



P.O. Box 1115 | Albany, NY 12201 | 518/813-9176 | [www.nysapf.org](http://www.nysapf.org)

## **MEMO IN SUPPORT OF S7694/A9877 RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS FOR PEACE OFFICERS SERVING THE MOHAWK HUDSON HUMANE SOCIETY**

The Mohawk Hudson Humane Society (MHHS) is chartered as the society for the prevention of animal cruelty (SPCA) for both Albany and Rensselaer Counties and now has a solid presence in Saratoga County yet its peace officers, the folks who work alongside law enforcement to prevent animal cruelty, have to live in Albany County because that's where the shelter is physically located and registered.

The Federation supports this bill which would ease the residency requirement for MHHS peace officers by amending Section 3-B of the Public Officers Law to include counties adjacent to Albany County.

According to NYS Criminal Procedure Law, SPCA Peace Officers have the power to legally intervene in situations of animal cruelty. However, except for Nassau, Suffolk, and Allegany counties, SPCA Peace Officers can only serve in the county in which the shelter is located. Due to these restrictive residency requirements, these organizations are finding it more and more difficult to find qualified SPCA Peace Officers.

There are approximately 30 designated SCPAs in New York, including Mohawk Hudson Humane Society (MHHS) which serves Albany and Rensselaer Counties. In 2015, MHHS seized and then housed over 110 animals from animal cruelty investigations. MHHS would like to expand their work. However, the residency restriction makes it difficult for MHHS to appoint new and qualified Peace Officers.

Currently, Section 3-B of the Public Officers Law provides exceptions to this restriction for the SPCAs in Nassau, Suffolk and Allegany counties. In Nassau and Suffolk counties, residents of either county can be appointed to be SPCA Peace Officers. Additionally, the Allegany County SPCA is allowed to recruit and appoint Peace Officers from adjacent counties. This allows Nassau, Suffolk, and Allegany SPCAs to expand their force and rescue more animals from cruelty.