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Dogs and cats shouldn't be discarded after research

SB 638: Requires laboratories to put research dogs and cats up for adoption

SALEM – When a dog or cat is no longer needed for laboratory research purposes and is still healthy, it should have a chance for a happy life.

That's the intent behind [Senate Bill 638](#) – which passed by a 25-0 vote today on the floor of the Oregon State Senate. The bill requires research facilities to offer dogs and cats that were used in laboratory research through a private adoption process or animal shelter.

The concept was brought to Sen. Elizabeth Steiner Hayward (D-Beaverton), who sponsored and carried the legislation on the Senate floor, by a group of fifth-graders last May. The students had been learning about animal rights and that beagles often are used to test skin care products and cosmetics. Once the research concludes, they are euthanized. The bill covers all dogs and cats that are fit and healthy enough for adoption.

“These dogs and cats can live healthy lives for the remainder of their days,” Steiner Hayward said. “Often times they are used for testing for just a year or two and they are euthanized, even though they are still healthy. They can be adopted through internal placement or through a rescue organization. These animals should have a chance to live a normal, healthy life with a loving family. This bill will give those animals that chance.”

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, about 8,000 mammals were used for scientific research in Oregon in 2017, including several dozen dogs and cats. Several research

facilities in Oregon use animals, including Oregon Health and Science University, Oregon State University and the University of Oregon. The three universities support the bill.

“These cats and dogs still have the capacity to be companions and we have the skills to match the right people with these special animals,” Oregon Humane Society President Sharon Harmon said. “This bill would open the door to partnerships that could save thousands of lives and enrich the lives of those who take them in.”

Senate Bill 638 now goes to the House of Representatives for consideration.

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