
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 6317

AN ACT CONCERNING REGISTRATION OF GROWERS OF SWINE AND TREATMENT OF GESTATING SOWS.

SUMMARY:

This bill reenacts a section of law that was repealed in 2012 relating to the registration of swine growers with the Department of Agriculture (DoAg) and the control of swine diseases. Specifically, the bill:

1. requires anyone growing swine in one location for use or disposal at a different location to register with the DoAg commissioner;
2. authorizes the commissioner to issue orders and regulations for protecting swine from contagious and infectious diseases;
3. requires the commissioner to investigate swine diseases and issue instructions for quarantines and disinfection of diseased premises;
4. requires most imported swine to be disease-free, as certified by a health official and accompanied by a DoAg permit; and
5. requires swine brought into the state for immediate slaughter to be killed in an approved slaughterhouse under veterinary inspection.

By law, the penalty for diseased animal violations is a class D misdemeanor, subject to a fine of up to \$500, up to three months' imprisonment, or both (CGS § 22-321).

The bill also prohibits, with certain exceptions, a farm owner or operator from knowingly tethering or confining a gestating sow in any enclosure (e.g., cage or crate) in a way that prevents the sow from

turning around freely, lying down, standing up, or fully extending its limbs. A violator is subject to a fine of up to \$1,000, up to one year imprisonment, or both. The bill specifies that it is not an affirmative defense to an alleged violation that the farm owner or operator kept the sow as part of an agricultural operation and in accordance with customary animal husbandry or farming practices. The bill does not limit any other law that may protect the welfare of gestating sows.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

IMPORTING AND TESTING SWINE

Under the bill, as under the repealed law, swine cannot be imported into Connecticut unless they come from a validated brucellosis-free and pseudorabies-negative herd. Imported swine must come with a permit from the DoAg commissioner and an official health certificate that certifies the swine are free of infectious or contagious disease. Swine that are imported for immediate slaughter on federally inspected premises do not need a health certificate, but the owner of the premises must weekly report to the commissioner the number of such swine imported.

Swine imported for other than immediate slaughter that are over three months old, other than a barrow (i.e., castrated swine), must pass a brucellosis and pseudorabies blood test within 30 days of being imported. The state veterinarian may waive the 30-day blood test for swine imports from (1) a state validated to be brucellosis- and stage V pseudorabies-free, if the swine spent at least 30 days there before importation, or (2) a herd he determines is pathogen free.

GESTATING SOWS

The bill's prohibition on knowingly tethering or confining a gestating sow in a small enclosure does not apply during:

1. medical research;
2. veterinary care under the direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian;

3. transporting the sow;
4. exhibiting the sow at a state or county fair, 4-H program, or similar exhibition;
5. up to six hours in a 24-hour period for animal husbandry purposes;
6. humane slaughter in accordance with applicable laws and regulations; or
7. the seven days before the sow's expected due date.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 28 Nay 0 (03/04/2013)