



October 9, 2026

Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney for Henrico County
Attn: Shannon L. Taylor, Commonwealth's Attorney
Dylan McCauley, Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney
Henrico County, Virginia

Dear Commonwealth's Attorney Taylor and Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney McCauley,

On behalf of Alley Cat Allies and our supporters in Virginia, I am writing to thank your office for its successful prosecution of Rodney Travis Jr. We were grateful to learn that, thanks to your office's work, he was sentenced to 15 years in prison for his egregious acts of cruelty, nearly doubling the previous record sentence for an animal cruelty case in Virginia.

The horrific acts of cruelty Travis carried out - drugging, beating, and filming cats in extreme distress, then using those videos to solicit donations under false pretenses - subjected both the animals and the donating public to calculated, nefarious harm. Securing a sentence of this length sends a clear message that this kind of cruelty will not be tolerated. And so, we are grateful for the diligence your office showed in bringing him to justice.

Alley Cat Allies is the leading advocacy organization with a mission to protect and improve the lives of all cats and kittens. Since our founding in 1990, we have worked in communities large and small to develop humane, evidence-based policies for cats and take strong action, including in court, against incidents of cruelty to cats.

Far too often, animal abusers escape punishment because our judicial system lacks clear standards for recognizing the signs and implications of animal cruelty. When these acts are overlooked, abusers avoid convictions that reflect the severity of their crimes. This failure ignores cats' sentience and capacity for suffering, and it overlooks the well-documented link between animal cruelty and other forms of violence in our society.

The link between animal cruelty and child abuse, domestic violence, and adverse mental health and community health outcomes is well established. Research has found that violence against animals is predictive of, and often co-occurring with, violence against humans¹. To protect us all, animals and people, it is critical to enforce our animal cruelty laws.

That is why we so greatly appreciate your office's efforts to seek and secure appropriate punishment in this case. This outcome brings a measure of justice to the victims and sets a strong standard for the future investigation and prosecution of animal cruelty, in Henrico County and beyond. Alley Cat Allies remains available to assist with future animal cruelty cases at no cost. Our team includes experts in animal cruelty prosecutions who can research legal issues, provide information regarding veterinarians and other expert witnesses, assist with pleadings, and more.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at dlopez@alleycat.org to discuss how we can help.

Sincerely,

Daniel López, Director of Cruelty Prevention and Justice
Alley Cat Allies

¹ Arnold Arluke et al., The Relationship of Animal Abuse to Violence and Other Forms of Antisocial Behavior, 14-9 Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 963 (1999); Tia Hoffer et al., Violence in Animal Cruelty Offenders, New York: Springer Briefs in Psychology/Behavioral Criminology (2018).