

CITY OF MARGATE, FLORIDA

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF MARGATE, FLORIDA EXPRESSING SUPPORT OF FLORIDA SENATE BILL 494: AN ACT RELATING TO ANIMAL CRUELTY REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT TO POST ON ITS WEBSITE THE NAMES OF CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE VIOLATED SPECIFIED ANIMAL CRUELTY AND SENATE BILL 150: AN ACT RELATING TO ANIMAL CRUELTY DURING A DECLARED STATE OF EMERGENCY PROVIDING INCREASED CRIMINAL PENALTIES FOR ANIMAL CRUELTY OFFENSES COMMITTED DURING A DECLARED STATE OF EMERGENCY; AND FOR PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

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**WHEREAS**, Senate Bill (SB) 494 introduced by Florida State Senator Tom Leek would compel the Department of Law Enforcement to post on its website a searchable format of the names of people convicted of animal cruelty and those who pleaded guilty or no contest to the same; and

**WHEREAS**, Florida Statute defines a person who commits animal cruelty in a couple of different ways. Someone found guilty of animal cruelty as a first-degree misdemeanor is one who unnecessarily overloads, overdrives, torments, deprives of necessary sustenance or shelter, or unnecessarily mutilates, or kills any animal, or causes the same to be done, or carries in or upon any vehicle, or otherwise, any animal in a cruel or inhumane manner. In addition, a person who intentionally commits an act to any animal, or a person who owns or has the custody or control of any animal and fails to act, which results in the cruel death, or excessive or repeated infliction of unnecessary pain or suffering, or causes the same to be done, commits aggravated animal cruelty, a felony of the third degree; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Margate has documented cases of severe animal abuse and neglect; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Commission of the City of Margate declares that the current State of Florida laws related to animal welfare and abuse are lacking and in need of more draconian measures; and

**WHEREAS**, if SB 494 passes and is signed, the law would be effective July 1, 2025, and implementation will be required by Jan. 1, 2026; and

**WHEREAS**, the Senate Criminal Justice Committee approved SB 150 sponsored by Senator Gaetz garnering an 8-0 vote. Senator Gaetz and his colleagues in the Senate referred to the proposal as "Trooper's Law," named after the dog tied to a pole by his owner and his mother, who had stopped their car while evacuating from heavy hurricane rain, leaving Trooper to drown in standing water along Interstate 75 near Tampa before a Florida Highway Patrol trooper saved him; and

**WHEREAS**, SB 150 would increase the penalties for abandoning animals using a restraint during a natural disaster and make doing so a third-degree felony, which could lead to a five-year prison sentence and a fine of up to \$10,000; and

**WHEREAS**, Republican Reps. Philip Griffitts of Panama City and Susan Plasencia of Winter Park filed a companion bill in the House; and

**WHEREAS**, if passed, the bill would take effect July 1, 2025.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MARGATE, FLORIDA:**

**Section 1:** That the foregoing "WHEREAS" clauses are hereby ratified and confirmed as being true and correct and are hereby made a specific part of this Resolution.

**Section 2:** Animal abuse continues to be of primary importance to the Florida Legislature this year after Floridians were shocked last year by the story of a dog that would come to be known as Trooper, who was tied to a pole as Hurricane Milton approached on October 9, 2024, and rescued by a Florida Highway Patrol state trooper.

**SECTION 3:** That SB 494 will require the Department of Law Enforcement to post on its website, in a searchable format the names of those individuals who have been convicted of, or who have entered a plea of guilty, nolo contendere to,

regardless of adjudication, a violation of Section 828.12.

**Section 4:** That SB 150 would increase the penalties for abandoning animals using a restraint during a natural disaster and make doing so a third-degree felony, which could lead to a five-year prison sentence and fine of up to \$10,000.

**Section 5:** The Margate City Commission hereby expresses its unwavering support of the passage of SB 494 and SB 150 and deems this legislation as vital for the future of animal welfare making Florida a tough on animal abuse and neglect

**Section 6:** That the City Clerk is hereby directed to furnish a copy of this Resolution to the sponsors of SB 494 and SB 150, the State of Florida Legislature and to the Office of Governor Desantis.

**SECTION 7:** This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its passage.

PASSED, ADOPTED AND APPROVED THIS \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2025.

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
JENNIFER M. JOHNSON  
CITY CLERK

\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR ARLENE R. SCHWARTZ

RECORD OF VOTE

Ruzzano	_____
Caggiano	_____
Simone	_____
Arserio	_____
Schwartz	_____