

# 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, is designed to keep animal abusers away from innocent victims by requiring any offender convicted of an animal abuse crime to be listed in this public database used by citizens, veterinarians, pet sellers, and rescues to verify that they are not placing an animal with a past abuser; and

**WHEREAS**, the Animal Abuser Registry is further enhanced by the monitoring and penalizing of registered offenders who face fines or possible incarceration if found in possession, exercise control over, harbor, live with, or work with animals for as long as they are required to register in Marion County; and

**WHEREAS**, although Molly is no longer with us, she leaves behind a legacy and will forever represent all animal victims, Marion County will continue to advocate for Molly’s Law to become a statewide initiative, encouraging other counties to follow suit and create their own animal abuser registries 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, 2025** be known as

**“MARION COUNTY ANIMAL ABUSER REGISTRY AWARENESS MONTH”**

**DULY PROCLAIMED** this 17th day of **December, 2024**.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
KATHY BRYANT, CHAIRMAN

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CARL ZALAK, III, VICE-CHAIR

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MICHELLE STONE, COMMISSIONER

**ATTEST:**

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CRAIG CURRY, COMMISSIONER

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GREGORY C. HARRELL, CLERK

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MATT MCCLAIN, COMMISSIONER