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საქართველოს ცხოველთა დაცვისა და გადარჩენის საზოგადოება Georgian Society for the Protection and Safety of Animals

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Addressees:

Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Committee - Parliament of Georgia

Copies:

- 1. Legal Issues Committee - Parliament of Georgia,***
- 2. Regional Policy and Self - Government Committee - Parliament of Georgia,***
- 3. Budget and Finance Committee - Parliament of Georgia.***

Opinion of “Georgian Society for the Protection and Safety of Animals” – GSPSA, on Georgian draft legislation programme regarding the “Welfare of Domestic Animals”:

“Georgian Society for the Protection and Safety of Animals” has carefully studied a draft legislation document for “Welfare of Domestic Animals” (Initiators of Draft Legislation Programme: members of the Parliament of Georgia: Kakhaber Kutchava, Zaza Khutsishvili, Otar Danelia, Endzela Matchavriani, Giorgi Gatchetchiladze, Koba Lursmanashvili, Sulkhan Makhatadze, Gogi Meshveliani, Levan Koberidze, Giorgi Khatidze. Authors: non-governmental organizations working for animal welfare: “Animal Rights Committee”, Animal Protection Organization “Humanimal”, “Center for Social Programs and Development”, “Advocacy Center for Safeguarding Animal Rights”, non-profit legal entity “Animals Friends”, non-profit legal entity “Animal World”, “Organization for Protection of Animals, Their Rights and Rehabilitation, Georgia”, non-profit legal entity “Georgian Federation for the Protection of Animals”, “Association for Animal Protection and Nature Reserve - Nara”, “Vegan Georgia”, “Georgian Society for Animal Protection”, non-profit legal entity “Association for Dog Rescue and Safety”, “Organization for the Protection of Homeless Dogs” and Tbilisi Zoo Monitoring group.

After careful study of the Draft Legislation Document/Programme for the welfare of domestic animals in Georgia, “Georgian Society for the Protection and Safety of Animals” has the following notes and recommendations:

To begin with, the regulations, stated in the above-mentioned draft legislation programme for domestic animals’ welfare, cannot safeguard animal rights protection and does not guarantee their safety, thus important changes to the legislation document are required.

It must be noted that the document does not respond to core issues regarding the animal rights protection. Moreover, the main principles for animal protection and safety are completely ignored. the above-mentioned programme does not state any governmental institution or agency that would have enough competence and would take responsibility for domestication and animal breeding. Furthermore, there is nothing mentioned regarding the issuing official permits for potential animal owner, confiscation of animals from their owners, regulations regarding the lost and found pets, the rules for elimination of animal shelters and etc. Some articles in the draft legislation document requires additional explanatory notes and fundamental changes. The main goal of the legislation is also ambiguous. To be more precise, the above-mentioned regulations would deteriorate animal protection environment in the country, that is already devastating.

We strongly believe, that if the draft legislation programme does not changes with the proper guidance and recommendations from experts and professionals on the field, we will have a completely uncontrolled situation with

regards to stray animal population management (significant problems are already present in managing both domestic and wild animal populations in Georgia), which will cause increased number of diseases among animals and other undesirable consequences, including animal cruelty. It is also obvious, that if the legislation comes into force without amendments and proper changes, government will most likely spend a lot of tax money from the budget, but It will be improper, fruitless and wasteful expenditure.

Another important issue in the draft document is the absence of appropriate central government agency (ministry) that would have enough competence and would take responsibility for animal rights protection and safety, which means that local municipalities remain to be responsible for fulfilment of animal welfare legislation. And as practice shows, local municipalities spend almost zero attention to animal well-being.

Taking all the above-mentioned into consideration, the draft legislation programme requires fundamental changes and involvement of proper non-government organizations, government agencies (such as Ministry of Environmental Protection of Georgia), professionals and experts who work for animal protection.

To sum up, “Georgian Society for the Protection and Safety of Animals” gives negative evaluation of the draft document and recommends further discussions and meetings around the issue. Otherwise, as stated above, we believe that situation regarding animal welfare in Georgia will deteriorate.

Finally, worth mentioning that the draft legislation document contradicts with international conventions or other acts safeguarding animal rights and several articles are also unconstitutional. Therefore, the document violates several international conventions on animal welfare and domestic human rights protection legislation as well.

Conclusion: The draft legislation document on “Welfare of Domestic Animals” is completely unacceptable!

“Georgian Society for the Protection and Safety of Animals” is ready for further recommendation meetings and discussions around the topic, with the involvement of other non-governmental and governmental organizations and experts from the field to make proper fundamental changes in the document.

In addition to this paper, please find further explanatory notes and recommendations from “Georgian Society for the Protection and Safety of Animals” regarding the “Welfare of Domestic Animals” draft legislation programme:

Attachments:

1. Attachment N1 – Provisions (critical and explanatory notes) for “Welfare of Domestic Animals” draft legislation program;
2. Attachment N2 – Further notes and recommendations for “Welfare of Domestic Animals” draft legislation program.

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“Georgian Society for the Protection and Safety of Animals”

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