



Central Texas Veterinary
SPECIALTY & EMERGENCY
HOSPITAL

Powerful medicine. Exceptional care.

Don Bland
Austin Animal Services Chief
7201 Levander Loop Bldg. A
Austin, TX 78702

Dear Mr. Bland,

I am writing this letter in support of all the pets and animals of the Central Texas Community. Our hospital has three locations within Travis and Williamson Counties. In 2019 alone, over 800 patients have been brought into our hospital for veterinary services within Travis County when the Austin Animal Center is not open, does not have a veterinarian available or does not have the expertise needed to care for the animals. Unfortunately, some of those 800 pets did not make it and all we were asked to do is to announce that it indeed had passed. Others, we have been able to help, provide the medical care needed to alleviate the pain and/or suffering, and treat the ongoing disease processes. The last set of patients we have seen are those that have a very poor prognosis to have a pain-free life regardless of the extent of medical intervention provided and thus euthanasia was recommended by the attending licensed veterinarian. These animals had a very poor prognosis for being able to live without severe, unremitting physical pain and thus their pain and suffering was eliminated by means of euthanasia.

I understand that the Austin City Council has proposed revisions to current animal-related City Code. We hope that the section allowing the veterinarians that work at our hospitals (and others) to make the life and death decision about the patients we see will continue to be within the City Code. If we as veterinarians do not have the right to make those decisions on site and we have to watch patients suffer unduly because of a "no kill clause", then we will no longer be able to provide services for the City of Austin or the Austin Animal Center. As veterinarians, we strive to help our patients and hope that they may have a long, pain free life. If the City Council feels they need to take the decision to do what is in the best interest of our patients (which may be to euthanize) from our veterinarians, then the Council will also need to make a decision on where to send those 800 plus patients when the Austin Animal Center is unable to service those animals. We will be forced to discontinue our services and agreement with AAC.

According to the AVMA, the Veterinarian's Oath is as follows:

*Being admitted to the profession of veterinary medicine, I solemnly swear to use my scientific knowledge and skills for the benefit of society through the protection of animal health and welfare, the prevention **and relief of animal suffering**, the conservation of animal resources, the promotion of public health, and the advancement of medical knowledge. I will practice my profession conscientiously, with dignity, and in keeping with the principles of veterinary medical ethics. I accept as a lifelong obligation the continual improvement of my professional knowledge and competence.*

Best Regards,

Stephanie Beardsley, DVM
Diplomate ACVS
CEO Central Texas Veterinary Specialty & Emergency Hospital