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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

### **sHB 5368**

#### ***AN ACT EXTENDING CERTAIN PET SHOP LICENSEE REQUIREMENTS TO PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS THAT IMPORT ANIMALS FOR ADOPTION.***

#### **SUMMARY:**

This bill makes several changes affecting animal importers. The bill requires animal importers to register with the agriculture commissioner and pay a \$100 registration fee before bringing any dog or cat into the state. The registration is valid until the following December 31 and may be renewed annually. Violators are subject to a fine of up to \$500 per animal.

The bill requires any animal importer who intends to offer a dog or cat for sale, adoption, or transfer at a public or outdoor location to notify the Department of Agriculture and the appropriate municipal zoning officer at least 10 days before the event. The notice must include the event date, exact location, and expected number of animals involved. Violators are subject to a fine of up to \$100 per animal.

The bill's registration and notice provisions do not apply to an animal importer who offers a dog or cat for sale to a licensed pet shop.

The bill requires an animal importer, before offering a dog or cat for sale, adoption, or transfer and every 15 days until the sale, adoption, or transfer is complete, to have a state-licensed veterinarian examine the animal. The importer must maintain records of the veterinarian's services for five years after they were rendered. Violators are subject to a fine of up to \$500 per animal.

The bill prohibits a person, firm, or corporation from importing or exporting for adoption or transfer a dog or cat under eight weeks old without its mother. It also prohibits the adoption or transfer of a dog or cat under eight weeks old. Violators are subject to a fine of up to

\$500, imprisonment for up to 30 days, or both.

By law, a dog or cat imported into the state must be accompanied by a health certificate issued within 30 days before the importation by a licensed graduate veterinarian. The certificate must state that the animal is not diseased and, if over three months old, is currently vaccinated for rabies. A dog or cat from a rabies quarantine area must have the state veterinarian's permission before importation. Under current law, violators are subject to a fine of up to \$100, imprisonment for up to 30 days, or both. The bill increases the fine to up to \$500.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2011

## **ANIMAL IMPORTER**

### ***Definition***

The bill defines "animal importer" as a person who brings any dog or cat into Connecticut from another state to offer the animal for sale, adoption, or transfer or give the animal to any person in exchange for a fee, sale, voluntary contribution, service, or any other consideration. An animal importer includes a commercial or nonprofit animal rescue or adoption, humane relocation, or delivery organization that is not required to be licensed under state law. (By law, commercial kennels, pet shops, grooming facilities, and training facilities must be licensed by the agriculture commissioner.)

### ***Registration***

The bill prohibits an animal importer from importing a dog or cat into the state until he or she registers with the agriculture commissioner and pays a \$100 registration fee. The registration must be on a form the commissioner prescribes and include the registrant's name, mailing and business addresses, telephone number, and Internet address. If the registrant is domiciled out-of-state, the registration also must include the name, Connecticut address, and telephone number of a local agent for service of process.

A registration is valid until the following December 31. An importer must renew the registration annually, if the commissioner

determines the importer complies with any applicable regulation relating to the health, safety, and humane treatment of animals.

Registration is not required by an employee or volunteer of a registered animal importer or person holding a commercial kennel, pet shop, grooming facility, or training facility license if the employee, volunteer, or person is not otherwise an animal importer.

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***Related Law***

By law, a person obtaining a dog or cat for resale must hold a pet shop license. Violators are subject to a fine of up to \$1,000, imprisonment for up to 30 days, or both (CGS § 22-344e).

## **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 27 Nay 0 (03/18/2011)