or operate an animal facility. In July of 2009, the Mayor's Anti-Animal Abuse Task Force was created to help combat the increase in animal abuse and neglect. Stamping out animal abuse is one of the most effective crime prevention tools available to law enforcement officials. The Task Force released a report in July 2010 which recommends enactment of legislation to authorize a judge, at his or her discretion, to ban a convicted defendant from owning animals for as long as is deemed necessary to protect those animals. Following the creation of the Task Force, Animal Control began documenting animal cruelty in May 2010. As of March 2011, Animal Control has recorded 132 potential neglect cases and 74 potential cruelty cases. This legislation is an important means of protecting abused animals from further abuse at the hands of a convicted abuser.

Stamping out animal abuse is one of the most effective crime prevention tools available to law enforcement officials, and this bill would assist the local code enforcement efforts of our Animal Enforcement Officers, and allow for greater enforcement of animal cruelty and neglect cases. Therefore, BCHD supports Bill 11-0667, and welcomes the opportunity to participate in the hearing.

cc: Angela Gibson, Office of the Mayor
Michelle Spencer, Chief of Staff, Department of Health
Olivia Farrow, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Health
Rachel Indek, Legislative Director, Department of Health
Kevin Usilton, Director of Animal Control, Department of Health

