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Canton, MI 48187

June 22, 2021

Representative Roger Hauck
Chair, Regulatory Reform Committee
Michigan House of Representatives

Via email, Mollie Wingrove, Committee Clerk, mwingrove@house.mi.gov

Re: Support HB 4726, House Regulatory Reform Committee Meeting, June 22, 2021

Dear Rep. Hauck, Committee Members and Rep. Meerman:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. Attorneys for Animals, Inc. (AFA) is a Michigan non-profit and 501(c)(3) organization of legal professionals and animal advocates. AFA's Board of Directors voted to support HB 4726, to revise the Public Health Code to allow a veterinarian or veterinarian technician licensed in another state to practice in Michigan during emergencies or large-scale animal cruelty cases.

Approximately 15 years ago, two events occurred that have shaped our perception of the human-animal bond as it relates to animals' need for care during emergencies, either natural or human-made. In 2005, Hurricane Katrina brought indelible images of people who refused to leave their homes without their companion animals. Two years later, the very well publicized prosecution of NFL quarterback Michael Vick on animal fighting charges, highlighted the resources needed to care for animals who are the victims of crime. With this care, the last of the "Vicktory" dogs lived until 2020.

It isn't only companion animals who are impacted: farmed animals and those in research laboratories are vulnerable, particularly to natural disasters.

When these events occur, Michigan needs an "all-hands-on-deck" approach, which must necessarily include veterinary professionals who are licensed in other states, but who are willing to work here temporarily.

With this legislation, Michigan will be able to better serve its animals and – in the case of natural disasters – the people who care for them. We look forward to reviewing proposed amendments from the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs to make the bill more easily enforceable and to ensure proper oversight.

We urge the committee to report HB 4726.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Beatrice M. Friedlander".

Beatrice M. Friedlander, JD
President

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