



October 31, 2022

Ted Laking, President
Association of Yukon Communities
#140 -2237 2nd Avenue
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 0K7



Dear President Laking,

RE: Bill # 20, Animal Protection and Control Act

Thank you for your October 25, 2022, email expressing your concerns with the new proposed *Animal Protection and Control Act (APCA)*. The Government of Yukon knows that animals are important to Yukoners. We support responsible stewardship of animals, both livestock and pets, that are under Yukoners' care.

The Yukon's current animal protection and control legislation is outdated. This has led to high-profile, possibly preventable deaths of Yukoners, as well as an ongoing concern for public safety from roaming dogs and the need for methods to better control feral animal populations. There have also been demands to ensure that working dogs and horses are cared for throughout their life. The new proposed APCA enables modern animal welfare standards to be adopted and fills the current significant gaps and challenges around the enforceability of animal control and welfare in the Yukon.

The proposed Animal Protection and Control Act will also provide a framework to close the current legislative gaps concerning the ownership of exotic animals, expand our tools to enforce animal control in remote communities and regulate animal businesses and organizations.

The principles captured in the proposed Act reflect the priorities we heard during our engagement with Yukoners – that people and businesses who own animals must be responsible for providing the care they require and respect the safety of people, property and the environment.

We acknowledge the challenges faced by Yukon communities, both incorporated and unincorporated as a result of the pandemic and events outside of anyone's control including flooding, landslides and wildfire. We appreciate the efforts required for communities to recover and thrive, especially in the face of rising inflation. We support the growth of local businesses and the attraction that communities provide for Yukon tourism. We believe that the proposed Act will provide options that will improve local response to issues with animal control and contribute to safer communities. We assure you that we will engage

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with the Association of Yukon Communities as well as with individual local governments to provide input to the legislation.

The details of this legislation will come forward in regulations that are yet to be drafted. This means the Act will not come into force until the regulations are completed and approved. There will be ongoing engagement with stakeholders to work on the details of these regulations. This will include adopting national codes of practice for animal care and welfare and potential partnership to undertake enforcement in communities as well as the options for local response.

We thank you for your interest in contributing to this process and for expressing your concerns. The Chief Veterinary Officer in the Animal Health Unit has reached out to your office to begin these conversations and we look forward to further engagement. We invite you to contact Dr. Mary VanderKop at animalhealth@yukon.ca to follow up.

Sincerely,



Nils Clarke
Minister of Environment

cc: Hon. John Streicker, Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources
Paul McConnell, Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources
Manon Moreau, Deputy Minister of Environment
Dr. Mary Vanderkop, Chief Veterinary Officer, Animal Health Unit
Wade Istchenko, MLA
Emily Tredger, MLA