

Background information

What actions have you taken affecting the welfare of animals in the past? Please include actions taken at the local, state, or federal levels.

My deep commitment to animal welfare is profoundly inspired by my family's leadership in the field, from my mother-in-law, who provides vital veterinary medicine to our local pets at Compassionate Care Vet right here in the Fourth Ward, to my aunt, Alice Di Concetto, a prolific animal rights law professional and executive director pioneering policy within the European Union.

Their dedicated care has helped inform my own public service career, which is guided by the principle that a just and equitable community takes seriously its responsibility to protect all living beings. As a Human Rights Commissioner for the City of Ann Arbor, I championed policies grounded in dignity and respect—values that naturally extend to our treatment of animals—and helped direct equitable use of ARPA funds to support community well-being programs that benefit families and their pets. As President of the Ann Arbor District Library Board, I have supported investments in green infrastructure and mixed-income development that recognize the interconnectedness of community and environmental health. At the state level, as a member of Governor Whitmer's Growing Michigan Together Council, I helped develop strategic roadmaps for Michigan's long-term infrastructure and sustainability, which includes protecting the green spaces and ecosystems on which wildlife depends. While my formal roles have not focused exclusively on animal welfare, they reflect a lifelong dedication to building communities where all life is valued, and I look forward to bringing these values to City Council as a direct, proactive advocate for animals and the families who care for them at the local level.

What actions have you taken affecting the habitats of animals in the past? Please include actions taken at the local, state, or federal levels. Examples may include efforts to address the impacts of natural disasters such as wildfires and hurricanes on ecosystems.

As a strong champion of Ann Arbor's A2Zero plan — the city's roadmap to achieve community-wide carbon neutrality by 2030 — I have consistently advocated for policies that protect and expand green spaces, strengthen stormwater infrastructure, and reduce the urban heat island effects that degrade habitat for wildlife. Protecting and restoring Ann Arbor's natural environment is central to my climate platform. On the Library Board, I helped lead development of a new downtown branch that integrates mixed-income and affordable housing — a model of smart, density-focused development that preserves surrounding greenspace rather than sprawling into natural areas. I believe that sustainable land use is a key tool for protecting the habitats that

birds, pollinators, small mammals, and other wildlife depend on. At the state level, my work on Governor Whitmer's Growing Michigan Together Council included attention to the infrastructure and environmental investments needed to sustain Michigan's world-class natural resources — including the waterways, wetlands, and forests that countless animal species call home. I will bring this same commitment to habitat protection to City Council.

Are there any animal welfare programs or issues of importance to you that you would take the initiative on after you are elected? Examples might include municipal animal welfare standards; cracking down on large-scale commercial breeding facilities known as puppy mills; or local tethering and weather-related laws where pets are concerned.

Yes. If elected, I will work to ensure Ann Arbor is a leader on animal welfare at the local level. Specifically, I am committed to: 1. Reviewing and strengthening local ordinances governing tethering and weather-related protections for pets, to ensure Ann Arbor's standards reflect the best practices in animal welfare; 2. Advocating for adequate funding and staffing for Ann Arbor's animal control and shelter services, so our community can respond effectively to animals in need; 3. Exploring options to restrict the sale of puppies sourced from inhumane commercial breeding operations ('puppy mills') in Ann Arbor pet retail establishments; and 4. Ensuring that housing policies — particularly protections for renters, which are a core part of my platform — do not impose unnecessary barriers to responsible pet ownership. Having rented for over 25 years myself, I know firsthand how harmful blanket 'no pets' policies can be for families and their animals, and I intend to advocate for more pet-inclusive housing standards. I am committed to engaging with local animal welfare organizations, shelters, and advocates as I develop these priorities further.

Will you post information on your campaign website outlining your positions on animal protection issues?

Transparency and accountability are cornerstones of my campaign. I am committed to clearly communicating my positions on animal protection to voters, and I will post information on my campaign website at voteaidansova.com outlining my stances on the issues raised in this questionnaire and others relevant to animal welfare in Ann Arbor.

Do you have, or have you had in the past, any pets that have made an impact on you personally?

I grew up in a low-income, single-parent household on the Southside of Jackson, Michigan, where we often struggled to afford the basics, let alone the luxury of caring for a pet. It wasn't

until adulthood, when I built a life with my now-wife, that I was truly introduced to the profound joy and responsibility of animal companionship. When we moved into our first shared home, she brought Bianca—an adopted senior cat who completely transformed my outlook on life. Sharing a space with an older animal taught me to become a more patient, accepting, and flexible person, as I learned to adapt to her rhythms and provide the specialized care and comfort she deserved in her golden years. Though Bianca recently passed away, her impact on me is permanent. Loving and caring for a senior pet opened my heart to the deep emotional bonds animals share with us, and it has made me a fierce advocate for animal welfare, rescue, and the vital role pets play in making our homes and communities more compassionate.

Puppy mills: Internet sales, flea markets, face-to-face sales and the majority of pet stores that sell puppies are getting those dogs from puppy mills. A puppy mill is an inhumane high-volume dog breeding facility that churns out puppies for profit, ignoring the needs of the pups and their mothers. Dogs from puppy mills are often sick and unsocialized. Pet retailers often falsely assure consumers that the puppies they offer for sale are raised in reputable or humane breeding facilities, even when they come from inhumane facilities like mass production puppy mills. Our family of organizations hears from thousands of devastated consumers every year who bring home a dog only to have the animal fall sick and, in some cases, even die.

Will you support efforts to end the sale of puppies sourced from puppy mills in pet stores?

Yes No Not Sure

Fashion: Animals need their fur coats more than we do. But on fur factory farms around the world, millions of rabbits, foxes, mink and other wild animals spend their entire lives in cramped cages, deprived of the ability to engage in natural behaviors—only to be crudely gassed or electrocuted at the end. In the wild, animals are caught in crippling leghold traps for days without food or water. These archaic traps are indiscriminate, often maiming and killing non-target animals, like threatened species and even pets—all this in the name of fashion.

Will you support efforts to prohibit the sale of new products containing fur from animals?

Yes No Not Sure

Breed-specific legislation: Throughout the United States, entire communities ban or restrict dogs because of their breed, or, more commonly, what is perceived to be their breed. Breed-based policies aren't founded on science or credible data, but on myths and misinformation surrounding different breeds and their natures. The impact of these policies on dogs, families, and animal shelters, though, is heartbreakingly real. Breed bans and restrictions force dogs out of homes and into shelters, taking up kennel space and resources that could be used for animals in need.

Will you support efforts to prohibit discriminatory breed-based policies?

Yes No Not Sure

Public contact: While exciting to see up close, wild animals are altogether unfit for public contact. Substandard wildlife attractions like roadside zoos and cub petting operations exploit these animals to turn a quick profit, often with such neglect that horror stories have been recorded through undercover investigations. Not only do wild animals suffer cruelly when captured, transported, and placed in close proximity to humans—the risks they then pose to human health and safety are enormous. Cases of aggression may prove life-threatening, as may a host of zoonotic diseases. In recognition of these dangers, the federal government now prohibits the private ownership, breeding, import, or export of big cats acquired, or maintained and unregistered with the USDA, after June 18th, 2023. All big cats, even those owned and registered prior to the law's enactment, are now banned from use in public contact.

Will you support efforts to prohibit direct public contact with wild animal species?

Yes No Not Sure

Factory farming: On factory farms, egg-laying hens are packed into battery cages where they can't even spread their wings. Baby calves are taken from their mothers and confined in pens so small they can barely move, and pigs are locked in gestation crates the width and length of their bodies, unable to even turn around.

Will you support efforts to prohibit the extreme confinement of breeding pigs, egg-laying hens, and calves raised for veal in restrictive, inadequate, and painful conditions?

Yes No Not Sure

Local control: Across the country, bills are often filed aiming to overturn hundreds of local ordinances related to animals. These overly broad bills seek to eliminate commonsense restrictions on matters of animal protection and public safety, alike, by undoing local ordinances prohibiting the sale of dogs from puppy mills; outlawing roadside zoos and similar cruel, unsafe operations; regulating livestock management; or even requiring safety standards for ingredients in our food or health products.

Will you oppose any efforts to prohibit municipal or county ordinances related to animals?

Yes No Not Sure