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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Charlottesville-Albemarle SPCA Joins Virginia Animal Shelters and Rescue Groups in Seeking Animal Cruelty List**

**CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA (December 28, 2023)** — Delegate Ellen Campbell, District 36, is sponsoring a BILL that will establish an Animal Cruelty List in Virginia. The Rockbridge SPCA, along with BILL liaison and volunteer Mona Hazera, have been coordinating with Delegate Campbell on this much-needed animal advocacy effort.

The Registry will contain the names of those who are convicted of felony animal cruelty in Virginia. Tara Rodi, Executive Director of the Rockbridge SPCA, says “It will be very beneficial to animal organizations who do pet adoptions. Right now, we keep our own list and call other shelters to inquire about their list. Having a statewide list will help shelters and rescue groups keep animals safe by being able to check the list for those convicted of animal cruelty.”

“We are honored to extend support to our partners in animal welfare. This is an incredible step in making Virginia a safer place for animals in our communities. We are incredibly grateful to Delegate Campbell and Rockbridge SPCA for their efforts to bring this bill to the legislature. We encourage all community members to write to their legislators in support of this Bill,” says Libby Jones, Executive Director of the Charlottesville-Albemarle SPCA.

Delegate Campbell is working on legislation to create the list and is planning to introduce it during the 2024 legislative session in Richmond and will seek bipartisan support.

Mona Hazera adds, “Virginia ranks in the top tier of states for animal abuse and Veterinarians.org rank Virginia number 5 on data collected 2012-2021 (ref: <https://www.veterinarians.org/animal-abuse-statistics/>) and the Animal Legal Defense Fund ranked Virginia number 15 in 2022. Further, the FBI’s Behavioral Analysis Unit identifies a direct link between animal cruelty and human violence. The FBI started collecting data on animal cruelty crimes and added it to the Nation Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS)”.

Animal advocates in Virginia are encouraged to contact your Delegate and Senator to support the Animal Cruelty List or contact the Rockbridge SPCA by visiting their website:

[www.rockbridgespca.net](http://www.rockbridgespca.net) to sign up and support this BILL or for more information.

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***About the Charlottesville-Albemarle SPCA:*** *The Charlottesville-Albemarle SPCA is proud to have maintained the City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County as life-saving communities for thousands of animals in the region.*

*The mission of the SPCA is to advance the compassionate treatment of animals by providing sheltering, medical care and behavioral services for dogs and cats; promoting permanent, caring homes; and furthering education and outreach to place healthy animals in caring homes.*