



NYSAPF is the voice of New York's Humane Societies, SPCAs, Non-Profit and Municipal Animal Shelters

## Companion Animal Capital Fund Overview

There is an overwhelming need to assist the state's humane societies, SPCAs and nonprofit and municipal animal shelters to maintain and improve their infrastructure through capital projects. We are writing on behalf of the New York State Animal Protection Federation which represents the state's animal shelters.

As private, not for profits, the state's humane societies and Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCAs) do not receive any direct state funding. Yet, they provide an essential service to their local communities. Article 7, Section 114 of Agriculture and Markets Law requires every municipality to operate an animal shelter. For those municipalities that do not have their own shelters, they contract directly with their local humane society, SPCA or nonprofit animal shelter. This saves taxpayers dollars—the contracts cost much less than the municipality staffing and managing an animal shelter of their own.

We propose the creation of the Companion Animal Capital Fund—a new, recurring funding stream that would start at \$5 million. This fund would provide humane societies, SPCAs and nonprofit and municipal shelters with grants for shelter capital projects through a competitive application process. With better facilities more people will come to the states' animal shelters to adopt companion animals. We will also be able to construct more efficient facilities that streamline the cost of operation.

The Companion Animal Capital Fund will enable eligible sheltering organizations to focus their fund raising efforts on those programs that enhance the care of the dogs and cats in their facilities as well as within the community. This initiative will put funding for shelter capital projects where it is needed—with our state's humane societies, SPCAs and nonprofit and municipal shelters. Updated and upgraded facilities will enhance animal care and health, increase humane education and create more companion animal adoptions.

The Federation is currently conducting a statewide survey to assess the capital needs of animal shelters across New York. Preliminary results from fourteen shelters illustrate the needs. Over 20% of the respondents need to replace their present facility many of which are over 40 years old. Over the past five years, three shelters have raised money through capital campaigns to build new buildings while others have only had enough funding to replace roofs or dog runs.

**Based on construction estimates, we know of 15 shelters across New York that are in need of more than \$50,000,000 for capital improvements.** While some of the shelters will be able to raise a portion of this money privately, there is still a tremendous need.

Over 150,000 animals come into our shelters each year. Tens of thousands of New Yorkers adopt companion animals from our local shelters. In 2016, close to 81,000 dogs and cats were adopted from 91 organizations throughout New York that manage their data on PetPoint, a shelter management system used by many of NYS' animal shelters

New Yorkers from Buffalo to Montauk Point treasure their companion animals. We are hoping you will also make a commitment and provide \$5 million in new, recurring funding for the Companion Animal Capital Fund so that we can continue to provide more New Yorkers with the gift of loving dogs and cats and other companion animals.