



2021 Judge's Survey

Alyssa Cowan

Candidate for Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas

1. Libre's Law (Act 10 of 2017) expanded animal protections and increased penalties for animal abusers. Felony violations *require* forfeiture of an animal, while lesser convictions *allow* for forfeiture.

- Would you include forfeiture as a penalty for misdemeanor convictions?

(Check one) Yes No

- In 50 words or less, please explain your position, including offenses for which you would consider forfeiture as a penalty.

Libre's Law requires forfeiture for felony convictions and permits forfeiture for other convictions so judges do have wide discretion to impose forfeiture. As a judge, I would utilize forfeiture in cases where the facts demonstrate that an animal has suffered bodily injury or is at imminent risk of serious bodily injury.

2. Multiple studies have shown a link between animal abuse and future domestic violence abuse.

- Will you impose penalties for animal abuse that fit the serious nature of these crimes?

(Check one) Yes No

3. Many domestic abuse victims stay with their abusers out of fear for the safety of household pets.

- Will you include custody and protections for household pets as part of the resolution for domestic abuse cases?

(Check one) Yes No



4. In 50 words or less, please give an example of how you have fought for animals in the past.

In my work, I've advocated for the needs of abused and neglected children who enter foster care. These children often have strong attachments to their pets and I've worked to ensure that they are placed in homes that will be welcoming to them and their pets so that both are well cared for and protected.

5. In 50 words or less, please explain how you intend to help protect animals if elected.

My family cherishes our two dogs. Protecting animals is personal for me and will continue to be a high priority in my professional life. As a child welfare attorney, I've seen firsthand the intersection of animal and domestic abuse. As a judge, I'll have the ability to impose strong penalties for animal cruelty.

HUMANE ACTION Pittsburgh is committed to working with local officials throughout Western Pennsylvania. We welcome the opportunity to begin a dialogue with you. Please feel free to contact us.