



April 26, 2019

To our amazing supporters and advocates:

We wanted to give you an update on AB 366, The California Pet Blood Bank Modernization Act aka “Lennon’s Law” authored by Assemblymember Richard Bloom.

The premise of AB 366 is to modernize the canine blood banking industry by allowing volunteer canine blood banks while phasing out closed-colony blood banking like that practiced by the companies Hemopet and ABRI. These two entities keep hundreds of dogs confined in cages for months and years on end, drawing their blood routinely to sell to California veterinarians, who under current law are not permitted to buy from anyone else. California is the only state with such restrictions.

After hearing the concerns of the California Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA), we were working to ensure that AB 366’s closed colony phase-out would not jeopardize the availability or safety of blood critically needed by dogs during emergencies. We crafted a “trigger” mechanism that would only require Hemopet and ABRI to transition to community sourcing once the market for more humane blood sources had become established enough to ensure no shortage.

Meanwhile, more than 30 animal protection organizations signed on in support of AB 366, eight legislators agreed to coauthor the bill, and nearly 80 California veterinarians wrote in support agreeing that they had “the necessary experience, education, skill and motivation to modernize this industry in ways that are practical, safe and humane.” We brought greyhound racing industry and blood bank survivors Skipper and Lennon to the Capitol, where their stories warmed the hearts of all who met them. We generated numerous news stories sympathetic to the colony dogs’ plight and questioning the need to keep them captive for this purpose.

But, one month after AB 366 was introduced, a group called Social Compassion in Legislation (SCIL) -- hired by Peta -- spurred state senator Scott Wilk to introduce Senate Bill 202 which does not propose any end *ever* to the imprisonment of animals who are exploited for their blood and held in captivity at closed-colony blood banks.

We are at a loss to explain why Peta – which released an exposé last fall about its investigative findings at Hemopet – would agree to sign on to a bill that doesn’t get any justice for those dogs, and that also undermined the prospects for AB 366 to do so.

With SB 202's more limited ambitions, lobbying by the colony blood banks and the CVMA starved AB 366 from key votes we need in the Assembly Agriculture committee in order to advance. We agree with Assemblymember Bloom's decision to hold AB 366 rather than agree to drop provisions of the bill related to phasing out the archaic and cruel institutionalization of dogs to produce blood.

And so, AB 366 has stalled for now and SB 202 is advancing. But because SB 202 fails the very dogs we got into this effort to protect, Beagle Freedom Project does not support it. We intend to amend AB 366 in the coming weeks to reflect the efforts we had been diligently making to ensure a thoughtful transition so that if an opportunity arises to advance it, we will be ready.

We will keep you posted as the legislative session progresses and urge you to stand with us – and Lennon, Skipper, and the hundreds of other dogs locked away waiting for us to end their suffering.

Yours In Freedom,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shannon Keith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent than the last.

Shannon Keith
Attorney at Law
President & Founder, Beagle Freedom Project