To Whom It May Concern,

I am the Shelter Medicine and Intake Manager at the Humane Society for Greater Savannah. I have been managing the intake program at the shelter since October 2019, but we have been working as transfer partners with Liberty County for much longer. In 2019, we transferred approximately 164 dogs and cats, and 66 dogs and cats so far in 2020. These numbers are not exact, as they also include Long County and Jesup, but the overwhelming majority are from Liberty County (they are sometimes transferred in together because transports from the other facilities are combined).

We have been working with Rebecca Needham and the Underground Tailroad to coordinate these transfers. The only reason we do so is because she is able to coordinate a list of animals in need, send photos and medical/temperament information, and have dog tests done at the facility. It is a requirement for us that the dogs are tested with other dogs before we can transfer them. This is a tremendous amount of effort on her behalf and the volunteers who assist her with transporting them to us. Sometimes we need more lead time as we wait for space to open up (space that we know we will have on a given date) or to coordinate transport, or to wait for dog tests to be completed. We rarely back out out of our committment unless there are unforseen circumstances like the COVID shutdown when we closed our shelter for 2 months (mid March to mid May).

The Humane Society for Greater Savannah is committed to saving lives by transferring animals in need. Our shelter has more foot traffic, higher adoption numbers, medical programs, spay neuter, behavior and training programs, and foster programs to support the animals we transfer in. We are able to do this because we make space in our schedule to assist other community shelters in our area, in addition to the owner surrenders that we intake 5 days a week.

The new euthanasia policy will severely limit our ability to assist. Because transferring animals from Liberty County requires some effort and time, we are only able to transfer animals when we 1) have the space available and 2) the dogs have been dog tested, photographed, and given a brief "look over" for any major health concerns. After this happens, we schedule a transport through Rebecca Needham. These current timelines will not allow for this happen and therefore we will be unable to assist in saving lives in Liberty County.

I would like to bring to your attention a couple examples from Liberty County Animal Control that would have been adversely affected by this policy, had it existed prior:

Elsa- she was considered possibly "aggressive" to people because of her kennel presence. However, once dog tested, she showed no aggression or reactivity. She was placed on hold while the video of the dog test was emailed to me and then we transferred her. We had zero issues with behavior, and she was adopted in 6 days!

Trenton- based on the photos sent alone, we decided to transfer him in. Once he arrived, we immediately felt he was familiar and sure enough, he had been adopted from HSGS and picked up as a stray in Liberty County. **He was chipped but never scanned at Liberty County and would have been euthanized had we not agreed to take him by chance.**

Ellie- Ellie and her partner Chino were placed on hold before the COVID shutdown. Liberty was ok with holding them because there was plenty of space, and once we reopened, we took them immediately. I ended up adopting Ellie myself, who needed eye surgery, and had Liberty not been understanding and willing to hold these two highly adoptable dogs, both she and Chino would have been euthanized.

There are many, many more stories like this. We would love to continue our relationship with Liberty County through the Underground Tailroad but will need the timelines to be reasonable so that we can do our due diligence and make the arrangements necessary to make the transports happen.

We hope you will understand how life saving is a collaborative effort and that adding further restrictions to a program that is already working very well will reverse that course.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

Respectfully,

**Rachel Bryan**

Shelter Medicine & Intake Manager

Humane Society for Greater Savannah