



*The advocacy voice of New York's humane societies, SPCAs, nonprofit and municipal animal shelters.*

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## **\$5M COMPANION ANIMAL CAPITAL FUND BACK IN STATE BUDGET**

Among the casualties in the FY20-21 pandemic-driven State Budget was the \$5M Companion Animal Capital Fund. For three years, the Fund assisted animal shelters across New York State with capital projects. Recognizing its importance, the state legislature restored the funding for the FY21-22 budget.

Assemblywoman Deborah Glick (D-Manhattan) and State Senator Joseph Addabbo (D-Queens) championed the fund in each of their houses by circulating budget letters that their colleagues signed on to. The Assembly letter had twice as many signatures—from 15 to 30—and the Senate letter went from three to 13. The Fund was also a priority for State Senator Michelle Hinchey and Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo, the chairs of the Agriculture Committees in their respective houses.

Each year the New York State Animal Protection Federation, the statewide organization that represents all of New York's animal shelters, conducts a capital needs survey. The 2021 survey showed 26 shelters with capital needs of \$56.7M. Since its inception in FY 17-18, the state has invested \$15M in shelter projects. These awards have helped jumpstart capital fundraising campaigns as well. In fact, when Susquehanna SPCA received word of its \$500,000 grant during the first cycle, the community responded almost 10 fold by helping to raise just over \$5M for their new building which will open in May 2021.

“I want to thank Assemblymembers Glick and Lupardo and Senators Addabbo and Hinchey for their steadfast commitment to New York's network of animal shelters,” said Libby Post, the Executive Director of the New York State Animal Protection Federation. “Their support will continue to change the future for New York's animal shelters and the homeless animals they serve. Every animal in our shelters deserves a good roof over their head, a warm place to sleep and nutritious food while they wait for their forever home.”

“I have been honored to once again champion and support The Companion Animal Capital Fund,” said Assemblymember Deborah Glick, who has championed the fund since its inception. “It provides critical resources to humane societies & shelters throughout New York. These organizations, working with localities and an army of volunteers, provide care to thousands of animals and secure forever homes for countless deserving animals.”

“When working on legislation or budgetary items, few issues are more important than caring for those without a voice,” said Senator Joseph Addabbo, the Fund's Senate champion. “It is essential for us to care for our animals and make sure the state's animal shelters have the capital funding they need to make crucial improvements. It's

all about enhancing the life of homeless animals while they wait to be adopted. The Companion Animal Capital Fund has proven to make a real difference in the lives of the thousands of animals living in our shelters, as well as those who ultimately house them. This year's funding will also level the funding playing field for shelters without municipal contracts."

State Agriculture and Markets law mandates that municipalities provide animal sheltering services. Some municipalities have their own shelters while many contract with local humane societies, SPCAs or nonprofit shelters to provide service for their communities. The Fund's original language primarily focused on municipal shelters or shelters with municipal contracts. This year's budget language expands eligibility to shelters that do not have municipal contracts.

"The Companion Animal Capital Fund is critically important to helping shelters increase capacity and upgrade facilities and equipment," said Assemblymember Donna Lupardo, Chair of the Assembly Agriculture Committee. "We were committed to making sure the fund was included in this year's state budget. The resources provided will improve the quality of life for animals waiting for their new forever homes, and help shelters provide more efficient services."

"Our local animal shelters play a critical role in our communities, facilitating adoptions that bring joy to families, providing a safe haven for defenseless animals, and delivering educational and volunteer opportunities for residents of all ages," said Senator Michelle Hinchey, Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee. "The Companion Animal Capital Fund has been instrumental in helping New York's shelters implement critical improvement projects so that more animals can be rescued and go on to find their forever homes. I'm proud to have joined my colleagues in successfully advocating for \$5 million in this year's state budget for this important initiative which will go a long way to ensuring the safety of vulnerable animals across New York State."

Since 2018 when the first grants were awarded, 38 shelters across the state received funding (<http://nysapf.org/companion-animal-capital-fund/>).

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Formed in 2011, the New York State Animal Protection Federation has over 70 members across the state from Buffalo to the East End of Long Island, from Plattsburgh to Jamestown. The Federation represents New York's shelters at the state legislature, Executive Chamber and the Department of Agriculture and Markets and advocates for shelters and their programs at the local level.

[www.nysapf.org](http://www.nysapf.org) and [www.nysapfedfund.org](http://www.nysapfedfund.org).