

EXHIBIT 9  
DATE 2.17.05  
HB 603

**Subject:** HB 603 Trapper Education and Departmental Regulation:  
**From:** WildQuests@aol.com  
**Date:** Thu, 17 Feb 2005 13:35:33 EST  
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Dave Pauli  
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Dear Committee Chair Golie and Committee Members:

Please accept my email testimony on HB603, as I just returned from ten days in Sri Lanka on humanitarian relief last night and am still awaiting my luggage as I type this.

I sat on the MFWP Trapper Advisory Committee in 2002, and attended most of the statewide meetings and public hearings, and the conflict between dog owners, dog hunters and trappers simply will not be resolved without some legislative intervention.

I applaud Representative Gutsche for her research and willingness to bring some common sense solutions to the table with this legislation. Two key issues that would be addressed are some type of minimum trap check period (I am the Legislative Chair of the Montana Animal Care Association (MACA) and we would prefer a 24 hour trap check like most states), and the ability for animals owners who have collared or licensed their living property a chance to at reclaim that property either dead or alive.

My Humane Society regional office and our MACA organization understand the frustration of landowners with free roaming dogs and cats and we want to promote responsible pet ownership. But as recent media reports indicate many of the trapped, shot and disposed of animals are owned by responsible pet owners who were exercising their dogs on public or private (with permission) basis and the dogs were attracted to the baited traps. Surely these legal responsible pet owners deserve the right to at minimum retrieve the animal either alive or dead from a trapper who has an incidental catch of an owned animal. The current practice of allowing collared and tagged animals to be shot and dumped seems to be to be either an illegal taking or an act of theft of personal property by deception.

Yes, there will be some problems with animals being turned over to game wardens or county sheriffs (the states statutorily designated humane officer) or shelters, but in the long run this will promote more people to properly restrain their animals and more trappers to avoid high public use recreational areas...both of which are good things.

So Please pass HB603 to bring protection to owned personal property and to increase the level of responsibility to trappers. My office would be delighted to work with the MTA or MFWP to provide additional training on the safe removal of dogs and cats from traps and how to determine if simple release or transport is the best remedy.

On behalf of the 68 shelters and societies within MACA and the 4,200 individual HSUS Montana Active Members I appreciate your support of this good legislation.

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