

**TESTIMONY ON BEHALF OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE MARC ELRICH
ON BILL 21-20 - OFFICE OF ANIMAL SERVICES – ESTABLISHED**

May 5, 2020

Good afternoon Council President and Councilmembers, my name is Dale Tibbitts, Special Assistant to the County Executive. It is a pleasure for me to appear before you on behalf of the County Executive in support of Bill 21-20. The Executive's position is as follows:

- Bill 21-20 would remove the Division of Animal Service from the Police Department and transfer those duties to a new non-principal office in the Executive Branch called the Office of Animal Services and make other technical changes.
- The Department of Police, Animal Services Division operates the Montgomery County Animal Services and Adoption Center.
- The center's goals are to provide high-quality sheltering and care to homeless, abused, and neglected animals in Montgomery County and to ensure the safety and welfare of County residents.
- The care and management of animals is the core mission of the Division. However, for obvious reasons, its mission cannot be a top priority of the Police Department.
- Therefore, if it continues to be housed within the Police Department, the Animal Services Division will have no visibility, nor will it be considered a top priority.
- This new approach will increase performance accountability and bring more attention to the core mission of this important function.
- This proposed legislation will create a non-principal office and transfer the Animal Services Division (74 positions) from the Police Department to the newly created Office of Animal Services.
- The entire staff will remain at the existing facility, but their positions will be reassigned to this new office.
- There is no anticipated budgetary impact relating to the action of this bill.