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**COMMENTS IN OPPOSITION TO 19-H 5113,
RELATING TO AN ANIMAL ABUSE REGISTRY
February 5, 2019**

This bill would create an “animal abuse registry” similar to the registration requirements already in effect for persons convicted of sex offenses. For all of the reasons we have opposed broad implementation of Megan’s Law and similar bills imposing onerous registration burdens and establishing broad community notification requirements, the ACLU opposes this bill.

It is costly, undermines rehabilitation of offenders, would subject individuals to severe criminal penalties merely for failure to follow proper registration requirements, and would promote the harassment of ex-offenders seeking to integrate themselves into the community or simply trying to remain in their own neighborhood.

Further, by covering every criminal-related activity contained in Title 4, it encompasses a wide range of criminal conduct involving animals. To give just one example, a person with a mental illness who is convicted under a law passed two years ago making it a crime to hoard animals would be stigmatized as an “animal abuser” and required to register as such for 15 years.

Finally, we note that many national organizations involved in animal rights – including the ASPCA and the Humane Society – also oppose animal abuse registries as being ineffective and even counter-productive.

For all these reasons, we urge rejection of H-5113.