

Isaacs, Tamiko

From: Oriane Falkenstein <orianefalkens@gmail.com>
Sent: January 24, 2020 4:36 PM
To: Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs
Cc: Baber, Roman-MPP
Subject: Support for pet owners

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51 Codsell Avenue
Toronto
M3H3V8
24th January 2020

Attention : Finance Committee

I would like to request consideration on a matter that has long been close to my heart. My family, like many others in this city are dog lovers and have always offered the best care to our dogs in terms of veterinary checks at any time there was a health concern, aside from annual check ups and dental cleaning.

As background to this email I want to share that we recently had to put down our oldest dog which was heart wrenching and following that, spent over a month taking care of our second dog who suddenly got very ill. She has fortunately now recovered

I have always had pet insurance, but between both dogs this year have probably paid out over \$8000 aside from the monthly cost of pet insurance. The costs have continued into 2020 as our dog stills needs monitoring, ongoing check ups and prescription dog food.

Pet owners need to balance taking out more and more insurance and paying out a lot monthly and *not* usually needing it or alternatively running out of any coverage, as has now occurred with our second dog. Coverage will resume at the end of July 2020, as that will be the start of a new policy year. Other pet owners simply do not have coverage and are then responsible for all the costs.

I do not regret a single dollar spent on either of our dogs as they were and are a part of our family. However, I do know other pet owners who think twice (or three times) before they take their pet to the vet because of the costs. Things like dental cleaning and annual check ups are not usually covered by pet insurance and you are looking at a minimum of \$300 for a thorough check up and dental cleaning can range between \$600 and \$1000 dental cleaning. Some pet owners cannot afford this.

I applaud that the Government recently passed the PAWS Act legislation. Animals cannot speak for themselves, often suffer quietly and we need to support their welfare. My question is what support can be offered to pet owners?. I believe that pet expenses should be tax deductible even up to a reasonable amount. Alternatively payment made to pet insurance companies should be tax deductible. I am not questioning veterinary fees as they offer their expertise and are entitled to earn like any other medical professional. I am asking you to consider if some support can be introduced provincially to support financial costs incurred by pet owners. I believe that this will further help support a healthy pet population.

Sincerely

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