

**ANIMAL LAW SECTION**  
**Public Policy Position**  
**HB 4669**  
**SB 413 and SB 414**

The Animal Law Section is a voluntary membership section of the State Bar of Michigan, comprised of 262 members. The Animal Law Section is not the State Bar of Michigan and the position expressed herein is that of the Animal Law Section only and not the State Bar of Michigan. To date, the State Bar does not have a position on this item.

The Animal Law Section has a public policy decision-making body with 15 members. On October 30, 2017, the Section adopted its position after discussion an electronic discussion and vote. 9 members voted in favor of the Section's position on HB 4669, SB 413, and SB 414, 0 members voted against this position, 0 members abstained, 6 members did not vote.

**The Animal Law Section Supports HB 4669, SB 413, and SB 414.**

**Explanation:**

The following bill summary was taken from the published bill analysis as reported from committee:

Senate Bill 413 would amend the Michigan Penal Code to do the following:

- Mandate a term of imprisonment for a person who committed a felony related to fighting, baiting, or shooting an animal and had one or more prior convictions for such an offense.
- Specify that a person who failed to comply with an order prohibiting the ownership or possession of an animal would be guilty of a misdemeanor.
- Allow, instead of require, a humane society or other animal welfare agency to apply to a court for a hearing to euthanize a seized animal that has been used or trained to fight.

Senate Bill 414 [and HB 4669] would amend the sentencing guidelines in the Code of Criminal Procedure to include the phrase "first or subsequent offense" in the descriptions of felonies that Senate Bill 413 would modify.

Animal fighting is a serious offense. Decades of social science research have established a significant link between violence against animals with violence against humans, and animal fighting is often associated with other types of crime, including drugs, weapons, gang activity, murder, robbery, etc. Unfortunately, the penalties in current statutes do not go far enough to serve as an effective

deterrent, and these crimes often go unpunished. Strengthening penalties will serve to better protect people and animals.

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