



January 15, 2010

The Honorable Micah Kellner
New York State Assembly
315 East 65th Street
New York, NY 10065

The Honorable Tom Duane
New York State Senator
322 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1700
New York, NY 10001

Dear Honorable Kellner and Duane:

I am President of the advocacy group, No Kill Houston. I want to thank you for introducing Oreo's law and express my support of this important piece of legislation. It is unfortunate that, in this day and age, it is necessary to pass laws that enforce and allow life saving efforts. One would think that, as a compassionate nation, saving lives would be our top priority. Unfortunately it is not a priority in numerous shelters and "humane" organizations all over the country.

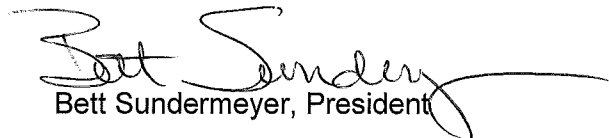
Oreo and Max's unnecessary and preventable deaths, at the hands of a "humane" organization, sadly are not uncommon. In Houston, foster parents and rescue groups routinely experience these very same horror stories at our five kill shelters. In the past year, we have seen a callous shelter vet kill and behead a cat because the cat scratched the vet out of fear (this was after the terrified cat and her kittens were placed next to a Bulldog). This killing was carried out even though the shelter staff knew that a foster parent was, at that very moment, enroute to the shelter to save the cat and kittens. When the foster parent arrived, shelter workers told her that they "couldn't find" the cat. We later learned the truth. This same vet has killed animals out of spite if she did not like the volunteer who had arranged for rescue of the animals. I experienced this callousness first hand last summer after I spent many hours arranging for the rescue of about a dozen cats and kittens from this same kill shelter. A pilot had even offered to transport these animals, for free, to a no kill rescue in Dallas. However, before we could get to the shelter to physically take the cats, the shelter had killed one of the cats. A second cat was found outside the euthanasia room next in line to be killed. This was done even though the shelter's computer system clearly showed that these animals were on hold for rescue. In this case, as with the others, there were absolutely no repercussions to the employees. Unfortunately, my stories are not isolated incidents. I hear similar stories all the time from people all over Houston as well as other cities. So you can see why I, wholeheartedly, believe that Oreo's law is desperately needed so that shelters are forced to "allow" us to save more animals.

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To me, it inconceivable that anyone would choose to kill an animal when life saving alternatives are presented. In light of pleas to save Oreo and Max's lives, it is unconscionable that they were killed and at the hands of a self proclaimed "humane" organization. This is an organization who, in its mission statement, declares to "provide effective means for the prevention of cruelty to animals throughout the United States". Their website states that the ASPCA was founded "on the belief that animals are entitled to kind and respectful treatment at the hands of humans, and must be protected under the law." Shouldn't this "kind and respectful" treatment include an animal's right to its life especially when someone offers to care for that animal? How was killing these animals kind or respectful? How did killing them "protect them under the law"? Clearly, this organization, and hundreds just like it all over the country, cannot regulate themselves. Laws that will protect rescue groups' rights to save these animals are desperately needed.

You may wonder why someone in Texas is writing you. It is because I believe that New York could help set the standard that other states will follow. Your work in New York could help us in our fight to save animals in Texas. Those of us "in the trenches" immensely appreciate your efforts to help stop this national atrocity.

Sincerely,



Bett Sundermeyer, President