



Fairbanks North Star Borough

Mayor's Office

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January 22, 2024

To: Senate Judiciary Committee
Cc: Senator Robert Myers

Dear Senator Claman and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to extend support for Senate Bill 163: An act relating to animal adoption and foster care records.

The bill would give protection to the privacy of those who are providing foster care for an animal or that have adopted an animal by exempting those records from public record requests. As the law is currently written, these records are subject to records requests which poses a potential safety risk.

It is not unheard of for individuals who have surrendered animals, for any number of reasons, to use access to these records to track down current owners of those animals and intimidate or threaten them. This discourages people from being willing to foster or adopt animals from our shelter.

We feel the passage of this bill would assist in our ability to get animals into loving forever homes and protect our citizens' privacy. I urge the hearing and passage of SB163 from your committee. These are small steps that will make a difference and clarify statute in the long run.

Sincerely,

Bryce Ward, Mayor



Fairbanks North Star Borough

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Main. (907) 459-1300

January 24, 2024

To: Senator Robert Myers
Representative Maxine Dibert

Senator Myers and Representative Dibert,

Thank you again for carrying SB163 and HB188 regarding animal adoption records. Below are answers to questions that have been asked as of today.

1. On average, how many animals does the FNSB animal shelter take in each year?
The Fairbanks North Star Borough animal shelter takes in approximately 3,500 animals a year of various species and ranging circumstances.
2. Of these, approximately how many are qualified for adoption?
Of the 3,500 animals the shelter takes in annually, approximately 1,500 are qualified for adoption. Additionally, about 600 will be returned to their owners.
3. Of the animals taken in and qualified for adoption, approximately how many are successfully adopted as pets each year?
Approximately 1,450 of the 1,500 animals qualified for adoption will ultimately be adopted out to homes.
4. What percentage of adoptions would you guess lead to confrontations with former owners? Would you say this is a weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annual occurrence?
Of the approximately 40 public record requests a year about a quarter of the records requests annually have adopter's personal information in them. This has resulted in instances of confrontation and harassment.
5. Do you think such a privacy measure – i.e. HB 188 - would encourage more families to adopt pets from your facility?
Yes, it is our opinion that adopter information should not be subject to public record requests and that by being able to withhold this information, more people would be inclined to adopt or foster animals.

If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.


Michaella Anderson



MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

Office of the Mayor

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Alaska State Legislature
Senate Judiciary Committee
State Capitol, Room 417
Juneau, AK 99801

Via Email

February 9, 2024

Subject: Support for SB 163 - Protection of Animal Adoption and Foster Care Records

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

We are writing to express our full support for Senate Bill 163, "An Act relating to animal adoption and foster care records." As representatives of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, we believe this bill is crucial in safeguarding the privacy of our citizens while also encouraging participation in animal adoption and foster care programs.

Under the provisions of SB 163, personal identifying information of individuals who have adopted or are providing foster care for animals would be exempted from public records requests under Alaska's Public Records Act. This measure is essential in protecting the privacy and safety of our citizens who generously open their hearts and homes to animals in need.

Animal adoption and foster care play a vital role in our community, providing loving homes for homeless and abandoned animals, reducing overcrowding in shelters, and promoting responsible pet ownership. However, potential adopters and foster caregivers may be hesitant to participate if they fear their personal information could be made public. SB 163 addresses this concern by ensuring that the privacy of these individuals is upheld.

By safeguarding the confidentiality of adoption and foster care records, SB 163 will foster a more supportive environment for animal welfare initiatives in our Borough and across the State. Citizens can feel confident that their decision to adopt or foster an animal will not result in unwarranted intrusion into their personal lives.

Furthermore, this legislation has the potential to encourage more individuals to consider adopting and/or fostering animals from local shelters and animal rescue partners. Knowing that their privacy will be protected, more people may be inclined to open their homes to animals in need, ultimately benefiting both the animals and our community.

In conclusion, we urge the members of the Senate Judiciary Committee to support SB 163 and ensure its passage into law. By safeguarding the privacy of individuals involved in animal adoption and foster care, we can create a more compassionate and supportive environment for both our citizens and our furry companions.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further information.

Sincerely,

Edna DeVries
Mayor

Edna.DeVries@matsugov.us

Michael Brown
Borough Manager

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