NEVADA ANIMAL ADVOCATES
NevadaAnimalAdvocates.org
Stronger Together. For Them. For Justice.

November 20, 2026

Via Certified Mail [redacted]

The Honorable Aaron D. Ford
Governor-elect of Nevada
Office of the Attorney General
100 North Carson Street
Carson City, NV 89701-4717

RE: Formal Request for Independent Review of Animal Cruelty Prosecution Practices and Unanswered Government Complaints

Dear Governor-elect Ford:

I write as the founder of Nevada Animal Advocates, a Nevada-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening animal protection laws, promoting accountability, and advocating for the enforcement of criminal animal cruelty statutes throughout our state.

I was directly involved in advocating for the passage of Assembly Bill 381, commonly known as Reba's Law, which became effective June 9, 2025. This legislation was intended to strengthen Nevada's response to serious acts of animal cruelty. However, passing stronger laws is only meaningful when those laws are properly evaluated and enforced.

Formal Complaints Submitted in June 2026

In June 2026, I submitted formal written complaints concerning the Clark County District Attorney's Office to both the **Nevada Attorney General's Office** (Certified Mail #[redacted]) and the **State Bar of Nevada** (Certified Mail #[redacted]).

These complaints were transmitted by certified mail and were verified received in each office. As of November 18, 2026, approximately five months later, I have received no substantive response from either organization concerning the disposition of my complaints.

Since you were and still are, as of today's date, the Attorney General of Nevada and failed to provide a substantive response, this is extremely troubling. As you are the Governor-elect, this means your office will have received this request two times now.

I recognize that these agencies have different jurisdictions, responsibilities, and procedures. Nevertheless, the continued absence of meaningful communication raises legitimate concerns regarding transparency, accountability, and the ability of Nevada residents to obtain information about complaints submitted to public institutions.

Request for Independent Review

I respectfully request that your incoming administration consider the following actions, within the authority granted by Nevada law:

1. Request an independent assessment of how serious animal cruelty cases are reviewed, charged, declined, negotiated, and prosecuted in Clark County.
2. Seek available information regarding the implementation and application of Reba's Law, including the circumstances in which its enhanced penalties have been considered.
3. Request appropriate clarification from the Attorney General's Office regarding the receipt, processing, and disposition of my June 2026 complaint.
4. Encourage greater transparency in the reporting of animal cruelty charging decisions, dismissals, plea agreements, and convictions, subject to applicable confidentiality laws.
5. Arrange a meeting with representatives of Nevada Animal Advocates to discuss potential administrative and legislative measures to strengthen accountability.

I am not asking the Governor's Office to interfere with an individual criminal prosecution, dictate charging decisions, or prejudge allegations against any public official. I am requesting an objective examination of whether Nevada's animal protection laws are being administered consistently and whether the public has adequate mechanisms to obtain accountability.

Available Judicial Remedies Under Nevada Law

Because my prior complaints have remained unanswered, I am also reviewing remedies available through Nevada's courts.

1. Writ of Mandamus — NRS 34.160 and NRS 34.170

Nevada law authorizes district courts, under appropriate circumstances, to issue writs of mandamus compelling a public officer or entity to perform an act that the law specifically requires. I recognize that mandamus generally cannot be used to dictate the outcome of a discretionary investigation or prosecution. However, where a legally enforceable, nondiscretionary duty exists, judicial relief may be available, and I am prepared to seek these remedies if need be.

2. Nevada Public Records Act — NRS 239.011

Nevada law provides a judicial remedy when access to public records has been unlawfully denied. Where applicable, I may seek records documenting the receipt, processing, referral, or disposition of my complaints and pursue relief in district court if a lawful records request is improperly denied. I understand that statutory confidentiality provisions may restrict disclosure of certain investigative or disciplinary materials.

3. Judicial Review of Specific Agency Duties

I am also evaluating whether any agency has failed to perform a specific duty imposed by statute or regulation, and whether that failure could support an appropriate judicial proceeding. I would prefer to resolve these matters through communication and administrative accountability rather than litigation.

Since the original filing of this complaint, several animal cruelty cases that should have been charged under Reba's Law but were not include; but not limited to:

Guadalupe Camarillo Guarneros, 62, drug his horse, Pinto, by the neck behind a pickup truck through the scorching Las Vegas heat. Despite the horse visibly resisting, Guarneros continued driving until Pinto collapsed and died. He then abandoned the horse's body along a residential street in east Las Vegas. Originally arrested on felony animal cruelty charges, Guarneros later pleaded guilty to four gross misdemeanor conspiracy charges under a plea agreement. Prosecutors agreed to seek no more than six months in jail, with the original felony charge to be dismissed at sentencing.

Michael Gordon Martenies — Taco the bulldog
Incident: July 8 · Arrest: August 13
Taco died from heatstroke after being transported in a dog-training van with a nonfunctioning rear air-conditioning system.

Charges: One felony count of willfully or maliciously torturing an animal causing death.
Current status: Posted $5,000 bond.

Eric Lee Ward — Lana the husky
Police alleged Ward left Lana inside an SUV for more than three hours in temperatures reaching 111°F. Lana died of heatstroke.

Charges: Felony animal cruelty resulting in death.
Current status: Released on $5,000 bond.

Beion Crespo Rimando — Nabi the kitten

Incident reported: October 9 · Arrest: November 5
Rimando threw five-month-old Nabi against a wall, causing catastrophic spinal injuries. Nabi was euthanized.

Charges: Felony willful or malicious animal torture or maiming resulting in death.
Current status: Released on $5,000 bail. Preliminary hearing scheduled for January 25, 2027.

South Point Equestrian Center — Three horses stabbed
A 17-year-old girl was accused of stabbing three competition horses during a barrel-racing event.

Charges reported: Twelve animal cruelty counts and three felony property destruction counts.
Current status: Found competent to stand trial. As of October 28, the case had not been transferred to adult court. Next

Juliane Lee — Dog and cat neglect
Police reportedly found a dog and cat severely undernourished and confined in a filthy apartment closet without food or water. The cat was subsequently euthanized.

Charges: Two counts of willfully or maliciously torturing, maiming, or mutilating an animal.
Current status: In custody when reported July 15, with a July 27 court hearing scheduled. No verified subsequent disposition.

Beau the retriever — Suspected animal cruelty
Beau was discovered abandoned in a vacant Las Vegas home with extensive injuries, including exposed bone and serious tissue damage.

Current status: Animal Protection Services was investigating as of today. No confirmed arrest, named defendant, or filed criminal charge in the reporting reviewed.

These are just a few cases after a brief search. You can clearly see that there is no shortage of animal cruelty in our community. There horrific cases will continue to happen until we have a District Attorney who holds these offenders accountable and stop giving plea deals to everyone.

Request for Written Acknowledgment and Response

I respectfully request written acknowledgment of this correspondence **within 15 business days** of receipt and a substantive response, or an explanation of the appropriate referral or review process, within 30 calendar days. These are requested response periods, not an assertion that Nevada law imposes those deadlines on your office. If your incoming administration lacks authority over any particular matter, I request identification of the appropriate agency or official to whom the concern should be directed.

Nevada's residents deserve confidence that laws enacted to protect vulnerable animals are receiving meaningful consideration and that legitimate complaints concerning their enforcement are handled through transparent and lawful procedures.

Nevada Animal Advocates stands ready to provide supporting documentation, certified-mail receipts, copies of the original complaints, legislative materials, and specific case information for independent evaluation.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to your written response.

Respectfully,

John Waudby
Founder, Nevada Animal Advocates
NevadaAnimalAdvocates.org

Enclosures:
June 2026 complaint correspondence
Certified-mail delivery documentation
Supporting case records and legislative materials, as applicable

REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION INTO THE CLARK COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S HANDLING OF SERIOUS ANIMAL CRUELTY CASES

Office of the Attorney General – Certified Mail [redacted]
McCarran Center - State of Nevada Campus
1 State of Nevada Way Suite 100, Las Vegas, NV 89119

State Bar of Nevada Office of Bar Counsel Certified Mail [redacted]
3100 W. Charleston Blvd., Suite 100, Las Vegas, NV 89102

To Whom It May Concern:

I respectfully request that your office conduct a formal review of the Clark County District Attorney's Office under the leadership of District Attorney Steve Wolfson regarding what I, and this community believe is an extremely troubling pattern of declining to prosecute or significantly reducing serious animal cruelty cases despite Nevada's strengthened animal cruelty statutes under Reba's Law.

I recognize that prosecutors have broad discretion in charging decisions. However, when those decisions appear to form a consistent pattern involving serious acts of animal cruelty, I believe the public deserves an independent review to determine whether these laws are being enforced as intended by the Nevada Legislature.

Concerns include, but are not limited to, the following matters since the passage of Reba's Law.

1. Mitchell Fairburn – Venetian Flamingo

Mr. Fairburn has been charged with four felony counts of animal cruelty after injuring a flamingo on the Las Vegas Strip. As of this complaint, the case is reportedly the subject of plea negotiations. I am concerned that a case involving significant public attention and serious allegations of animal cruelty may be resolved through a plea agreement that does not reflect the seriousness of the conduct or the intent of Reba's Law.

2. Tabitha Berube – Working Dogs of Nevada

Ms. Berube was reportedly captured on video engaging in conduct that I believe constituted criminal animal cruelty under the law. Despite the existence of video evidence, the Clark County District Attorney's Office declined to file criminal charges. I respectfully request that this charging decision be reviewed to determine whether it was consistent with Nevada law and prosecutorial standards.

3. John Johnstone – Working Dogs of Nevada

Mr. Johnstone was initially charged with four felony counts of Willfully or maliciously torture, maim or mutilate animal kept for companionship or pleasure, but three of those charges were immediately dismissed by Wolfson's Office. During the early stages of this case, Mr. Johnstone was taken into ICE custody after they served a detainer because they wanted to deport him.

ICE send these orders because they want "information about a person who is about to be released from custody and/or asking that the local agency hold that person for an extra amount of time in order to facilitate their deportation". Mr. Wolfson's office could have denied this detainer because "ICE detainers are not mandatory.

There is no legal requirement that a local agency respond to a detainer request. Law enforcement agencies can choose for themselves whether or not to cooperate voluntarily". They could have told ICE that they refused their detainer until the resolution of this case and then honored the detainer.

Due to the honoring of the ICE detainer, Mr. Johnstone was deported back to Scotland and will never face the consequences of his actions, and the animals will never see justice.

These are not isolated concerns. They represent what I believe is an emerging pattern of declining or minimizing prosecution of serious animal cruelty offenses.

What makes this particularly troubling is that, during the legislative effort to pass Reba's Law, District Attorney Steve Wolfson publicly begged law makers to pass legislation because prosecutors lacked sufficient legal tools to effectively prosecute serious animal cruelty cases that would give them the ability to prosecute these heinous crimes, stating "*The punishment does not fit the crime*". He went on to state that "*What I'd like to see is an increase. Our lawmakers should consider everything. Any increase is sufficient. A slight increase isn't enough. Perhaps in the range of 1-10 years in prison. The penalty should be greater. I'm urging anybody who is listening to that is a Nevada resident, and, in particular, a Clark County resident, to reach out to your lawmaker. Reach out to the person that represents you in Carson City and urge them to consider a bill to increase the penalty for animal cruelty.*"

These comments were made after a hearing for the two individuals, Isaac Laushaul, Jr. and Markeisha Foster. The two were charged with animal cruelty for leaving Reba the Bulldog in a sealer container next to a dumpster in Las Vegas heat. Reba would later die from heat stroke.

Laushaul would later accept a plea deal and receive 16 months to four years in prison. Foster plead to a lesser charge of attempt to kill, maim or disfigure the animal of another and received a 7-month jail sentence. She would walk free less than 3 weeks later after time-served credit.

The Nevada Legislature responded by enacting Reba's Law, providing prosecutors with enhanced legal authority intended to address serious acts of animal cruelty. Despite receiving those additional statutory tools, I believe the Clark County District Attorney's Office continues to decline prosecution in cases where substantial evidence exists or seeks resolutions that significantly reduce accountability.

Historical criticism of sentencing recommendations

Wolfson's office has frequently agreed to probation or suspended sentences instead of seeking prison, even in serious cases.

Wayne Leonard Johnson took his dog Kea into the Southern Nevada desert in March of 2023, bashed her skull in with a hammer, stabbed her, and slit her throat twice before leaving her to die. The dog, discovered by an individual who thought it had been attacked by animals, was alive but had to be euthanized. Wolfson plead him down to a 19 to 48-month suspended sentence. Johnson completed probation and withdrew his plea and entered a guilty plea on a misdemeanor charge."

James Koh in October 2022 attempted to kill a puppy by twisting its legs and strangling it, a gross misdemeanor. Wolfson's office agreed to probation. Koh entered a guilty plea, agreed to stay away from animals. and received a suspended sentence.

Rechelle Ruegner New Years Eve 2022 shot a dog and received a suspended sentence of 14 to 38 months in favor of probation. The terms of probation included no prohibition on owning an animal. Ruegner's felony conviction was later reduced to a misdemeanor after she successfully completed the terms of her probation.

Tiffany Chyrell Washington attempted to drown a wee-old kitten which would later die. She agreed to plead guilty to felony attempted cruelty to an animal with parole eligibility after just 12 months of a 48-month sentence.

Michael E. Cardona punched and kicked a dog named Nala to death and was sentenced to a maximum of four years in prison. Wolfson sought probation only, however, Judge Carli Kierney required Cardona to serve a minimum of 14 months before being eligible for parole.

There are a couple of examples of cases where Steve Wolfson has pleaded serious animal cruelty cases down and there are many more that his office declined to prosecute all together. We will continue to see the non-stop, horrific cases of animal cruelty until Wolfson starts prosecuting these crimes and sends a message that these crimes will be dealt with the most serious prison time.

There are many other animal cruelty cases that are currently going through the court system and based on Steve Wolfon's history of plea bargaining these animal cruelty cases down to probation or outright dismissing charges, there are serious concerns about the potential outcome of these cases.

Accordingly, I respectfully request that your office determines:

- Whether there exists a pattern of declining to prosecute serious animal cruelty cases in Clark County.
- Whether charging and plea decisions involving animal cruelty offenses are consistent with the intent of Nevada law, including Reba's Law.
- Whether any written or unwritten policies exist that discourage prosecution of serious animal cruelty offenses.
- Whether the public has been provided accurate and consistent explanations regarding the enforcement of Nevada's animal cruelty laws.

This complaint is submitted in the interest of transparency, accountability, and maintaining public confidence in Nevada's criminal justice system. The Legislature strengthened Nevada's animal cruelty laws because these crimes are serious offenses deserving meaningful enforcement. If those laws are not being utilized as intended, the public deserves to understand why.

I respectfully request a written acknowledgment of this complaint and notification of whether your office will undertake a review of these concerns.

Sincerely,

John Waudby
Founder, Nevada Animal Advocates
info@nevadaanimaladvocates.org