



# NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

JONATHAN F. THOMPSON  
Executive Director

February 11, 2015

The Honorable Katherine Clark  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1721 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Clark and Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen:

On behalf of the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) and the more than 3,000 elected sheriffs nationwide, I write to you today in support of legislation you intend to introduce, the *Pet and Women Safety (PAWS) Act*. This bill addresses an often forgotten piece of the discussion surrounding domestic violence issues.

As you know, many domestic violence victims delay leaving a dangerous environment for fear of what may happen to their pets. As many as one-quarter of those who do leave a dangerous environment report returning out of concern for their pets. Your bill would address these concerns by expanding federal domestic violence protections to include pets and establish a federal grant program specifically designed to assist domestic violence victims to shelter their pets. Furthermore, your bill takes the important step of encouraging states to expand their own protections for the pets of domestic violence victims. By establishing these protections and programs, you are acknowledging the important place that pets hold in the lives of domestic violence victims.

In closing, I thank you both for your tireless work on behalf of domestic violence victims. I look forward to working with you to pass the *PAWS Act* and working with you on many other important issues in the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress. If I can be any assistance, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonathan F. Thompson". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Jonathan F. Thompson