



General Assembly

February Session, 2006

Raised Bill No. 5743

LCO No. 2856

02856_____ENV

Referred to Committee on Environment

Introduced by:
(ENV)

AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION PROGRAM FOR MUNICIPAL ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICERS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2007*) For the purposes of
2 sections 2 to 5, inclusive, of this act, "animal control officer" includes a
3 regional animal control officer, assistant regional animal control
4 officer, municipal animal control officer, as defined in section 22-327 of
5 the general statutes, and an assistant municipal animal control officer.

6 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2007*) (a) The Commissioner of
7 Agriculture shall develop a training program, within available
8 appropriations, for certification of animal control officers. The program
9 shall consist of not less than eighty hours of training including, but not
10 limited to: (1) State and federal laws of arrest, search and seizure; (2)
11 state law relating to animals; (3) the basics of investigation; (4) report
12 writing and record keeping; (5) shelter or pound standards; (6) disease
13 recognition; (7) euthanasia policy; (8) ethics and professionalism in
14 dealing with the public; (9) cruelty and neglect investigations,
15 including, but not limited to, blood sports and cults; (10) animal bite

16 and vicious animal investigations; (11) officer safety and loss
17 prevention; (12) animal care, identification, behavior, handling and
18 capture and restraint techniques; (13) overview of the legal system,
19 court structure and terminology; (14) warrants; (15) civil liability
20 issues; and (16) for animal control officers employed by municipalities
21 that permit officers to carry firearms, weapons training.

22 (b) The commissioner shall approve or develop an examination,
23 within available appropriations, designed to test proficiency in the
24 subjects covered by the training program developed pursuant to
25 subsection (a) of this section. The examination may be written, oral,
26 practical or a combination thereof.

27 (c) The commissioner may approve, reject or revoke approval of any
28 animal control officer training courses including, but not limited to,
29 courses provided by the National Animal Control Association, the
30 American Humane Association, the Police Officer Standards and
31 Training Council or the Humane Society of the United States, for
32 inclusion in the training programs developed pursuant to this section.

33 (d) The commissioner may, from time to time, amend or alter the
34 training programs and the examination the commissioner develops
35 pursuant to this section.

36 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2006*) (a) Each person appointed as
37 an animal control officer after October 1, 2006, shall be certified by the
38 Commissioner of Agriculture not later than four years after such
39 appointment. Unless exempted pursuant to subsection (b) of this
40 section, such animal control officers shall satisfactorily complete
41 training requirements and examinations pursuant to section 2 of this
42 act. One-half of the certification shall be completed not later than two
43 years after such appointment. The provisions of section 7-294d of the
44 general statutes shall not apply to animal control officers appointed
45 pursuant to section 22-328, 22-331 or 22-331a of the general statutes.

46 (b) The commissioner shall waive the requirement of satisfactory

47 completion of the training requirements for candidates who have
48 served as animal control officers in the state for a period of five years
49 since July 1, 1996.

50 (c) Notwithstanding any other provision of sections 1 to 4, inclusive,
51 of this act, the commissioner may decline to issue a certificate if (1) the
52 applicant falsified any document in order to obtain or renew the
53 certificate, (2) the applicant has been convicted of a felony, (3) the
54 applicant has been found not guilty of a felony by reason of mental
55 disease or defect pursuant to section 53a-13 of the general statutes, (4)
56 the applicant has been convicted of a violation of subsection (c) of
57 section 21a-279 of the general statutes or section 29-9 of the 2006
58 supplement to the general statutes, or (5) the applicant has been
59 refused issuance of a certificate or similar authorization or has had a
60 certificate or other similar authorization canceled or revoked by
61 another jurisdiction on grounds that would authorize cancellation or
62 revocation under the provisions of this subsection.

63 (d) The commissioner may revoke any certificate if (1) the certificate
64 was issued by administrative error, (2) the certificate was obtained
65 through misrepresentation or fraud, (3) the holder falsified any
66 document in order to obtain or renew any certificate, (4) the holder has
67 been convicted of a felony, (5) the holder has been found not guilty of a
68 felony by reason of mental disease or defect pursuant to section 53a-13
69 of the general statutes, (6) the holder has been convicted of a violation
70 of subsection (c) of section 21a-279 of the general statutes or section
71 29-9 of the 2006 supplement to the general statutes, or (7) the holder
72 has been refused issuance of a certificate or similar authorization or
73 has had the certificate or other authorization canceled or revoked by
74 another jurisdiction on grounds that would authorize cancellation or
75 revocation under the provisions of this subsection.

76 (e) Whenever the commissioner believes there is a reasonable basis
77 for cancellation or revocation of the certificate of an animal control
78 officer, the commissioner shall give the holder of the certificate notice

79 and an opportunity for a hearing, in accordance with the provisions of
80 section 4-182 of the general statutes. Any officer whose certification is
81 revoked pursuant to this section may reapply for certification no
82 sooner than two years after the date on which the revocation order
83 becomes final.

84 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2007*) (a) Certification of a person
85 as an animal control officer shall expire after two years if the person
86 has not been employed as a municipal animal control officer during
87 that period, unless the person is an officer who has been on leave of
88 absence. Upon reemployment of a person as an animal control officer,
89 such officer shall apply for certification and become certified in a
90 manner provided by section 2 of this act.

91 (b) A municipality may appoint a temporary animal control officer
92 who does not hold a certificate pursuant to this act for a period not
93 greater than thirty days per calendar year. The Commissioner of
94 Agriculture may grant a one time thirty-day extension for such
95 temporary animal control officer. The commissioner may encourage
96 municipalities to share the services of animal control officers in the
97 event a temporary animal control officer is needed by a municipality.

98 Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2007*) The Commissioner of
99 Agriculture may adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions
100 of chapter 54 of the general statutes, to implement the provisions of
101 sections 1 to 4, inclusive, of this act, including, but not limited to,
102 establishing procedures for applying for certification as an animal
103 control officer.

104 Sec. 6. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2007*) No municipality shall be
105 liable for compensation to any municipal animal control officer whose
106 certification under section 3 or 4 of this act has been revoked or
107 expired during the period of such revocation or expiration.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>January 1, 2007</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>January 1, 2007</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>October 1, 2006</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>January 1, 2007</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>January 1, 2007</i>	New section
Sec. 6	<i>January 1, 2007</i>	New section

Statement of Purpose:

To protect the public by establishing a training and certification program for municipal animal control officers.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]