



NYSAPF is the voice of New York's humane societies, SPCAs, non-profit and municipal animal shelters as well as animal welfare organizations which focus on homeless animals.

**TESTIMONY TO THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE HEARING ON
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION**

SFY 25 STATE BUDGET

Presented by Libby Post, Executive Director of the NYS Animal Protection Federation

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony to you today on behalf of the New York State Animal Protection Federation (NYSAPF). The Federation represents all the humane societies and SPCAs as well as non-profit and municipal animal shelters across the state. From a policy perspective, our focus is two-fold—on the organizational strength and financial sustainability of our memberships and on the health and well-being of companion animals—mainly dogs, cats, puppies and kittens but also other domesticated animals such as rabbits and birds. Our members also include animal welfare organizations such as the ASPCA, the Humane Society of the United States, Feral Cat Focus on Western New York and the Animal Alliance of Greater Syracuse.

Companion Animal Capital Fund

Since the Companion Animal Capital Fund, the legislature, along with the governor, have allocated \$33M to help over 60 shelters and across New York build or upgrade their facilities. We want to thank Governor Hochul, Agriculture Commissioner Richard Ball and his staff at the Division of Animal Industry, Assemblymember Deborah Glick, State Senator Joseph Addabbo, Assembly Agriculture Committee Chair Donna Lupardo and Senate Agriculture Committee Chair Michelle Hinchey for their on-going support of the Fund.

While \$33M has been allocated, there is still \$7.6M in unspent funds due to project awards that couldn't be started because of cost overruns due to supply chain issues and construction materials inflation and funds that were never awarded because of the narrow scope of the budget language for the first few years of the program.

The Federation worked with the Department of Agriculture and Markets and the Division of Budget to amend appropriation language going back to the first year of the Fund in the 2017-18 budget to mirror last year's language. Last year, you continued the 10% match making the Fund more accessible to smaller organizations and municipalities and made non-residence-based rescues eligible for grants. Including these rescues was done to enable these groups to make the upgrades needed to meet the Companion Animal Care Standards Act for Shelters and Rescues that was unanimously passed in each house and signed by the Governor in 2022. It takes effect on December 15, 2025.

With the Governor's allocation of \$5M and the budget language change, there will be \$12.6M available for FY25. We wholeheartedly support the present language in the budget and will not be asking the legislature to add any additional funding—THIS YEAR!

The Federation promised to provide no-cost consulting to shelters or rescues across the State, regardless of their membership status, to provide them with the technical assistance they would need to meet the standards. To date, we have received \$246,000 in grant funding from the Weiderhold Foundation, the NY Community Trust and the ASPCA and expect another \$100,000 from Weiderhold to provide these services. Our goal is to work with 60 organizations—we are one-third of the way there from the initial funding and now that new grants have been provided, more organizations are signing up. We made good on our promise.

Addendum A: Listing of CACF Grants

Animal Crimes Fund

On January 19th of this year, a Times-Union headline read “Animal Seized from Unregistered Animal Rescue.” On February 2nd, the same paper’s headline read “Animal Rescue Operators Charged with Cruelty.” The story behind these headlines is simple and disturbing. A so-called animal rescue brought in dogs from Texas. A house in Latham was raided by Mohawk Hudson Humane Society’s humane law enforcement personnel and the Town of Colonie Animal Control. Over 100 animals were taken from the home—they were living in squalor. Dead animals were found in a freezer.

Mohawk Hudson is now holding those animals as live evidence. Two leaders affiliated with the raided organization, EmPawthy Rescue, have each been charged with 102 counts of animal cruelty. As the case winds its way through the court system, Mohawk Hudson Humane Society estimates that the cost of care for these animals—live evidence that can’t just be put on a shelf like a stolen television—will be \$100,000.

We see situations like these happen time and time again. Shelters across New York State either have their own humane law enforcement officers or work with local police agencies to protect animals whose owners are charged with animal cruelty crimes. They know all too well that holding owned animals is vastly different than storing other types of seized property. A dog, cat, horse (or even a bull, in one case) cannot be packed away in secure storage. They require routine care like food and shelter, and many need veterinary care.

While a minority of shelters successfully use the security petition process in current law in an attempt to require accused abusers to pay these sheltering costs or convince a court to order them to surrender their animal(s), the overwhelming majority have found that process expensive and ineffective. There are some district attorneys who will assist a shelter in this regard, but most will not, especially in rural areas where the shelter has to weigh providing care for the animals or paying a lawyer to prepare the petition and represent the shelter in court.

Of the 18 cases reported to the Federation’s 2023 Animal Crimes Survey, the cost of care was \$373,618. The shelters only recouped \$69,521—19% of the total cost.

In 2016, the ASPCA worked with the New York Police Department on seizing 73 animals from the small home in Queens of a mother and her daughter. The ASPCA spent \$421,739 on medical care and sheltering costs for those animals. It took 14 months to get a decision on the security bond and no restitution was ever received.

In 2010, when the SPCA Serving Erie County cared for 73 horses in an abuse case that stretched over four years, *the shelter spent \$1.6 million caring for this live evidence*. The shelter was reimbursed only \$620,724 by the owner—38% of the total cost of care.

In consideration of this long-standing and costly problem, the New York State Animal Protection Federation is asking the legislature to create a \$2.5M NYS Animal Crimes Fund in the FY25 budget. By

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creating this fund, the impact of such costs to eligible shelters could be significantly alleviated in all regions of the state. If we do not address this issue – especially as shelters and rescues begin compliance measures with the new facilities standards rapidly approaching at the end of 2025 – this problem will only get worse, especially in more rural parts of the state.

Below are some additional examples of animal crimes and the shelters’ cost of care.

Shelter	Year	Animals Cared For	Length of Stay	Cost of Care	Restitution
Hudson Valley Humane Society (Rockland County)	2021	24 Husky and Husky-mix adult dogs removed from small home	18 months	\$334,200	None
Pets Alive (Orange County)	2021	27 goats, 1 sheep, 1 duck seized, working with UCSPCA who seized 53 animals in total	14 months	\$194,725	None
Pets Alive (Orange County)	2022	2 sheep, 2 mini-horses and 1 mini-donkey seized	15 months	\$30,365	None
SPCA Serving Erie County	2022	2 sheep, 1 bull, 4 dogs, 1 chicken and 1 horse locked in a stock trailer/car hauler living in squalor in very poor condition	162 days-sheep, 100 days-horse, 177 days-dogs, chicken died day after seizure	\$14,852	\$3,400
ASPCA	2023	28 dogs seized	8 months	\$100,000	None
Finger Lakes SPCA (Steuben County)	2023	13 dogs (mostly Cane Corsos), 7 adults, 6-week-old puppies	11 months	\$85,000	\$23,195 (paid by county)
LollyPop Farm	2023	200 cats from hoarding situations	5 months	\$15,043	None

Thank you.

Addendum B: The Federation’s 2022 Humane Agenda

ADDENDUM A



NYSAPF is the voice of New York's Humane Societies, SPCAs, Non-Profit and Municipal Animal Shelters

2018-2023 Grants

2023 Grants

Capital Region

Albany County Sherriff's Office (Albany, Albany County): \$500,000 to create an auxiliary animal shelter in partnership with the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society.

City of Schenectady (Schenectady, Schenectady County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$200,000 for updated larger kennels.

New York City

Animal Care & Control of NYC (Manhattan, New York County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$143,175 to outfit their new shelter system with updated equipment, installation of new kennel tops, a new washer and dryer, and replacement of an aged water heater.

Brooklyn Bridge Animal Welfare Coalition (Brooklyn Heights, Kings County): \$164,719.67 for shelter expansion, design of cat wards dedicated to health and compatibility, installation of windows, and the creation of a full-service medical suite.

Mohawk Valley

Animal Shelter of Schoharie Valley (Howes Cave, Schoharie County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$500,000 for the renovation of a medical suite and roof renovation.

Southern Tier

Broome County Humane Society (Binghamton, Broome County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$110,879 to improve cat housing and dog kennel design, and acquisition of a generator and a grooming basin.

Finger Lakes

Finger Lakes SPCA of CNY (Auburn, Cayuga County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$482,491.50 for a new facility design including HVAC system.

Hudson Valley

Hudson Valley Humane Society (Pomona, Rockland County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$200,000 to upgrade dog kennels, replace cat enclosures, and increase animal capacity.

Hudson Valley Animal Rescue & Sanctuary (Poughkeepsie, Dutchess County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$398,495 to increase animal capacity including quarantine area.

North Country

Potsdam Humane Society (Potsdam, St. Lawrence County): \$100,067 for housing and environmental improvements, including updates to laundry room, caging, heating, and renovation of flooring.

Lewis Co. Humane Society (Lowville, Lewis County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$500,000 for new HVAC system, new laundering equipment, creation of cat isolation room, and to repair and update damaged shelter structures.

Long Island

Town of Oyster Bay (Oyster Bay, Nassau County)- \$200,000 for shelter renovation and new HVAC system.

Town of North Hempstead (Manhasset, Nassau County) – \$200,000 for new HVAC system.

Kent Memorial Shelter (Calverton, Suffolk County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$200,000 for new shelter facility with isolation area, including new kennels for dogs and cats.

Pioneers for Animal Welfare Society (Hicksville, Nassau County): \$200,000 for down payment of new facility.

Western New York

SPCA Serving Erie County (W. Seneca, Erie County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$200,000 to improve kennels and outdoor exercise area, renovate cat recovery and nursery area, obtain new HVAC system and security system.

Lollypop Farm (Fairport, Monroe County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$500,000 for the redesign of kennels, to increase animal capacity, and expand the isolation ward.

Wayne Co. Humane Society (Lyons, Wayne County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$500,000 for a new and updated shelter facility including new HVAC.

Wyoming Co. Animal Shelter (Warsaw, Wyoming County): \$318,318 to improve facility design, upgrade mechanical equipment, and provide outdoor enrichment area.

Wyoming Co. SPCA (Attica, Wyoming County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$62,825.89 for roof replacement, repair of driveway and parking area, acquire cat caging and update record keeping technology.

2022 Grants

Capital Region

Animal Protective Foundation of Schenectady (Glenville, Schenectady County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$492,563 for medical supplies, tile flooring, new isolation areas, and increased capacity for dog housing.

Mohawk & Hudson Humane Society (Menands, Albany County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$500,000 for a new veterinary suite that allows for separation of sick dogs from healthy ones.

Super Heroes in Ripped Jeans (Oneonta, Otsego County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$440,347 for renovation of a recently purchased building to increase both canine and feline housing capacity as well as a cat condo and isolation area.

Susquehanna SPCA (Cooperstown, Otsego County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$143,289 for the purchase of

veterinary equipment including a stationary radiograph machine, a dental radiograph machine, laser therapy equipment, and surgical cautery tools to provide enhanced medical care for animals.

Hudson Valley

Humane Society of Westchester (New Rochelle, Westchester County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$125,000 for resurfacing of outdoor dog runs, a retaining wall for the dog park, and new cages and floors for the cat area.

Paws Crossed Animal Rescue, Inc. (Elmsford, Westchester County): \$200,000 for a new adoption area, cat rooms, and meet and greet rooms. The addition of a veterinary clinic area, community room, and staff offices are planned as well.

Sullivan County SPCA (Rock Hill, Sullivan County): \$100,000 for an HVAC system, new kennel gates, doors, and fencing that will support animal health, safety, and comfort.

Ulster County SPCA (Kingston, Ulster County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$250,510 for a total renovation of their dog kennel area as well as new paint and new flooring.

Long Island

Animal Rescue Fund of the Hamptons (Easthampton, Suffolk County, **NYSAPF Member**): **\$200,000** for a new pressure washing system, plumbing, and HVAC system to support animal health, safety, and comfort.

Bidawee, Inc (Westhampton, Suffolk County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$200,000 for a brand new, state of the art HVAC system.

Town of Brookhaven (Brookhaven, Suffolk County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$146,500 for a shelter renovation to include additional kennels, a dedicated food preparation area, and a meet and greet area.

Town of Hempstead (Hempstead, Nassau County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$52,000 for shelter upgrades and enhancements including better drainage and lighting.

Northern New York

Jefferson County SPCA (Watertown, Jefferson County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$189,767 for expansion of services in a new veterinary wing for sick or injured animals. This will allow space for dental procedures, surgeries, pre-operative care, post-operative care, and a treatment area for injured pets.

Western New York

Chautauqua County Humane Society (Jamestown, Chautauqua County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$159,677 for increased security, window replacements, an HVAC system, and generator expansion.

Hornell Area Humane Society (Hornell, Steuben County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$ 346,875 for a cattery expansion, and expansion of the space for canine behavior and training sessions. Additional areas will be renovated, including a new food preparation area and a separate area for cleaning supplies.

Pet Pride of New York (Victor, Ontario County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$200,000 for renovations and additions to a new wing of the shelter which will include intake, isolation, veterinary areas as well as a utility room, staff restrooms, and a staff breakroom.

Ten Lives Club (Blasdell, Erie County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$200,000 for shelter expansion and improvement

for their cats. Four new living spaces will provide space for additional cats, and the addition of an HVAC system will provide clean air.

2020 Grants

Western New York

Town of Lancaster (Lancaster, Erie County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$228,750 to support a new building with epoxy flooring, new kennels, new drains, a new HVAC system, floor sink, exercise yard, and garage.

Finger Lakes

Humane Society of Yates County (Penn Yan, Yates County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$500,000 to build an addition that houses modern dog kennels, purchase sound panels, and improve drainage. Funding will also allow in-floor heating, a new HVAC system and the construction of enclosed outdoor runs.

Livingston County (Mount Morris, Livingston County): \$112,500 to support the construction of a new intake area for new dogs, replacement of old kennels, addition of four new isolation kennels, four new primary enclosures for overflow, and an attached and enclosed garage.

Ontario County Humane Society, Inc. (Canandaigua, Ontario County): \$363,030 to support two isolation areas, repair kennels, epoxy surfaces, install new indoor/outdoor runs, build an outdoor play area, install cat condos, HVAC system.

Central New York

Central New York SPCA (Syracuse, Onondaga County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$172,490 to support the shelter's roof replacement.

Hudson Valley

Pets Alive, Inc. (Middletown, Orange County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$500,00 to replace the current kennel with a new modern dog kennel building, improve medical facilities for the animals, and provide dedicated space for adoption and intake.

Town of Saugerties (Saugerties, Ulster County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$500,000 for a new building, indoor and outdoor dog housing, isolation kennels, to install proper drainage, floor heating, and a multi-level exercise and training area.

Long Island

South Hampton Animal Shelter Foundation, Inc. (Hampton Bays, Suffolk County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$500,000 for a new Behavior Training Center, which allows trainers to work with dogs in need of rehabilitation year-round.

2019 Grants

Mid-Hudson Valley

Humane Society of Westchester (New Rochelle, Westchester County, NYSAPF Member): \$500,000 to expand and upgrade its facilities by adding a new structure to improve animal socialization, training, and community education.

Dutchess County SPCA, Inc. (Hyde Park, Dutchess County; **NYSAPF Member**): \$312,381 to renovate its 60-year-old facility to improve animal housing, ventilation, and flooring to ensure the safety, sanitation, and health of humans and animals.

Warwick Valley Humane Society, Inc. (Warwick, Orange County): \$500,000 to construct a new facility to improve sanitation, drainage, lighting, and ventilation for improved overall animal wellbeing.

Long Island

North Fork Animal Welfare League, Inc. (Peconic, Suffolk County; ***NYSAPF Member***): \$500,000 to renovate its recently purchased facility to create separate rooms for dogs, cats, intake, and isolation, and to improve overall housing quality.

Western NY

City of Dunkirk (Dunkirk, Chautauqua County): \$100,000 to acquire a new building to relocate the current animal control holding center and establish a larger shelter that exceeds minimum standards requirements.

Niagara County SPCA (Niagara Falls, Niagara County; ***NYSAPF Member***): \$500,000 to construct an in-house surgical suite to provide much-needed medical services and procedures to sheltered animals.

Southern Tier

Hornell Area Humane Society (Hornell, Steuben County, ***NYSAPF Member***): \$93,760 to renovate the current canine housing area to create a separate area for isolation, creating better living surfaces and drainage, and improving ventilation and noise control.

Mohawk Valley

Stevens-Swan Humane Society of Oneida County, Inc. (Utica, Oneida County, ***NYSAPF Member***): \$373,500 to increase capacity for animal holding, provision of medical care, isolate sick animals, and improve the structure of enclosures.

Montgomery County SPCA (Amsterdam, Montgomery County; ***NYSAPF Member***): \$500,000 to construct a new facility that significantly increases capacity, sanitation, physical wellbeing, and behavioral health.

Finger Lakes

Wayne County Humane Society (Lyons, Wayne County; ***NYSAPF Member***): \$138,565 to enhance the dog holding area by improving climate control, ventilation, surfaces, drainage, and lighting.

Central NY

Country Acres Animal Shelter, Inc. (Homer, Cortland County): \$101,365 to construct a quarantine area, outdoor play area, and update current housing facilities.

2018 Grants

Capital Region

Animal Protective Foundation (Scotia, Schenectady County, ***NYSAPF Member***): \$220,867 to support the construction of a new feline care center to create group housing environments, to improve medical facilities, and to support the renovation of the current shelter, including a new heating/cooling system for improved ventilation.

Western New York

Lollypop Farm (Fairport, Monroe County, ***NYSAPF Member***): \$500,000 for the renovation of the current shelter. The project will add sound-absorbing panels to the dog-holding area and a new heating/cooling system for proper ventilation.

Wyoming County Animal Control (Warsaw, Wyoming County): \$100,000 for the renovation of the current shelter. The project includes the addition of new kennels to increase safety, comfort, and capacity; a new heating/cooling system to improve heating, ventilation, and air quality; and renovations to improve infection control and daily life for the animals.

SPCA in Cattaraugus County (Olean, Cattaraugus County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$164,436 for the renovation of the current shelter. The project includes the installation of a new heating/cooling system for improved ventilation and weatherization. The shelter will also create a more welcoming adoption environment.

Town of West Seneca Municipal Shelter (West Seneca, Erie County): \$119,775 for the renovation of the current shelter. The project includes covered kennels and a roof replacement and extension.

Mohawk Valley

Susquehanna SPCA (Cooperstown, Otsego County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$500,000 for the construction of a new animal shelter to replace the current structure. The project includes building a new facility on adjacent land to decrease the flooding risk and to allow for the addition of an adoption counseling area.

Long Island

Town of Islip Municipal Shelter (Islip, Suffolk County): \$498,200 for the construction of a new animal shelter to replace the current structure. The new shelter will replace the 54-year-old current building to increase capacity and improve safety. It also includes the addition of a new surgical suite.

Town of Smithtown Municipal Shelter (Smithtown, Suffolk County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$168,750 for the construction of an addition to the current shelter. The project includes the construction of a new building to house intake of animals, isolation, and trap-neuter-return areas.

Mid-Hudson Valley

Humane Society of Middletown (Middletown, Orange County): \$439,000 for the construction of an addition and renovation of the current shelter. The project includes the construction of a new wing with quarantine and treatment areas and expanded animal housing areas to increase capacity.

SPCA of Westchester (Briarcliff Manor, Westchester County, **NYSAPF Member**): \$500,000 for the construction of a new animal shelter to replace the current structure. The project will consolidate several buildings into a single, modern facility to modernize care.

Central New York

City of Oswego Municipal Shelter (Oswego, Oswego County): \$489,375 for the construction of an addition and renovation of the current shelter. The project will weatherize the existing facility and expand quarantine areas to improve disease control.

North Country

Potsdam Humane Society (Potsdam, St. Lawrence County): \$178,895 for the construction of an addition and renovation of the current shelter. The project will replace heating/cooling units for ventilation improvements, make repairs and modifications to kennels, and install sound-reduction materials. It will also include the construction of a detached building for long-term shelter animals to improve daily life.



The advocacy voice of NY's animal shelters, humane societies, SPCAs, animal welfare organizations and a growing number of rescues

2024 Legislative Agenda

Budget

- **Companion Animal Capital Fund (CACF).** Continue state support at \$5 million, plus retroactively applying current eligibility standards to previous years' reappropriations which would make the \$7.6M currently unallocated available in the FY25 budget for a total of \$12.6M. This increased funding will help shelters and rescues better prepare for the 2025 launch of statewide shelter/rescue standard licensing & inspection.
- **Animal Crimes Fund.** \$2.5 million in the 2024 State Budget, include language that all legal remedies for cost of care are exhausted (security, dismissal, etc.).
- **Companion Animal Welfare Unit.** Ensure funding Companion Animal Welfare at the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets. Last year's budget included \$2M to enable the Department to staff up for the 2025 launch of statewide shelter/rescue standard licensing & inspection. We support the continuation of that funding.

Support

- **Civil Remedy for Companion Animals (bill number pending).** Introduces a legal path to animal forfeiture that does not require charging offender with a criminal offense.
- **Expand Insurance Discrimination Law to Cover Renter's Insurance (S.7416-A/A.6867-A).** Builds upon and improves 2021 law prohibiting such discrimination in the issuance of homeowner's insurance policies.
- **Lowering Sales Threshold for State Regulation of Home-based Breeders (A.1649, Paulin).** Lowers the sales threshold from 25 to 15 dogs offered for sale per year.
- **Animal Crimes Package**
 - **Weapons Inclusion Exception in Felony Cruelty Law (A.7904/S.6913).** Elevates the penalty for causing physical injury to companion animals through use of a deadly weapon or dangerous instrument while intending to cause serious physical injury.
 - **Appearance Ticket Exception (bill number pending).** Authorizes police/HLE officers or agents to forego the issuance of an appearance ticket and bring a suspect directly into custody if the person is charged with a crime for which the court may order the posting of a security pursuant to the agriculture and markets law.

- **Make Animal Fighting an Enterprise Crime (A.7303).** Includes animal fighting as a designated criminal act under the Penal Law's Article 460 Enterprise Corruption statute and provides sentencing enhancements for certain animal fighting offenses.
- **Livescan Access for SPCA officers (A.1196/S.1182).** Provides SPCA officers access to live scan fingerprinting technology that allows officers to complete arrests independently and without the assistance of other law enforcement personnel, saving valuable time and resources.
- **SPCA Qualified Agency Status (A.8150, senate number pending).** Designates SPCAs as a qualified agency for the purpose of allowing access to the division of criminal justice services central data facility.

Oppose

- **Repeals Puppy Mill Pipeline law of 2022 (A.6863).** Direct attack on Puppy Mill Pipeline Act of 2022.
- **Increase and restructure dog fighting statute. (A.1148/S.3431-A).**