**Insert Current Date**

**Government Official**

**Government Office**

**Street Address**

**City, State Zip**

SUBJECT: NEW YORK ANIMAL SHELTERS IN CRISIS

Dear **Representative**:

First, let me express my gratitude for your commitment to providing quality care to dogs and cats living in our great state of New York.

Unfortunately, I find it necessary to express my concern for the practical implementation of the Companion Animal Care Standards Act, scheduled to go into effect on December 15, 2025. In response to this legislation our local shelter, Elmore SPCA, located in Peru, NY, has recently announced a significant reduction in animal care services. This comes at a time when animal service requests are at an all-time high. This not-for-profit, private, no-kill shelter is stretched to its limits addressing strays, animal cruelty, abandonment, and the community’s surrender needs.

Even with substantial downsizing, their current building is inadequate to meet this new legislation. Dollars spent to make modifications to their small, old building are impractical, and if attempted, will be costly and yield minimal care space. They will be reduced to providing care to dozens of animals each year, from the hundreds they currently provide for.

There are those that will say that shelters and rescues have been given three years to address the legislation; however, this is an unrealistic timeline, due to:

* New larger shelter buildings, equipped to legislation standards, are multi-million-dollar projects.
* These mandates fall equally on the small, poorer communities that have limited options and resources. In the case of Elmore SPCA, the county wants to utilize its resources without contribution.
* Grants oftentimes are complex, untimely, and in the case of a new building, are completely inadequate.
* Financial procurement, materials acquisition, and labor resources to create or modify a facility are impracticable within this timeline.
* Shelters and rescues were left to their own resources to track down legislative requirements. No resource guide, webinar, or other information materials were provided in the first year. Questions to NYS Agriculture and Markets have gone unanswered, as they were not included in the drafting of this legislation, but are tasked with its enforcement.

In most small shelters, it will be a major challenge to just keep the doors open. Costs have risen in every facet of sheltering, including labor, veterinary care, and facility management. Tethering our shelters to unreachable legislation under a restrictive timeline is going to lead an already stressed system into collapse. Please do not force our NYS shelters and municipalities to regress into implementing euthanasia as a solution.

I will not give up on our local shelter which has served Clinton County for nearly eighty years, or any of the other shelters across our state struggling to meet this unfunded mandate. Animal shelters serve a very important role that is necessary in our communities. I ask that you consider reworking this legislation into a manageable outcome before the enactment of the Animal Care Standards Act. This will ensure that needed animal sheltering doors remain open, as dedicated shelters and rescues strive to be the best and most compassionate animal shelters we all want and need.

If you have any questions regarding Elmore SPCA operations, please feel free to reach out to Laurie Parsons, Board President, at 518-572-6485 or laurie@elmorespca.org.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely yours,

**Your Name**

**Your Title, if appropriate**