

Oppose New Hampshire HB 616

Protect law enforcement. Protect animals. Protect public resources.

HB 616 would cripple animal cruelty investigations in New Hampshire.

Handcuffs law enforcement

- HB 616 forces law enforcement to charge owners with animal cruelty without providing adequate time for veterinarians to properly evaluate the animals before determining possible charges.
- This bill may require animals to be returned to their owner even in situations in which owners are overwhelmed and do not have the capacity to properly care for their animals.
- Officers could be delayed in responding to livestock investigations due to a new requirement that would limit veterinary assistance.

Prevents rescue of suffering animals

- In criminal cases, charges are usually filed *after* a warrant is executed. This bill may block lawful seizures until it's too late.
- Only animals in "imminent danger" could be seized, ignoring the many forms and stages of neglect.

Cuts off funding for animal care

- New Hampshire does not have a cost of care law and animal cruelty cases can cost towns and nonprofits hundreds of thousands of dollars in animal care expenses.
- HB 616 would ban fundraising, leaving shelters that receive no state funding without resources to care for rescued animals and requiring taxpayers to pick up the bill.

Ends crucial partnerships

- Nonprofits that receive cruelty complaints and immediately notify law enforcement would be prohibited from giving expert assistance with the rescue or recovery of neglected animals.
- Courts have previously upheld the legality of nonprofit assistance during cruelty cases, including the New Hampshire Supreme Court.

