



# Hands of Hope Rescue

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January 28, 2018

Dear Mr. Chair and Member of the Committee:

I am writing this to plead with you to oppose HB2477, which is a proposition to raise fees for rescues and shelters in Kansas.

My name is RaShann Southard, President of Hands of Hope Rescue, a non-profit canine rescue based in Great Bend, KS. We are a foster based only rescue that relies solely on donations and our adoption fees to help save dogs throughout Kansas and other states.

Let me start out by saying how sad it is that Kansas is known as a rampant puppy mill state, supports puppy mills, and even caters to them. It is even more heartbreaking that Kansas is more interested in making money off of non-profits that try to make some small difference in a state that is more about the almighty dollar than protecting God's creatures he placed on this earth and entrusted humans to care for. By raising fees for rescues and shelters you not only hinder the efforts of people trying to clean up a small portion of the mess puppy mills and back yard breeders leave behind, such as dumped breeder dogs, malformed puppies, severely neglected and sickly adult dogs and puppies, you also encourage the continuation of these facilities and the purchase of their poorly bred animals.

Rescues beg and plead for donations to pay for the medical bills of these rescued animals only to be slapped in the face by our own state, which we pay taxes in, by increasing our licenses and making regulations that expand the difficulty in keeping rescues and shelters open.

We did not cause the enormous problem of unwanted animals, but we have taken on the responsibility of helping them and it would send a signal to the people of this state and surrounding states if our elected officials stood behind rescues and shelters in their efforts instead of proposing legislations that hinder and even stop rescues from our mission.

I implore you, ***PLEASE***, oppose HB2477 and help the rescues and shelters in the State of Kansas to keep the money we work hard to raise for the sole purpose of saving tossed aside animals that people view as property instead of lives created by God.

One last recommendation, a panel of rescue and shelter heads could help develop ways to increase the flow of money into the state by drawing up proposed fines and fees for those in violations, needing to be relicensed due to violations, etc. There are other ways to increase money into the department other than penalizing those doing the right thing by increasing their fees. I would love to be a part of being the solution.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

RaShann Southard  
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