

March 2024

Subject: Support for S.F. 3542 (Marty) - Minnesota Office of Animal Protection

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to express my support for S.F. 3542, the Minnesota Office of Animal Protection bill.

In 2015, we got our dog Pudding, who became my son's best friend. On October 8, 2021 at around 3:00 pm, Pudding, along with our other dog Cookie, accidentally got loose. My son called me at work and went to search for them. I left work shortly to join him in the search and called my neighbor to let him know the dogs were out and we were looking for them. At 4:30 pm, we heard a gunshot. We later learned that was the sound of our neighbor killing our beloved dog Pudding. We searched the rest of the week tirelessly, hoping to find Pudding. My feet were bloody and sore from hours of walking in the wet swamps. After speaking with our neighbor multiple times during that week, he finally admitted to killing Pudding and burying her on his property. We were devastated.

I share this story with you because Pudding was part of our family. His death, the neighbor's intentional killing of our dog, caused extreme emotional harm. I have had okay and bad days, working to get to good days though was not easy. My son has struggled with depression as a result and required therapy. The trauma this act of violence has created in our life is at times unbearable. Those who hurt animals and as a result their people need to be held accountable for their actions.

I support the Office of Animal Protection because I believe creating a state office focused on this terrible crime and providing more expertise and resources to hold abusers accountable or prevent cruelty in the first place will help the entire community including the animals and all of us who love these animals.

Please support S.F. 3542 and help establish the Minnesota Office of Animal Protection. It's an important step toward creating a safer and more compassionate community.

Sincerely,

Michelle Biniek
Resident, Mille Lacs County, Minnesota