



## **HB 1916: Transparency for Texas Animal Shelters and Releasing Agencies**

Millions of animals are euthanized in animal shelters every year. Experts in the animal welfare field agree that one of the most effective ways to reduce shelter killing is to collect, analyze, and disseminate accurate and consistent data. With this information we can target our resources towards programs and policies that we know are efficient, effective, safe, and humane, while replacing outdated and ineffective ones. This is vital for improving outcomes for animals.

In Texas, there is currently a hole in this data stream. Many shelters and releasing agencies are diligent about data collection and analysis, but many are not. This inconsistency is why we need **HB 1916** - a shelter transparency bill that will provide consistency and reliability to animal shelters and rescue organizations about information pertaining to the animals in their care. This bill makes it so that all animal shelters and releasing agencies in the state will be collecting and reporting the same very basic information, like how many animals are taken in and how many are adopted or transferred out.. Best of all, the required record keeping can be done for free, allowing more resources to be devoted directly to the animals.

In addition to reducing the unnecessary killing of animals, **HB 1916** will also bring transparency and accountability to our shelters. The public has a right to know what is happening to the animals in their community, especially since their taxpayer dollars oftentimes go towards funding these organizations. As the saying goes, sunlight is the best disinfectant and right now we need to know how our tax dollars are being spent.

If passed, **HB 1916** would align Texas with numerous other states that have passed similar laws requiring this type of reporting, including Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Delaware, Virginia and Maryland. The national trend is moving in this direction.

### **What HB 1916 does:**

- Require shelters and releasing agencies to keep accurate and consistent records about animals in their care, including
  - The number of dogs and cats that are adopted, euthanized, returned to their owners, lost while under their care, and transferred to other shelters
- Provide the public access to monthly records, by publishing the data on the organization's website
- Bring accountability and transparency to our animal shelters and releasing agencies

### **Why we need this bill:**

- Taxpayers need to know how their money is being spent
- Animal shelters and releasing agencies need this data to measure their performance.
- Understanding what happens in shelters will help us provide more efficient care to animals and will reduce unnecessary shelter deaths

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