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**HUMANE SOCIETY CRITIC SEEKS DISMISSAL OF LIBEL SUIT
Hearing on November 6**

Kathi Mills hopes to end her year-long legal catfight with the Atlanta Humane Society next Wednesday.

Gwinnett Superior Court Judge William Ray will consider Mills' motion to dismiss the case and a separate motion for summary judgment at 9:40 am in courtroom 3B at the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center.

The public is encouraged to attend the hearing, which promises to be enlightening.

Mills' lawyer, Rob Adelson of Begner & Begner P.C., argues that the case is a Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation (SLAPP), an abuse of the judicial system designed to chill criticism of the AHS by Mills and like-minded individuals.

Adelson also argues that Mills has a First Amendment right to express her opinion about the humane society, which receives \$2 million in taxpayer funds annually—making its executive director, Bill Garrett, a public official and the AHS' operations a matter of public concern.

In rebuttal, the AHS argues that the public has no right to know what is going on at the humane society, the way the humane society treats animals is not an issue of public concern, and Mills' statements have cost them more than \$250,000.

"My statements were made in a private Internet e-mail group consisting of local pet rescuers who share a low opinion of the Atlanta Humane Society," Mills said. "My statements did not cost the AHS one penny."

"The national media would not have known about my statements if the AHS had not filed a lawsuit against me. Bill Garrett made the decision to file this suit, which he admits has cost the pets at the humane society a quarter of a million dollars as a direct result. His conduct is shameful and he should be fired immediately," Mills continued.

In Defense of Animals, a national animal protection organization, filed a "friend of the court" brief supporting Mills' motion to dismiss the case.

In the brief, IDA attorney Dion Sullivan wrote, "IDA relies to a great extent on information received from people who speak out regarding conditions inside government and quasi-governmental facilities regarding the treatment of animals ... Indeed, such people provide the only way the public, government agencies and animal protection groups can find out what is going on inside these facilities."

"Ms. Mills' statements should be protected because they were made out of a desire to correct abuses at a county funded agency," Sullivan wrote.

The humane society sued Mills for \$75,000 last December for criticizing them for failing to spay or neuter animals before adoption, for refusing to allow no-kill groups to rescue animals slated to be killed, and for failing to pursue animal cruelty investigations.

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