

## Linda Leehman

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**From:** beverly soychak <vtbeavercollective@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 21, 2025 8:53 AM  
**To:** Linda Leehman  
**Subject:** [External] VSNIP Testimony

[External]

Respected Senators,

My name is Bev Soychak , I'm a lifelong Vermonter who has been involved with rescue ,cruelty and animal welfare for over 30 years. Our state is at a crisis level to say the very least. I have never seen it this bad, but the topic today is VSNIP.

Simply put, VSNIP saves lives and money! Without this program many animals will suffer and die horrible deaths; many animals will be born into bad situations and the cycle will continue. Every unwanted unexpected animal comes at a high cost to Vermonters, whether it's later turned into a shelter , abandoned or ends up as a costly cruelty investigation.

Record high vetting cost caused by corporate buy outs of independent vet operations across our state have cripple rescue's ability and many Vermonters ability to provide vetting . A simple spay or neuter can cost anywhere from \$600.00 to \$1000.00.in todays economic state that's not even a possibility for most. The sad reality is without laws protecting animal as having rights at all they turn into victims. Vsnip protects these animals, in most cases we work on are underprivileged homes most have good intentions from taking in strays with the intention to help and then it quickly escalates. Facts are most [people with the largest pet issues should not have so many in the first place but we have no way to enforce anything except try to control reproduction issue.

Two examples:

1. We did some work on a household with many cats , overwhelmed and desperate they overcame her life , she became depressed , went on disability and almost ended up homeless. We stepped in to help her by removing most and got her to a manageable amount and sent her to Vsnip for the rest to get help. Within a year because it took that long , she had a job was off disability and cleaned up her home so she did not get evicted. Just think of the saving to our state in this situation by offering help. Mental illness issues clearly accompany hording and overpopulations.
2. We had a case where 3 cats turned 40 in 2 years and it ended up being a cruelty case which cost our state tens of thousands of dollars. Reason ? She could not afford to get them fixed or access program.

In closing I would love to recommend that not only VSNIP be extended but reevaluated to make it more easily available . The application process is complicated , some don't have access to computers . Very few vets are currently participating and will not take on new clients so even approved its hard to get appointments. I would love to see Shelters who have vets available be able to accept vsnip cases and be reimbursed, this would help generate more funding for them. We have a lot of work to do but we cant do

anything without the support for this program. Maybe even support a large scale spay and neuter clinic. VSNIP saves money everyway you look at it in my opinion 10 to 1 .

Thanks

Bev Soychak

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