

April 14, 2026

Brandon Feusner
Butterfly Valley Rescue &
Sanctuary
Louisville, Kentucky

Public Safety Committee
Louisville Metro Council
601 West Jefferson Street
Louisville, Kentucky 40202

Dear Members of the Public Safety Committee,

My name is Brandon Feusner, and my family and I operate Butterfly Valley Rescue & Sanctuary here in Louisville. We are a small, neighborhood-based microsanctuary that provides a home to animals in need, especially those with special needs, disabilities, and nowhere else to go. These animals are not numbers on a page or categories in a code book to us. They are lives that we have committed ourselves to protecting. They are part of our family, and they are part of this city too.

That is why the unintended changes made through Ordinance 178 have been so troubling.

Like many others in the community, we understood Ordinance 178 to be what it was publicly presented as: a dog and cat microchipping ordinance. Only later did families, rescues, and responsible animal owners begin to realize that it had also changed the rules for goats, sheep, ponies, and miniature horses. For those of us directly affected, this was not some small technical cleanup. It created real fear, real confusion, and real instability for animals who were already safe, already cared for, and already home.

Through the records that have since been produced, it has become clear that there was no species-specific data showing a livestock-related enforcement problem that justified these restrictions. It has also become clear that guidance related to livestock enforcement followed enforcement rather than preceding it. In plain terms, families and animals were forced to bear the consequences of a change before there was even clear direction on how it was meant to work.

That should concern all of us.

Not because anyone is trying to do harm, but because when policy moves faster than clarity, it is always the most vulnerable who pay the price first. In this case, that includes the animals who call Louisville home and the people who have opened their homes, hearts, time, and resources to care for them responsibly.

And this truly reaches all corners of Louisville. From our backyard sanctuary in Valley Station, to goats in Shively used to teach backyard farming and sustainability, to goats in the Clifton neighborhood used for fiber and deeply loved by their neighbors, to responsible goat owners in Highview and many other communities, and not to forget a very loved mini horse in the Merriwether neighborhood who started this entire conversation. This issue has touched far more than one family or one property. It has affected people and animals across our city.

That is why this amendment matters so much.

O-074-26 is a thoughtful and necessary correction. It restores a fair and workable standard while preserving the protections already in Chapter 91 for animal welfare, nuisance enforcement, and public safety. It recognizes something that should have guided this issue from the beginning: animal well-being is tied to actual care, actual conditions, and actual responsibility, not arbitrary acreage thresholds. The ordinance's own findings reflect that standards of care, nuisance enforcement, and health regulations are more directly tied to animal well-being than one-size-fits-all land requirements.

For my family, this is personal. We have built our lives around giving vulnerable animals a chance when no one else would. We know what it means to fight for lives that others might dismiss. We are not asking for special treatment. We are asking for fairness, clarity, and a return to language that allows responsible residents, rescues, and caregivers to continue doing the right thing without being blindsided by a change that was never clearly explained or supported.

I want to sincerely thank the committee for considering this amendment. That willingness to revisit a mistake and make it right means a great deal, not just to families like mine, but to all of the animals affected by this ordinance who depend on people in this city to speak up for them.

I respectfully urge the committee to vote yes on O-074-26 and help Louisville move forward with compassion, clarity, and common sense.

Thank you for your time, your service, and your consideration.

Sincerely,
Brandon Feusner