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September 13, 2007

Lynne Abraham  
Philadelphia District Attorney  
Three South Penn Square  
Philadelphia, PA 19107

VIA FACSIMILE: 215-563-0047

Dear Ms. Abraham:

On behalf of The Humane Society of the United States (The HSUS) and our more than 562,000 members and supporters in Pennsylvania, I am writing to you regarding a case of alleged animal cruelty involving Roger Hill of Kensington. Considering the callous and extensive nature of the alleged cruelty, I urge you to aggressively prosecute this case and to seek, upon conviction, meaningful sentencing conditions that include significant jail time, mandatory psychological counseling and a permanent ban on contact with animals.

According to news reports, Hill was arrested and jailed after admitting to trapping and killing neighborhood cats. When confronted by a neighbor, Hill reportedly said that he did so because he there were too many cats around and that did not want them in his yard. The Pennsylvania SPCA later questioned Hill and said that he showed "no remorse whatsoever" for killing the cats.

This case is disconcerting to us not only for the suffering of untold numbers of cats, but also because of the apparently callous nature of Hill's alleged killings. It is well known that people who inflict violence upon animals—especially with such a callous attitude—are far more likely than others to commit similar violence against people. Experts in abuse crimes recognize that it is the nature of the abuse-- not the identity of the victim- that is most important in crimes of violence.

We are also concerned about this case because in our experience, cases are not always taken as seriously by the justice system when the animals killed are not definitively proven to be house pets. In Hill's case, it may be unclear as to whether or not any of the cats he trapped and killed were owned by residents of the neighborhood, although many neighbors claimed to have considered many of the cats to be "pets." Regardless of whether or not all of the cats allegedly tortured and killed by Hill were pets, the consequences for Hill's alleged cruelty toward them should be the same. The suffering and terror of a cat who is trapped and strangled to death with no means of escape is tremendous and demands accountability, whether or not that animal is someone's pet.

Because of this, I encourage your office to take the charges against Hunt seriously. It is imperative for the sake of community safety that he receives the intervention necessary—including

**Promoting the protection of all animals**

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mandatory psychological counseling and a prohibition on keeping or coming in contact with animals—to ensure that he does not continue his abusive behavior against animals, and potentially people.

Additionally, we urge your office to seek, upon conviction, meaningful jail time as a punitive measure and to send a message to both Hill and to the community at large that animal cruelty is a violent crime that will not be accepted in Philadelphia.

The HSUS has decades of experience in assisting with the prosecution of animal cruelty cases, and we would like to offer our assistance in this case, as well, if you should feel it would be helpful. Should you need expert testimony or written statements regarding the implications of animal cruelty, for example, please feel free to contact me at 757-469-2896 or [dbartlett@humanesociety.org](mailto:dbartlett@humanesociety.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dale Bartlett", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dale Bartlett  
Deputy Manager, Animal Cruelty Campaign