



## Letter in opposition to naming rescued shelter dogs the official state dog HCR 16

March 8, 2017

Dear Rules Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of the National Animal Interest Alliance (NAIA), and the 100 Oregon AKC dog clubs we represent. NAIA is a broad-based animal welfare organization founded in 1991 and headquartered in Portland, Oregon. We are dedicated to securing high standards of animal care and treatment; to preserving the human-animal bond and to providing fact-based answers to complex and controversial issues regarding animals and their owners. Our membership includes pet owners, hobby breeders, trainers, rescuers and animal professionals, scientists and veterinarians.

Even though many of our members and supporters work with animal shelters, rehabilitate and rehome relinquished and/or stray dogs, they **strongly oppose** House Concurrent Resolution 16.

HCR 16 does not in fact name an official state dog. Instead it recognizes a specific “source of dogs”. Giving this title to a “source of dogs” amounts to an endorsement, implying that the named source is superior to other sources; or signaling that selecting a dog from this source is wiser or in some way more virtuous. It’s not the same as recognizing a dog or a breed for heroic service or valued work. To put it in marketing terms, HCR 16 confers an undeserved branding advantage to the named source. This is not right regardless of how much we care about rescued shelter dogs.

- Shelter dogs, while worthy of support, should not be celebrated above Oregon dogs with known records of service in Oregon
- Scientific studies consistently show that rescue and shelter dogs have more health and behavior problems than dogs from other sources
- In many cases Oregon shelter dogs are not from Oregon at all, but are trucked or flown in from out of the area; from out of state and sometimes from out of the country.  
Korea [http://www.kgw.com/news/local/animal/28-dogs-rescued-from-dog-meat-farm-brought-to-oregon/106347103?fb\\_comment\\_id=1140012809366961\\_1140361235998785#f2a2b7c66b06768](http://www.kgw.com/news/local/animal/28-dogs-rescued-from-dog-meat-farm-brought-to-oregon/106347103?fb_comment_id=1140012809366961_1140361235998785#f2a2b7c66b06768)  
<http://komonews.com/news/local/dogs-rescued-from-s-korean-meat-farm-head-to-washington>  
Israel <http://columbiahumane.com/the-canaan-dog-project/>
- Dogs transported into Oregon bring diseases and parasites that are not typically found in Northwest dogs. Well-funded shelters may be able to diagnose and treat these diseases and parasites, but most Oregon shelters do not have the resources necessary to do so effectively.

- Zoonotic and infectious diseases and parasites such as rabies in rescue dogs from the middle east, TB in rescue dogs from Turkey, and canine brucellosis in rescue dogs from Mexico, have all been diagnosed in rescue and shelter dogs as well as common infectious diseases and parasites. Canine influenza traced to Korean dogs is now infecting American dogs  
<http://mediarelations.cornell.edu/2015/04/12/midwest-canine-influenza-outbreak-caused-by-new-strain-of-virus/>
- Only [12 states have designated official state dogs](#) and of those, nearly all honor breeds that are closely associated with the state's history, or have performed heroic or celebrated acts: The Boston Terrier of Massachusetts, the Chesapeake Bay Retriever of MD and the Cairn Terrier (Toto) in Kansas are good examples.
- Only in recent years have campaigns to make shelter dogs the official state dog begun. These campaigns coincide with the end of dog overpopulation in vast regions of the United States, and signify an unannounced shift in the mission of animal shelters from serving local dogs in need to becoming the leading marketplace source for dogs in their communities.

**Please do not vote for HRC 16.** Passing it will harm Oregon dogs and Oregon dog lovers. It will only serve to promote, even legitimize, the controversial practice of transporting thousands of dogs from distant areas to Oregon animal shelters (without oversight); introducing diseases and parasites into destination communities; and displacing local dogs with poorer quality dogs that are adopted (sold) without warranty, using emotional appeals.

I am available to discuss this further with Oregon lawmakers and to provide additional information on this subject from highly credible sources.

Thank you,



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