

PROCLAMATION

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MARION COUNTY, FLORIDA

WHEREAS, launched on January 1, 2017, the Marion County Animal Abuser Registry, known as “Molly’s Law,” features those who have been convicted of misdemeanor and felony animal cruelty crimes in Marion County, Florida; and

WHEREAS, the “Molly’s Law” ordinance is named after Molly, an American boxer mix, who survived life-threatening wounds from a brutal attack suffered in 2014. Molly later found a loving *furr*-ever home with Lilly Baron, president of the SPCA of Ocala, and became the ambassador for Marion County’s Animal Abuse Registry; and

WHEREAS, Molly’s Law, the Animal Abuser Registry, protects animals by listing individuals convicted of animal abuse in a public database used to prevent animals from being placed with known abusers, and by enforcing penalties—including fines or incarceration—on registered offenders who possess, harbor, live with, or work with animals during their required registration period; and

WHEREAS, although Molly is no longer with us, she leaves behind a legacy and will forever represent all animal victims, Molly’s Law became a statewide initiative in 2025, requiring the Florida Department of Law Enforcement to create a searchable registry of convicted animal abusers to protect the members of our society that have no voices; and

WHEREAS, Animal abuse has been shown to lead to the abuse of people, Marion County has raised the bar for the welfare of animals and residents by protecting all vulnerable victims from the cycle of violence those perpetrators of animal cruelty often follow, setting a precedent for the Sunshine State;

NOW THEREFORE, the Board of County Commissioners of Marion County, Florida, by virtue of the authority vested in us do hereby proclaim that the month of **January 2026** be known as

“MARION COUNTY ANIMAL ABUSER REGISTRY AWARENESS MONTH”

DULY PROCLAIMED this **16th** day of **December, 2025**.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MARION COUNTY, FLORIDA**

CARL ZALAK, III, CHAIRMAN

MATT MCCLAIN, VICE-CHAIR

KATHY BRYANT, COMMISSIONER

MICHELLE STONE, COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:

GREGORY C. HARRELL, CLERK

CRAIG CURRY, COMMISSIONER