

MZM Mid-Year Report 2026



Prepared by FOHO WV



West Virginians have shared their homes with working and companion domestic animals for hundreds of years. However, these animals were allowed to breed indiscriminately - resulting in thousands of unwanted, homeless dogs and cats. Pet overpopulation became such a problem that pet owners took action to resolve the problem - unwanted animals were drowned, shot, or abandoned along rural roads. However, these inhumane solutions were only a temporary fix. Over time, some counties hired dog wardens, laws were passed, and some shelters were built, complete with another killing solution – the gas chambers. Killing became a government job - but it was not the solution. As society became more educated and compassionate, animal groups were formed that built their own shelters or shared their homes, animal cruelty laws were passed, gas chambers were replaced with certified euthanasia techs, but unwanted animals were still being born and the killing continued.

In the early 1900s, the first organized efforts to spay and neuter pets began in the United States to prevent the birth of unwanted animals. Veterinarians and animal welfare organizations supported this prevention method. Spay/neuter was introduced to the masses when celebrities like Bob Barker messaged to “spay or neuter your pets” at the end of The Price Is Right television show, Doris Day founded Spay Month, that has now grown to be an international event celebrated every February, and Cesar Millan, the “dog whisperer,” promoted spay/neuter with his own grant program, and many other celebrities have followed suit..

The no-kill movement began in the late 1900s, that changed the focus to crisis management (adoption, convincing caregivers to keep their animals, plus the coveted “no-kill” designation). Unfortunately, very few shelters can legitimately be no-kill if they shut their doors when their capacity is reached – eliminating the tough decisions of who lives and who dies. Turning away unwanted animals does not prevent unwanted births.

What does prevention really mean? It means an aggressive national spay/neuter program. It means preventing the shelter/foster intake of unwanted, homeless dogs, puppies, cats, and kittens – not relying on finding homes for them after they are born.

🐾 Without PREVENTION, adoption programs are just a finger in the dike.

Before We Begin

With the passage of SB 202 in 2013, the Administrative Regulations in 2015 and the funding bill HB 2552 in 2017, the West Virginia Spay Neuter Program (WVSNP) became West Virginia's instrument to PREVENT the birth of unwanted domestic animals, eliminating the dependence on euthanasia to control pet populations statewide. It took a long time, but was worth it!

WVSNP is funded by a small increase in the Pet Food Distributor's Fee collected by the WV Department of Agriculture. These funds are awarded every year to WV animal welfare groups and government shelters in the form of grants to increase their spay/neuter efforts. The first WVSNP grants were awarded in 2018 to 35 applicants.

In 2023, the WVSNP grant amount doubled when Mug-Z-Moo donated \$450,000 each year for four years to FOHO WV, to be distributed by WVSNP through a state-wide grant program.

In 2025, the grant recipients banded together to successfully remove the sunset clause in the state code that would have ended WVSNP in 2027.

In 2026, the last year of the Mug-Z-Moo grant, WVSNP awarded spay/neuter grants to 99 applicants, operating in 52 of the 55 counties.

With Mug-Z-Moo support, WVSNP has reduced pet overpopulation by spaying and neutering 125,565 animals.

Mug-Z-Moo requires FOHO WV to submit mid-year and final reports each year, challenging a small non-profit to oversee, analyze, and highlight the grant's impact.

The WV Department of Agriculture has successfully integrated a monumental program into their regular full-time duties and responsibilities.

The Report Outline

The 2026 mid-year report will address Mug-Z-Moo's benchmarks listed in the Grant Agreement dated October 6, 2022, followed by a FOHOWV observation (highlighted):

1. Total number of spay/neuter **PROCEDURES** completed in WV.
Address the absence of data collection in animal welfare programs.
2. Total number of **VETERINARIANS** who provided spay/neuter services.
Encourage more conversations to address shortage of veterinarians. Need data.
3. Number of **CLINICS** that were able to increase spay/neuter services.
Improve data collection and increase government and community support.
4. Type of **OUTREACH** made in areas that were lacking spay/neuter programs.
Increase marketing and public awareness using social media to accurately report intake and outcome.

1. BENCHMARK - PROCEDURES

From 2018 to 2025, a total of 125,565 surgeries were performed

- 🐾 97,717 surgeries were performed by WVSNP Grant
- 🐾 27,848 surgeries were performed by Clinic Grant

From 2018 to 2025, a total of \$7,372,396 was paid to WV clinics

- o \$1,350,000 paid by MZM
- o \$2,187,293 paid by recipients
- o \$3,835.103 paid by WVSNP

The average cost of spay/neuter surgeries has increased by 62% - dogs by 72% and cats by 51%.

2026 is the last year that WVSNP will be fully funded. Mug-Z-Moo has presented a unique opportunity for the grant recipients to benefit from the additional funding while sharing in the program's success and improving their data collection.

Prevention is the only solution, and numbers will tell our story.

Data Provided by the WV Department of Agriculture

						Mug-Z-Moo Tenure			
Six Year Study	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25	*FY 26
# Apps Received	60	72	68	69	71	77	84	93	100
\$ Requested	1,015,333	821,098	781,170	852,010	901,969	1,074,948	1,412,000	1,647,000	1,961,500
# Grants Awarded	47	56	64	68	69	76	84	93	100
\$ Grants Awarded	343,003	422,266	525,113	523,757	552,885	1,144,325	1,297,500	1,089,000	1,278,625
\$ Grants Spent	321,953	368,955	423,078	420,959	464,480	1,005,339	1,197,102	983,237	90,030
\$ Matching Spent	216,112	244,360	263,624	232,693	264,686	410,708	320,723	234,387	21,039
# Proc - WVSNP	8,953	9,927	10,590	9,774	10,279	17,568	17,537	13,089	1,115
# Pro - Clinics	0	0	0	0	0	5,824	10,030	11,994	

The 2026 grant agreements were emailed to the recipients mid-April, but official awards were not approved until the agreements had been signed by the recipient, returned for the WV Department of Agriculture signature, and returned to the recipients. The dollars spent and procedures reported in the chart ABOVE covers only invoices paid through May 15, 2026.

WVSNP SUCCESS STORY

FOHO WV CHART W/DATA PROVIDED BY WVDA

Year	Dogs	Cats	Community Cats	Counties Served	Grantess	Total \$ Spent
2018	2,669	6,284	No data	45	35	321,953
2019	2,315	4,731	2,881	48	55	368,955
2020	2,192	5,451	2,947	50	64	423,077
2021	1,857	4,877	3,040	51	66	420,958
2022	1,876	5,049	3,354	50	70	464,480
2023	3,732	9,050	5,386	54	75	975,734
2024	4,232	7,824	5,386	54	85	1,197,102
2025	3,424	3,460	3,460	55	93	983,238
2026				53	99	

Counties Served in 2026 includes one organization that did not apply for a grant but spay/neuter assistance will be provided by organizations in surrounding counties.

2. BENCHMARK -VETERINARIANS

The most consequential problems for domestic pet population control are the shortage of veterinarians and their support staff, and the absence of medical services in 16% of the counties. We know there is a shortage of vets, but this data is not being collected by WVSNP – clinics are billed, not the doctors performing the surgeries. FOHO WV will rely on data from WV Board of Veterinary Medicine (WVBVM). See next chart.

WV scored a 17 out of 100 in a 2021 national study of veterinary care access.

The partnership of two like-minded charities, Mug-Z-Moo and FOHO WV, shifted attention from shortcomings to outcome.

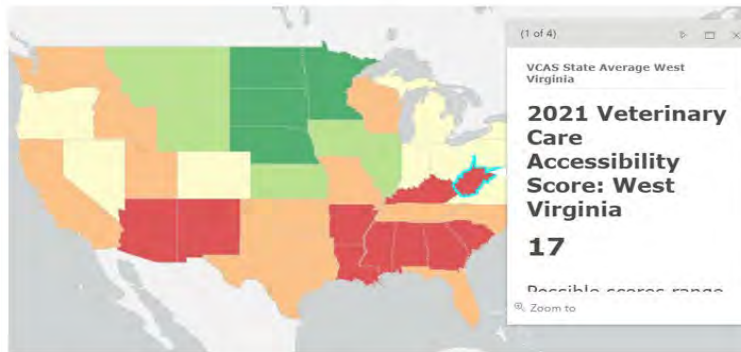
Non-surgical sterilization methods are being researched and may replace surgeries in some applications.

Prevention is the only solution and totally dependent upon the state attracting more doctors and trained technicians.

WV BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

Year	+/-	25	24	23	22
Licensed Veterinarians	78	484	406	384	398
Registered Vet Techs	22	294	272	248	238
Registered CAET	4	46	50	55	55
Veterinary Facilities	0	264	264	256	256

Veterinary Care Accessibility Score is an index that describes the accessibility of veterinary care in counties across the contiguous lower 48 states of the United States*. The index incorporates data on issues that affect access to care: income, transportation, language, veterinary hospitals. VCAS is currently updating this report.



Red shows low access to vet care. WV is 17
Possible scores range from 0 (care is nearly inaccessible) to 100 (care is very accessible).



Excerpts from Main Street's Top Dog: Growing the small business pet economy testimony.

"Pets are abundant in Americans lives, with around 57 percent of households owning at least one. In rural areas, this number is even higher. 71 percent of households have pets and 47 percent report owning more than one animal", Joni Ernst. Chairperson

"When it comes to growing the small business economy, veterinary care is essential infrastructure for communities, particularly in rural America. Veterinary practices contribute not only to animal health and public health but also to the long-term economic vitality of communities across the United States". Dr. Gary Brown, Animal Care Center, Princeton, WV

West Virginia's veterinarian shortage has been discussed by a variety of interested parties: law makers, for-profit clinics, educators, donors, and animal welfare groups. All initiatives have been tabled – for now!

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON VIABILITY OF WV VETERINARY MEDICINE SCHOOL – HIGHER EDUCATION – AGENDA

[SENATE](#) | [HOUSE](#) | [INTERIMS](#) | [BACK](#)

MONDAY, JANUARY 10, 2022, 5:00PM - 7:00PM



West Virginia University (WVU) does not have a fully accredited college of veterinary medicine but offers a strong [Pre-Veterinary Medicine program](#) and holds contracted seats for residents at out-of-state schools, including Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine and Mississippi State University.



Discussions have been reported by the WV Higher Education Policy Commission and the WV Veterinary Medical Association to ask the WVU students who receive financial support from the Pre-Vet Medicine Program to pledge employment in the state after graduation with a Vet Degree.



FOHO WV member participated in a group discussion regarding efforts to offer a Vet Medicine degree at WVU. Included two WVU professors, one non-profit, and an animal shelter director. WVU is a land grant University and the largest institution of higher learning in WV.



WVU pursues first four-year veterinary tech program

MORGANTOWN — Veterinary technicians and technologists play a critical role in caring for West Virginia’s creatures, yet less than 300 are registered statewide to provide support to more than 700 licensed veterinarians — a scenario akin to having one nurse for every three doctors at a hospital.

New Veterinary Technology Program

In 2023, WVU received funding for a new [four-year vet tech program](#) to prepare students for American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) certification.

“As of right now, the vet tech program is cancelled and there are no plans to move things forward. Internal funding to support the program is not available and donor funding is not an option for that support”.

Margaret A Minch, DVM, Teaching Prof./Animal & Nutritional Sciences, West Virginia University.

3. BENCHMARK - CLINICS

In 2018, the West Virginia Board of Veterinary Medical began registering and inspecting vet clinics operating in WV. Approximately 100 clinics are partners with WWSNP recipients

Eight of the 55 counties do not have clinics or any animal medical service. Three counties (Gilmer, Tucker, and Doddridge) did not apply for a 2026 WWSNP grant.

In 2026, 19 county governments received WWSNP grants, recognizing spay-neuter as a public health and animal welfare priority.

Prevention is the only solution, but local and state political awareness and support is needed to provide the incentives to increase business opportunities and attract new veterinarians and provide employment opportunities for trained technicians.

	Vet Shortage Casualties	
2024		Furever Fixed opened their doors.
2026	 SNIP WV, a HY/LC clinic in Monongalia County, is currently without a doctor and is relying on doctors employed at other clinics without a non-compete clause in the contract. Tiffany Dlesk, a HY/LC clinic in Marshall County, is currently closed due to the vet shortage. Mountaineer Spay Neuter Assistance Program, a voucher program and WWSNP recipient since 2018, is faced with transporting hundreds of animals out-of-state to find timely appointments for Community Cat surgeries, disqualifying the surgeries for reimbursement. Fix Charleston, Kanawha County, opened very limited hours to “fix” animals.	



NATIONAL LINK COALITION
THE GLOBAL RESOURCE CENTER ON THE LINK
BETWEEN ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN VIOLENCE
*Working together to stop violence
against people and animals*

“Link” publishes a comprehensive list of animal laws every year, for every state. Our representatives continue to fail us. Why can’t we protect innocent animals and children at the same time?

WEST VIRGINIA

HB 4130 and HB 5207 died when the Legislature adjourned. The bills would have established a new crime of hoarding animals. Offenders would have faced misdemeanor fines of up to \$500 and risk having their animals turned over to an animal shelter for proper care and relocation.

HB 4412 was signed into law on April 1. It establishes liability for publishers and distributors of sexual material harmful to minors, including “patently and sexually offensive” materials including bestiality.

HB 4725 died when the Legislature adjourned. It would have added a new section to West Virginia Code 61-9-19 (Crimes Against Chastity, Morality and Decency) to make the commission of a sexual act with an animal a felony, punishable by a fine of \$1,000 to \$5,000

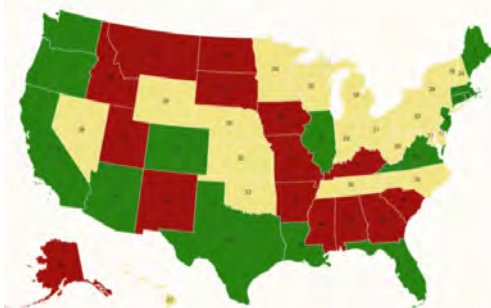
HB 5419 died when the Legislature adjourned. It would have defined working law enforcement and Search & Rescue K-9s as law enforcement officers; assault or battery of an on-duty animal would be treated similar to a crime against a human law enforcement officer.

SB 192 and SB 688 died when the Legislature adjourned. It would have created a new misdemeanor crime of Assault Upon a Service Animal and subject the offender to making financial restitution for costs. HB 5322 and HB 5335 died when the Legislature adjourned. The bills would have made sexual abuse of an animal and related activities a misdemeanor; offenders with prior sexual abuse convictions, or who engage a minor would have been guilty of a felony.

SB 714 died when the Legislature adjourned. It would have allowed the Board of Veterinary Medicine to punish or suspend the license of veterinarians and technicians to practice upon conviction for acts of cruelty, abuse or sexual abuse.

Map of US Reveals States Where Pets Most Protected

FLAUNTSHED
FEB 08, 2026 AT 06:00 AM EST



A map of the United States ranking the states in order of strongest to weakest laws around animal protection. | Floutsh/Animal League Defense Fund data

Animal Legal Defense Fund ranked WV #20

National Trends

The ALDF report saw significant growth in animal laws nationwide. Over the past two decades, the share of jurisdictions allowing courts to impose animal ownership bans after cruelty convictions has risen from about 41 percent in 2005 to more than 82 percent today. Laws allowing animals to be included in domestic violence protection orders grew from none in 2005 to more than three-quarters of jurisdictions in 2025.



WV Legislative session ended March 16, 2026, with very disappointing support for any animal welfare issues.

WVVAW is currently advocating for Congress to make greyhound racing illegal nationwide. West Virginia is the only state in the US with racetracks, and the legislature seems unable to stop subsidizing this industry, even though a recent Ball State University study indicate there is no economic benefit for WV.

4. BENCHMARK - OUTREACH

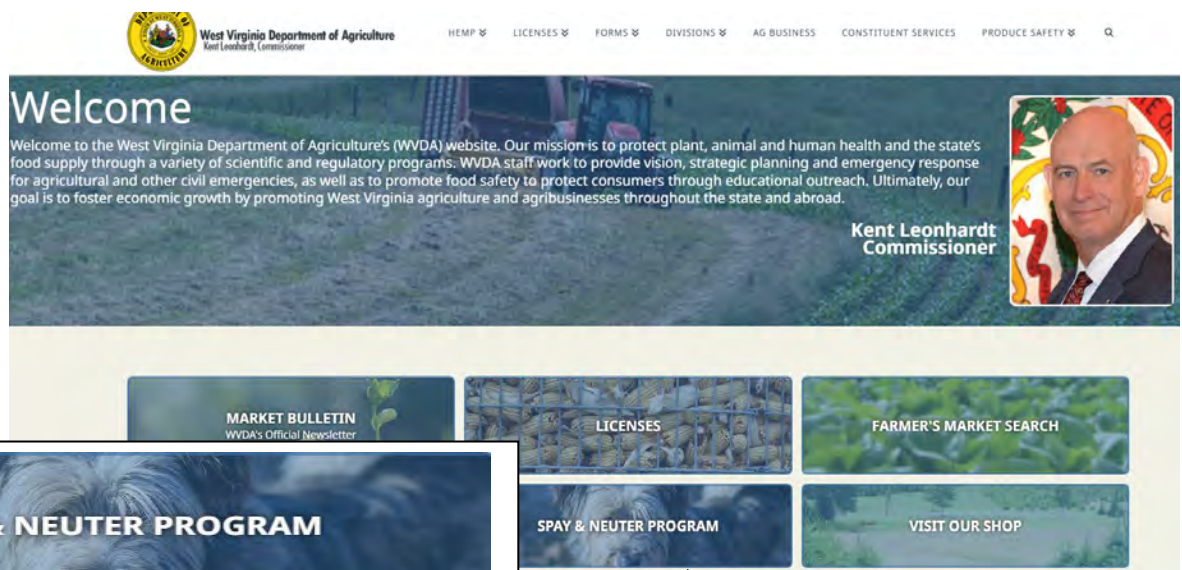
Outreach must always acknowledge the good and never ignore the bad. Despite many challenges, West Virginia offers incredible natural beauty, with low costs of living, a slower pace, a strong, close-knit community culture, recognized for over-all safety, and has a state-wide spay/neuter program – all positive reasons to attract new veterinarians to live and work in Wild, Wonderful WV.

There is a high expectation for the WWSNP grant recipients to publicize their grants. In addition, FOHO WV created a WV Voters for Animal Welfare, a WWSNP Support Page on Facebook and WVDA provides spay/neuter information on their webpage.

FOHO WV has recruited the assistance from the WVU College of Law students and the members of WVU Data Driven to help with legal research and to improve our data collection, respectively.

Prevention is the only solution and spay-neuter programs are being integrated into broader community initiatives that address pet retention, veterinary care, community health & safety, and improvements in laws and ordinances.

WV Department of Agriculture - <https://agriculture.wv.gov/divisions/animal-health/west-virginia-spay-and-neuter-assistance-program/>



SPAY & NEUTER PROGRAM

Spay/ Neuter is featured on the WV Department of Agriculture's home page. According to their IT staff, the WWSNP page averages 18,000 views per year and is one of their highest visited pages, only outpaced by the home page visits!!

Recipient and Program Outreach



Animal Friends of Lincoln Co - recipient



Fix Charleston - recipient



Save a Kitty Feral Cat Program – recipient



Five recipients collaborate every year

Help Meowt Helpline (Eastern Panhandle of WV+VA,MD,PA) · Join ...
To The ResQ · Yesterday at 3:39 PM ·

WV Spay & Neuter Assistance Fund – Eastern Panhandle Grantees

To The ResQ, Inc. is honored to have been selected as one of 100 organizations statewide to receive funding through the WV Spay & Neuter Assistance Fund. We are grateful for this opportunity to expand our impact and support both families and community cats across our region. This grant allows us to:



The whole post was too long to reprint because To The ResQ listed the 14 WVSNP recipients that serve 8 counties in the eastern panhandle.

Great outreach!

OPERATION FANCY FREE
Helping Cats Use All Nine Lives

♥ Nine Years of ♥
HELPING CATS
PAW USE ALL NINE LIVES PAW

Operation Fancy Free receives
\$31,500
in 2026 WVSNP funding!

THANK YOU, WVSNP!
Grant funding that changes lives — not tax dollars.
Funded through pet food registration fees in WV, and support from the Mug-Z-Moo Foundation.

MAKING A REAL IMPACT SINCE 2018

Icon	Value	Description
Cat	\$165,000	In WVSNP grant funding received since 2018
Heart	\$82,542	In matching funds provided by our community
Cat	3,490+	Cats (and counting) vetted through the program
Shield		Services Include: • Spay & neuter • Rabies vaccinations • Cryptorchid neuters

TNR WORKS.
A tipped ear means this cat has been humanely trapped, neutered & returned.

WVSNP FUNDING HISTORY 2018–2026

- 9 years of grants
- \$165,000 in grant funding
- \$82,542 in matching funds
- 3,490+ cats vetted And counting!

YOU CAN HELP MAKE THIS POSSIBLE!

- Donations & fundraising events
- Kroger Community Rewards & Walmart Spark program
- In-kind donations & community support
- Covering additional medical needs & emergencies

Together, we're giving cats better lives! ♥

LEARN MORE OR GET INVOLVED:
operationfancyfree@gmail.com
https://operationfancyfree.weebly.com

Operation Fancy Free, Inc. is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

To The ResQ + list of all local recipients

MEOW CAT RESCUE-recipient

WVDA NEWS

WV SPAY & NEUTER PROGRAM



The WV Spay & Neuter Assistance Program, or WVSNP, (administered by the WVDA) received a check for \$450,000 from the Federation of Humane Organizations (FOHO) of WV. The gift is part of a multi-year grant from the Mug-Z-Moo Foundation to reduce shelter populations and euthanasia rates. In 2025, WVSNP handed out \$983,673 in grants to help sterilize more than 13,000 dogs, cats and community cats.

Pictured: Andy Yost, WVDA Program Specialist; Alan Clemans, WVDA Exec. Dir. Administration & Operations; Laryssa Hoskins, WVDA CFO; Commissioner Kent Leonhardt.

MEOW CAT RESCUE

WVDA / WV SPAY / NEUTER OPPORTUNITY

ALL SPOTS FILLED

NOW BOOKING CATS FOR JUNE 24, 2026 @ FIX'EM CLINIC

WV Department of Agriculture

FIX 'EM CLINIC – recipient

 **Brooke County Animal Shelter Wes...** Apr 19 · 🌐

Brooke County has once again been awarded a grant from the Wv Department of Agriculture to help spay/neuter cats in our county. Please call the animal shelter Tues-Friday to pick up a voucher 304-394-0800

👍 96 🗨️ 223

 **Braxton County Announcements · Join**
Letishia Lynn Mccraw · April 28 at 4:48 PM · 🌐

Does anyone know if the animal shelter will be doing vouchers for spay/ neuter for cats yet & when?

Anxious pet owner wondering when 2026 vouchers will be available. BRAXTON CO COMMISSION-recipient

  **RESCUE ME WV'S**   

OPERATION SNIP & SPAY 2026

is open for another round!!

Low cost
Spay & Neuter Program.

Please read the post carefully for details on how to apply and eligibility requirements.

Rescue Me WV - recipient

 **Love your Fur Babies??
Get them Spayed or Neutered!!**

Vouchers available through a Grant from WV Dept of Ag/ WVSNP 

SUMMERS COUNTY RESIDENTS ONLY
2 VOUCHERS PER HOUSEHOLD

*** Steps to take to get a S/N Voucher ***

Summers County Residents ONLY

1. go to ACWP-WV.org website
2. Select FORM CENTER and SPAY/NEUTER ASSISTANCE REQUEST
3. fill form out Completely and Submit it

ONLY 2 vouchers per household – 1 pet per voucher
ONLY 50 vouchers will be issued this month
Vouchers will be emailed to you within 5 business days

Summers County Humane Society - recipient



**Spay/Neuter Vouchers
Available TOMORROW**

MAY 1 @ 11am

**Summers County WV
residents only**

Summers County Humane Society - recipient

5. OUR FUTURE

Although our future does not include Mug-Z-Moo after 2026, FOHO WV, the WV Department of Agriculture, animal control staff, and members of animal welfare community around the state will be forever grateful for Mug-Z-Moo. You pointed us in directions we probably would never have gone. WWSNP will continue beyond your investment in West Virginia.



In 2025, WWSNP recipients witnessed the passage of a bill that removed the sunset clause that would have ended all grant funding effective in 2027. Collaboration and action were possible because of the Mug-Z-Moo/FOHO WV partnership.

Thank you for believing in us!

RESOURCES

WV Code §19-20

WV State Rule 61 CRSR 24

WV Code §19-14-5

West Virginia Department of Agriculture

West Virginia Veterinary Medical Association

West Virginia Board of Veterinary Medicine

WV Voters for Animal Welfare

Visual Capitalist

Animal Legal Defense Fund

Veterinary Care Accessibility Project

US Senate Committee Small Business & Entrepreneurship

West Virginia High Education Policy Commission

Appalachian Regional Commission

National Link Coalition

Consumer Affairs