

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(11/20/08)

CONTACT: Karel Minor
Office: 610-921-2348, ext. 10
kminor@berkshumane.org

Humane Society of Berks County Names State Representatives Caltagirone and Kessler as 2008 Animal Welfare Award Recipients

The Humane Society of Berks County (HSBC), the leader in animal welfare, announced that two local State Representatives, Tom Caltagirone (PA 127th Legislative District) and David Kessler (PA 130th Legislative District), were selected to be the recipients of the HSBC's 2008 "Golden Bone Award". The Award is presented annually to individuals or organizations making a significant contribution to the welfare of animals in Berks County and Pennsylvania.

Caltagirone and Kessler were chosen for the award because of their work in Pennsylvania's State House in 2008 to promote vital animal welfare legislation. "Berks County is lucky to have several pro-animal welfare legislators in both parties and we are extremely grateful for all of their efforts," said Karel Minor, Humane Society Executive Director. "We specifically selected Representatives Caltagirone and Kessler to receive this award because of their important leadership roles in promoting two extremely important bills in the past year."

Representative Kessler was recognized for his work in moving House Bill 2525, better known as the Puppy Mill Bill, through the House Agriculture Committee. Although the final Puppy Mill Bill passed the house on a nearly unanimous vote, it faced stiff opposition when initially introduced and needed to be stewarded through the Agriculture Committee. Kessler's leadership in that committee was an important factor in helping HB 2525 to ultimately be signed into law. As a result, tens of thousands of dogs in breeding facilities in Pennsylvania will live better lives.

Representative Caltagirone was recognized for being the primary author of House Bill 2532 and for his efforts to move the bill through the Judiciary Committee and to a full House vote. HB 2532 would prohibit those who are not licensed veterinarians from performing surgeries such as de-barking, caesarian sections, and other significant medical procedures on their own dogs. HB 2532 still awaits State Senate action to become law. "The Humane Society of Berks County knows that we cannot help animals to the fullest extent without the support of strong, smart animal welfare laws," said Minor. "We are very lucky to have legislators like these who help put

Berks County at the vanguard of the effort to make life better for companion animals across the Commonwealth.”

Representative Caltagirone will be receiving his Golden Bone Award at the HSBC’s Thanks-For-Giving Volunteer Appreciation Reception on Thursday, December 4, 2008. The event runs from 5:00 PM to 7:30 PM with the award presentation and the dedication and grand opening of the HSBC’s new LaVigna Dog Adoption Center beginning at 6:30 PM. Representative Kessler will be receiving his award at the HSBC’s Furry Friday Art Exhibition on Friday, January 9, 2009, at 6:30 PM. Both events are free and open to the public and will be held at the HSBC’s animal welfare center at 1801 N. 11th Street, Reading. More information about the events can be found at www.berkshumane.org.

The Humane Society of Berks County serves all of Berks County and surrounding communities. It is a private, non-profit organization funded through donations and service fees. In addition to enforcing Pennsylvania’s animal cruelty laws for all of Berks County, the Humane Society provides adoption services, spay and neuter services, humane education, pet behavioral counseling, veterinary services to the general public, and helps stray, injured and mistreated animals. The Humane Society is located at 1801 N. 11th Street, Reading, and 1201 Ben Franklin Highway E., Douglassville.

###

Attached photos for use in coverage. Photo credit: HSBC (may be used without attribution). Below Left: *Representative David Kessler and his dog Rosie at the HSBC 2008 Walk for the Animals* (September 27, 2008). Below Right: *Representative Tom Caltagirone with HSBC Board member J.D. Krafczek at opening of the HSBC Cat Adoption Center* (March 31, 2007).

