

To whom it may concern,

As a local veterinarian in Bismarck, North Dakota, I see firsthand deleterious consequences of intact domestic animals in the region. In veterinary medicine, spaying and neutering lays at the top of our priorities as an ethical issue. A lack of these services causes a cascade effect with deep and never expanding roots but can be mitigated with neuter resources and education in communities. As a veterinarian and community member, spay and neuter programs should be taken as a focus due to the consequences of inaction and it is a key for preventable illnesses like deadly uterine infections, cancers, urinary complications, skin parasites, and so forth.

The over-population issues are noticeable in North Dakota. This leads to overtly poor quality of life situations for countless animals. The harsh weather conditions in this state make it even harder to chew if you were to put yourself in those animal's shoes.

I work collaboratively with local rescues in the state, I witness how they are overwhelmed with animals in need, as are the shelters. These groups have been doing a wonderful job working together to meet their goals, but it is apparent they are swimming in a fast current at the moment. There is essentially not a single day that goes by that I do not work with a local rescue at my job. They, without question, make up a large share of our appointments. These rescues not only bring animals in for spays and neuters, as well as regular wellness care, but many times it is to have animals seen on emergency basis. Quite often these emergency cases are severe but preventable issues.

Spay and neuter education and incentives would prove to be invaluable. There would no doubt be a return on money invested via lower intensive resources needed to fix the issues instead of if the can was just kicked down the road further. With this the lives of North Dakota's animals and citizens alike will improve.

I am writing this letter to show my support on the initiative for Spay and Neuter Awareness Grant Program as it will bolster the lives of many animals in need and the quality of live they with gain.

With thanks,

Andrew Bettenhausen, DVM