A 501c3 Non-Profit Animal Welfare Organization

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House of Representatives Local Gov. Committee
N-1193 House Office Building
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909

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Honorable Committee:

As a Michigan resident and Vice President of Voiceless-Michigan, a 501c3 non-profit animal welfare organization, I support SB 354 to require humane euthanasia of our shelter pets.

In addition to animal rescue, we also provide spay/neuter subsidy programs to low income families who otherwise could not afford it. We believe in reducing the homeless pet population through spay/neuter programs. *We also strongly promote the humane treatment of animals*. Webster defines euthanasia as "death in a painless way for reasons of mercy." Death by gassing is a slow, suffocating death and that cannot be considered merciful. Our society is considered to be humane and compassionate and to hear their screams, panic and clawing in the gas chamber during the sometimes 20 minutes it requires, you would agree it is not compassionate, humane or merciful.

EBI (Euthanasia By Injection) is more efficient and more effective. Gas chambers often cannot be used on old, sick or injured animals with circulatory conditions that delay the effects of carbon monoxide. Similarly, very young animals also have physical characteristics that also make a humane death impossible in a gas chamber. It causes the animal significant distress and panic prior to losing consciousness.

EBI has proven to be less expensive. Not only in "per animal" costs but all four of the Michigan shelters still using the gas chamber have an EBI back-up system and/or are trained in EBI procedures. So the cost to convert to EBI is certainly not an issue.

I believe the pertinent question is....why?

- Why have all but 4 counties stopped the use of gas chambers?
- Why have at least 19 other states banned the use of gas chambers?
- Why is gassing opposed by the National Animal Control Association, American Veterinary Medical Association, Association of Shelter Veterinarians and all of the national animal welfare organizations?
- Why are some Michigan counties still using gas chambers when they are more expensive to operate?
- Why are we not living up to our reputation of being a compassionate society?
- Why *wouldn't* you vote to ban gas chambers in Michigan?

Do you believe Michiganders and your constituents want a humane and dignified death for animals? If so, I hope we can count on your vote of YES to ban gas chambers in Michigan. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Beth Contreras
Vice President, Voiceless-MI