

Environment Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-1069
AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO CERTAIN DOMESTIC ANIMAL
Title: RELATED STATUTES.
Vote Date: 3/24/2023
Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute
PH Date: 2/27/2023
File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Environment Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

To redefine "animal", regulate breeding kennels, provide certain procedures concerning the control of rabies and make other minor changes to domestic animal related statutes.

Joint Favorable Substitute-LCO 6252

Deleted section 1 of the raised bill and made conforming changes throughout the remaining bill.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Brian Hurlburt, Commissioner, CT Department of Agriculture

This is the Departments bill with 13 Sections. Section 1 of this bill modifies the definition of animal to more closely align with the departments mission, which revolves around farm animals, companion animals, and animals offered for sale. The department worked closely with the DEEP and DPH to identify changes in this definition which would clearly separate jurisdictional responsibilities between the agencies. Section 2 deals with the seizure and custody of neglected or cruelly treated animals. These revisions would allow for the department and municipal animal control officers to seek orders through the judicial system to provide acceptable level of care for animals when there is reason to believe they are not receiving such care. Section 3 streamlines the reporting mechanisms for municipal animal control officers to the state. Section 4 moves inspection of breeding kennels from the State Animal Control Officers to the local animal control officers. The rest of the Sections are language changes and technical revisions.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Lisa Dalton, 2nd Vice President, CT Town Clerks Association

The CT Town Clerks Association support Section 4 of SB 1069 as the language modification clarifies the definition of kennel licenses issued by the town clerks and better defines in section 22-342 who is qualified to purchase a breeding kennel license.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Jo-Anne Basile, Executive Director, CT Votes for Animals

CT Votes for Animals is opposed to certain sections contained in SB 1069. Specifically, CVA is opposed to changes in the definition of "animal" because it diminishes protection for some of CT's most vulnerable animals. It potentially establishes a precedent that will unravel our animal cruelty statues. They are also concerned about the confusion created when "cruelty" and it is defined differently depending on the section of the law. Lastly, SB 1069 will add an additional option to the forfeiture provisions used when animal cruelty charges are made.

Laura Burban, Director & Animal Control Officer, Branford, CT

Ms. Burban opposes SB 1069, specifically the bill's provision to change the definition of "animal". The change will restrict the staff from working with or taking care of wildlife and will likely impact the care of community cat colonies in our towns.

Doris Harris, President, TAILS

The Alliance In Limiting Strays specifically opposes Section 1, lines 4-10 and the revised definition of "animal" which words "domestic animal that humans selectively breed in captivity". Currently, CT's Feral Cat Law defines a feral cat as a free-roaming domestic cat which is not owned. The proposed wording of SB 1069 will greatly limit an Animal Control Officer's ability to prevent cruelty to community cats and wildlife.

Annie Hornish, CT Senior Director, The Humane Society

The CT Humane Society oppose redefinition of the term "animal" for 4 reasons. 1. It creates statutory confusion. 2. Redefinition would conflict with existing statute that mandates the Animal Control Officers be trained in handling nuisance wildlife. 3. Such redefinition would make it so that the forfeiture process of 22-239a could not be used. 4. Such redefinition would significantly weaken Connecticut's cross reporting law.

Laurie Maulucci, President, CT Federation of Dog Clubs

The CT Federation of Dog Clubs opposes SB 1069. Section 1 of the bill proposes a change in the definition of grooming facility to include those doing business in any vehicle or trailer. CT residents participate in 275 AKC sanctioned events in this state. Grooming is part of the preparation for these events and this change in definition could be interpreted to include these handlers, requiring them to obtain a grooming facilities license. Section 1 also eliminates the current definition of kennel. It substitutes the word "facility and authorizes ACO's to inspect the "facility". The puppies bred by our CT hobby breeders are raised in our homes. There must be a definition of facility which distinguishes personal kennels from commercial business entities that produce dogs for sale to pet shops, wholesalers or brokers

Roz Downing, Pawcatuck, CT

Ms. Downing Opposes SB 1069 because it redefines "animal" and as an animal lover she feels it will remove all wildlife and community cats from the definition of animal.

Several speakers testified and submitted testimony in opposition to SB 1069 An Act Concerning Revisions to Certain Domestic Animal Related Statutes. Many of the concerns included changing the provision to redefine "animal", changing the definition of grooming facilities and the elimination of the current definition of kennel.

Gina Gambino, Animal Control Officer, Monroe, CT

Susan Linker, CEO, Our Companions Animal Rescue

Stacy Ober, New England Regional Manager, American Kennel Club

Lynn Philemon, Animal Control Officer, Old Lyme, CT

Nanette Prideaux, Treasure, Windham County Kennel Club

Jessica Rubin, Professor, Assoc. Dean, UConn Law

Rachel Solveira, President, CT Animal Care Alliance

Lisa Somers, Owner, Licensed Commercial Kennel

Karen Tracy, President, Stratford Animal Rescue Society

Donna Weinhofer, Municipal Animal Control Officer

Over 70 Connecticut Residents sent in testimony in opposition to SB 1069

Reported by: Judith Ganswindt

Date: March 27, 2023