



HOUSE BILL 113

Creating the Animal Welfare Program Fund

Providing resources to help enhance animal welfare and protect New Mexico communities

Sponsors: Rep. Lujan, Rep. Szczepanski, Rep. Sanchez, Rep. Borrego, and Sen. Cervantes
Co-Sponsors: Rep. Abeyta and Rep. Gonzales

WHAT WILL HOUSE BILL 113 DO?

House Bill 113 will establish an Animal Welfare Program Fund—with an appropriation of \$7 million allocated in HB 2—for projects and programs providing animal welfare services across New Mexico, with an emphasis on reaching rural and underserved parts of the state. Counties, municipalities, Tribal entities, and nonprofit organizations would be eligible to apply for funds to support a variety of needs to address the care and well-being of cats and dogs in their communities. The Department of Finance & Administration (DFA) would disburse the funds as grants and contracts. DFA would develop rules to facilitate the application for and distribution of annual grant fund dollars beginning in July 2025.

WHY IS THE ANIMAL WELFARE PROGRAM FUND NEEDED?

New Mexicans rely on animal shelters and rescues, humane law enforcement, and animal welfare programs to support public health and safety. They also care deeply about the humane treatment of animals: **according to a 2024 scientific poll, 2 out of 3 supported establishing a fund to support cat and dog shelters.** Yet many communities lack the resources to provide the level of care needed to cats and dogs. According to the New Mexico Companion Animal Network, a coalition of 15+ shelter leaders and partner advocates:

- **Most of NM's 40+ animal shelters are operating chronically at overcapacity.**
- **Many NM shelters operate with inadequate infrastructure.** Even recently built urban shelters have outgrown their capacity: there are needs for exercise, enrichment, and behavior modification to facilitate higher adoption rates. Animals deteriorate behaviorally as they stay longer in shelter environments.
- **Rural shelters in some areas lack the resources to fully comply with the state's humane minimum shelter standards.** Bringing struggling shelters into compliance with basic public-supported standards of care will enhance animal welfare and decrease taxpayer spending on animal care and control.
- **Most New Mexico families have pets, yet several counties and tribal communities lack adequate or ANY animal care and control infrastructure.** This contributes to inhumane outcomes for dogs and cats, and increases disease transmission, animal bite cases, and livestock depredation.

2023 Statewide Animal Shelter Numbers*

	Intake	Transport	Euthanasia	Euthanasia Rate (% of Intake)	Human Population	Euthanasia per 1,000 people
Totals Reported	95,139	35,902	17,964	19%	2,114,000	8.49
Estimated not Reported	14,987	N/A	5,844	N/A	N/A	N/A
Estimated Grand Totals	110,126	35,902	23,808	22%	2,114,000	11.26

*36 of 44 shelters reporting

HB 113 WILL HELP IMPROVE PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY & SAVE TAXPAYER DOLLARS

New Mexico animal welfare professionals (animal shelter workers and front-line animal control officers) help keep our communities safe and ensure animals are treated humanely. Also, because companion animals are so important in the lives of New Mexicans, the well-being of animals is inextricably linked to the well-being of people.

- In communities where shelters are overcrowded and cannot take in homeless animals, those animals are more likely to be abandoned, roam, go unvaccinated, and reproduce. The public health and safety risks flowing downstream from this lack of infrastructure include rabies transmission from unvaccinated animals, bites from stray dogs, and increased vehicular collisions with loose animals.
- Animal welfare professionals are often called on to address animal hoarding, which is a health risk to the animals as well as the people occupying the homes where hoarding is taking place (often involving children).
- Animal shelters are increasingly called upon to help animals impacted by tragic wildfires and other natural disasters, providing safe havens for animals while families are fleeing and finding their own safe shelter in spaces that often do not allow animals.
- Investments in animal care, control, and protection saves communities money: funds invested in spay/neuter lead to savings in animal care and control by preventing unwanted dog/cat births and the associated costs of sheltering unwanted animals, while community education on responsible animal ownership can prevent dogs running at large and other practices that lead to impoundment.
- Increasing programs like microchipping animals can meaningfully reduce shelter intake and costs and help return lost animals to their families more quickly. Microchips increase the chances that an animal will be returned to their family by over 50%.
- Important repairs and renovations for New Mexico's overcrowded and underfunded animal shelters will increase their capacity, so that loose, unsterilized animals can be rescued before reproducing.

WHAT PROJECTS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING?

Needs will vary by specific community or area of the state, but would include:

- Animal shelter operational costs, intake and euthanasia reduction;
- Equipment, supplies, or services for animal control, cruelty law enforcement, and seizures;
- Spay/neuter services and humane community education and outreach.

NEW MEXICANS SUPPORT AN ANIMAL WELFARE PROGRAM FUND

New Mexico Association of Counties
New Mexico Sheriffs' Association
Bernalillo County Sheriff John Allen
Rio Arriba County Sheriff Merrifield
Chief of Grants Police Department Maxine Monte
First Judicial District Attorney Mary Carmack-Altwhies
Second Judicial District Attorney Sam Bregman
Fourth Judicial District Attorney Thomas Clayton
Eighth Judicial District Attorney Marcus J. Montoya
Eleventh Judicial District (Div I) Attorney Jack Fortner
Thirteenth Judicial District Attorney Barbara Romo
Bernalillo County Commissioner Eric Olivas
Albuquerque City Councilor Tammy Fiebelkorn
Edgewood Mayor Kenneth Brennan

Town of Edgewood Commission
Santa Rosa City Council
City of Santa Rosa Animal Control
Dixon Animal Protection Society
Espanola Humane Society
Animal Services Center of the Mesilla Valley
Friends of Estancia Valley Animals
Los Suenos Veterinary Group
Jemez Valley Amigos
Taos Feral Feline Friends
Animal Humane New Mexico
Adopt a Pet Society