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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

### **sHB 6591 (as amended by House "A")\***

#### ***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 limit the killing 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.

The bill does not apply to the euthanization of:

1. farm animals or livestock;
2. cats or dogs by law enforcement officers in the course of their duties;
3. dogs by hospitals, educational institutions, or laboratories licensed to use living dogs in medical or biological teaching, research, or study, in accordance with the law's requirements for such activities; or
4. presumably, dogs or cats by the Connecticut Humane Society. As one of its exceptions, the bill references a statute which, among other things, provides that the euthanization of animals by the Connecticut Humane Society, in accordance with applicable state and federal drug laws, is not deemed to be the practice of veterinary medicine. (Other provisions of existing

law, unchanged by the bill, allow Connecticut Humane Society agents or officers, even if they are not licensed veterinarians, to humanely destroy animals under certain conditions.)

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

\*House Amendment "A":

1. removes a provision specifying that the bill applies notwithstanding other provisions of the statutes;
2. adds the exceptions for the Connecticut Humane Society and dogs used in teaching or research;
3. specifies that the defense to prosecution applies to someone who euthanized an animal with a life-threatening condition, not just a life-threatening injury; and
4. makes a minor change in the exception concerning a dog or cat that is attacking a person or animal.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 28 Nay 0 (04/05/2013)

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 38 Nay 3 (04/24/2013)