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April 29, 2011

Steve McNall, President
State Humane Association of California
c/o Pasadena Humane Society & SPCA
361 South Raymond Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91105-2687
email: steve@phsspc.org

Dear Steve,

I am writing to you to express my concerns with the state of the relationship between some members of the State Humane Association of California and The HSUS. Looking at your Board of Directors and membership ranks, I see the names of so many organizations and people that The HSUS has long collaborated with in shared efforts to prevent animal suffering, advance meaningful reforms, combat illegal cruelty and fighting, elevate the field of animal sheltering, and promote life-saving initiatives for homeless pets. For years we have supported the Association with membership dues, financial support of the Animal Care Conference, and the participation of experts for training and educational events. In addition, we have specific relationships with many of your member organizations, having provided them with financial support, partnered with them on advocacy and training efforts, and collaborated with them in regard to animal placement and law enforcement activities. What's more, one of your board members sits on our companion animal advisory committee. We consider you and all of the Association's members and member organizations our friends and colleagues.

That is why I was troubled to learn about the Association handout (attached) – including your name and that of other Association Board members – that was personally circulated in the State Capitol by the Association's executive director Erica Hughes, the Association's contract lobbyist Karen Lange, and Association board member Madeline Bernstein. The message of that handout – as well as the remarks that accompanied its delivery, as described by someone in the legislature who met with them – was hostile to The HSUS' efforts and clearly offered with the intention of undermining the credibility of our established voice at the Capitol.

While we believe that the effort was not well-received and has done damage to the Association, not The HSUS, we nonetheless are disturbed by the action and its underlying intent. Only one week prior to this, we happily included the Association as a co-sponsor on two important pieces of legislation we'd worked to see introduced, thinking we were adding

An important partner, voice, and asset to the shared effort. We had no idea that we would so soon be on the receiving end of unwarranted criticism from the Association.

This recent development reflected the same posture displayed to me by your executive director last February when I met with her prior to a legislative reception we hosted in the Capitol. This approach is surprising and frankly out-of-step with our sense of the broader relationship we have with Association members across California, including you and others on your board.

We are proud of the advances we have helped to steward for animal protection issues in the California legislature. We believe that this progress conveys a great deal to every California humane organization, and we strive to leverage our relationships in the legislature for the benefit of local agencies whenever and wherever we can. In fact we are co-sponsoring a bill this year at the express request of the San Diego Humane Society and SPCA, which solicited our help in an effort to seek changes to statutory language that has long troubled them. We see this as the perfect example of how The HSUS can be of service and partnership – and where our legislative influence can be an asset to all.

I have instructed every one of our state directors to maintain a focus on establishing, growing and nurturing collaborative relationships with other humane leaders. This is in fact the natural predilection of our California state director, so keeping focused on this goal has not been terribly difficult – in spite of the challenges associated with dealing with the confrontational posture manifested by Erica and Madeline.

It's not helpful for our broader cause to have a few individuals acting on the Association's behalf conducting themselves in this way. We don't believe these actions reflect well on the Association, and where HSUS is concerned, they seem incongruous with our sense of the broader views held of the Association. I do think it's time for corrective action, because the absence of it sends a signal to us that this behavior is not of concern to you. And if there are concerns that the Association board has with regard to HSUS activities in California, we would like to hear, discuss, and sort through them.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter, Steve. I look forward to speaking with you and I will call in you in the next couple of weeks. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact me to discuss. I'm personally committed to working through these issues via productive dialogue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wayne Pacelle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wayne Pacelle
President and CEO



About the State Humane Association of California

The State Humane Association of California (SHAC) was founded over 100 years ago to represent the collective voice of California's humane societies and societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals (SPCAs). Today, SHAC continues its long history of service to California's animal-welfare community through a wide array of activities, including:

- ❖ Publishing the *California Animal Laws Handbook*, a compilation of California statutes and regulations regarding animals that are of interest to humane societies, SPCAs, animal control agencies, attorneys, and legislators.
- ❖ Publishing the *California Pet Shop Law Guide*, a guide for humane officers, animal control officers, and pet shop operators on the state laws that pertain to animals in a retail setting. The *Guide* is published in collaboration with Born Free USA, California Animal Control Directors Association, and SPCA Los Angeles.
- ❖ Collaborating with the California Animal Control Directors Association and the California Veterinary Medical Association to put on the annual California Animal Care Conference, a three-day conference for California's animal-welfare professionals.
- ❖ Providing training for humane officers through the Animal Law Enforcement Training Academy in conjunction with the Marin Humane Society and the San Diego Humane Society & SPCA.
- ❖ Serving as a general resource to member organizations, which include approximately 40 humane societies/SPCAs and 90 animal control agencies throughout California.

There is no other organization in California whose mission is to represent the interests of California's humane societies and SPCAs. Often SHAC collaborates with other organizations on matters of mutual concern; but it is SHAC alone that speaks for California's humane societies and SPCAs.

What are Humane Societies and SPCAs?

Humane societies and SPCAs are:

- ❖ *Individually incorporated 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations that work to eliminate cruelty toward and suffering of animals as well as pet overpopulation.*
- ❖ *Not affiliated with one another or with the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) or the American Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA).*
- ❖ *Distinguishable from animal control agencies, which provide government-operated animal care services and sheltering. However, some municipalities do contract with humane societies and SPCAs to provide sheltering, issue licenses, etc.*
- ❖ *Spread throughout the state, the largest of which has an annual budget of \$10 million.*
- ❖ *Organizations that are tightly woven throughout their respective communities and have an extensive donor base that is both wide and diverse.*

How is SHAC different from HSUS and the ASPCA?

While SHAC's interests often overlap with those of HSUS and ASPCA, they are separate and distinct organizations with different missions.

- ❖ SHAC represents the collective voice of California's humane societies and SPCAs.
- ❖ In contrast, the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) are national organizations headquartered in Washington D.C. and New York, respectively, that advance a national agenda.
- ❖ ASPCA operates one companion-animal shelter in New York City and HSUS does not operate any companion-animal shelters.
- ❖ ASPCA and HSUS are not umbrella, parent, or sister organizations to local humane societies and SPCAs, contrary to the conclusion many reach based on the inclusion of "United States" in HSUS's name and "American" in ASPCA's name.
- ❖ While ASPCA and HSUS may give individual shelters funding from time to time for particular projects, ASPCA and HSUS do not regularly fund California's shelters and are not involved in their management or operations.

Often, the interests of SHAC and its humane societies and SPCAs are coextensive and SHAC endeavors to work HSUS and ASPCA when it promotes the collective good of California's shelters. For example, this year SHAC is co-sponsoring SB 917 (Lieu) with HSUS/ASPCA (and spcaLA) and SB 1117 (Smyth) with HSUS (and the LA County DA and spcaLA).

Only SHAC promotes an agenda that is exclusively based on the needs and interests of California's shelters. From time to time, the interests of SHAC and those of HSUS and ASPCA may not be parallel. Therefore, it is important to look to SHAC as the collective voice of California's humane community.

SHAC is Governed by California's Animal-Welfare Leaders

SHAC has an active Board of Directors that represents the diversity of the state as well as the interests of humane societies large and small. This is a list of the current Board of Directors:

Steven R. McNail
President
Pasadena Humane Society & SPCA

Leilani Vierra
CEO
Placer SPCA

Rick Johnson
Executive Director
The Sacramento SPCA

Lisa Carter
Executive Director
Santa Cruz SPCA & Humane Society

Norm G. Minson
Executive Director
Central California SPCA (Fresno)

Ronna Kadow
Member, Board of Directors
The Mary S. Roberts Pet Adoption Center (Riverside)

Madeline Bernstein
President
SPCA Los Angeles

Joyce George
Member, Board of Directors
Humane Society of Ventura County

Allison Lindquist
Executive Director
East Bay SPCA (Oakland)

Bonnie Lutz, Esq.
Advisor to the SHAC Board
KlinedInt PC

Erica Gaudet Hughes has been the Executive Director of SHAC since 2003. Prior to joining SHAC, Erica practiced law at the international law firm of Reed Smith LLP. Born and raised in Berkeley, California, Erica is a third-generation Californian and a graduate of the University of California, Santa Cruz (B.A.) and the University of California, Hastings College of the Law (J.D.).

For more information, please contact Erica Hughes: ehughes@california.state.humane.org or 510.525.2744 Ext. 1