



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 578**

January Session, 2013

Substitute House Bill No. 6591

*House of Representatives, April 18, 2013*

The Committee on Public Health reported through REP. JOHNSON of the 49th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

***AN ACT REQUIRING THE EUTHANIZATION OF ANY CAT OR DOG TO BE PERFORMED BY A LICENSED VETERINARIAN.***

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) Notwithstanding any  
2 provision of the general statutes, whenever any cat or dog is  
3 euthanized, such euthanization shall be performed in a humane  
4 manner by a licensed veterinarian, provided nothing in this section  
5 shall be construed to limit the euthanization of any cat or dog while  
6 such cat or dog is attacking a person or another animal under  
7 circumstances where a reasonable person would consider such attack  
8 life-threatening to a person or another animal or likely to cause serious  
9 physical injury to a person or another animal. Nothing in this section  
10 shall be deemed to apply to the euthanization of any farm animal or  
11 livestock or to the euthanization of any cat or dog by any law  
12 enforcement officer in the course of his or her duties.

13 (b) Any person who violates the provisions of this section shall be  
14 fined not more than one thousand dollars or imprisoned not more than

15 one year, or both.

16 (c) It shall be a defense to prosecution under this section that such  
17 person euthanized such cat or dog with a life-threatening injury in  
18 order to prevent such cat's or dog's further suffering.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section

**PH**      *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

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**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:**

<b>Agency Affected</b>	<b>Fund-Effect</b>	<b>FY 14 \$</b>	<b>FY 15 \$</b>
Correction, Dept.; Judicial Dpt (Probation)	GF - Potential Cost	Indeterminate	Indeterminate
Judicial Dept.	GF - Potential Revenue Gain	Less than \$20,000	Less than \$20,000

**Municipal Impact:** None

**Explanation**

The bill creates a new violation with regards to euthanasia of dogs and cats. The number of potential offenders for this new offense is unknown but is anticipated to be less than 20. To the extent that offenders are prosecuted under this bill, potential costs for incarceration or probation supervision in the community would result. On average, it costs \$50,690 to incarcerate an offender and \$4,968 (including fringe benefits) to supervise an offender on probation in the community. The bill also results in a potential revenue gain of less than \$20,000 to the Judicial Department for fines associated with this provision.

**The Out Years**

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

**OLR Bill Analysis**

**sHB 6591**

***AN ACT REQUIRING THE EUTHANIZATION OF ANY CAT OR DOG TO BE PERFORMED BY A LICENSED VETERINARIAN.***

**SUMMARY:**

With certain exceptions, this bill requires that the euthanization of dogs or cats be performed only by licensed veterinarians in a humane manner. The bill subjects violators to up to a year in prison, up to a \$1,000 fine, or both.

The bill does not apply to the euthanization of (1) farm animals or livestock or (2) cats or dogs by law enforcement officers in the course of their duties. It also does not limit the euthanization of a cat or dog that is attacking a person or another animal (not just a dog or cat), if under the circumstances a reasonable person would consider the attack to threaten the life of, or likely cause serious injury to, the person or animal.

Under the bill it is a defense to prosecution if a person euthanized a dog or cat with a life-threatening injury to prevent the animal's further suffering.

The bill does not define euthanization.

Current law allows Connecticut Humane Society agents or officers, even if they are not licensed veterinarians, to humanely destroy animals under certain conditions (see BACKGROUND). Because the bill specifies that it applies regardless of other provisions of law, it presumably prohibits humane society agents or officers who are not veterinarians from euthanizing dogs or cats unless one of the bill's exceptions applies (e.g., the dog is attacking a person as specified above).

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***Connecticut Humane Society's Authority to Euthanize Animals***

Existing law provides that the euthanization of animals by the Connecticut Humane Society in accordance with state and federal drug laws is not deemed to be the practice of veterinary medicine (CGS § 20-197). Existing law also specifically allows Connecticut Humane Society officers or agents to humanely destroy animals in their charge under certain circumstances. For example, they may humanely destroy such an animal that was lost, abandoned, strayed, homeless, or unsuitable for adoption, if the owner has not claimed the animal after five days. They can do so before then under certain conditions if the animal is injured or diseased (CGS § 29-108g).

They may also humanely destroy an animal that had been neglected or cruelly treated if a veterinarian determines that the animal is so injured or diseased that it should be destroyed immediately (CGS § 29-108e).

## **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 28 Nay 0 (04/05/2013)