
OLR Bill Analysis

SB 296 (File 253, as amended by Senate "A")*

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE ENFORCEMENT OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE GENERAL STATUTES CONCERNING ROAMING LIVESTOCK.

SUMMARY

Existing law prohibits owners or keepers of dogs or livestock from allowing their animals to roam at large on another's land or a public highway when not under their control. A violation is an infraction. This bill authorizes animal control officers to seek an order enforcing the law, including an injunction, from the Superior Court in the judicial district in which an animal is found roaming at large.

By law, land proprietors must install and maintain fences to secure their fields. The bill also requires land proprietors to install fences sufficient to contain their livestock and prevent them from roaming at large. The bill applies the statute's existing fence specifications, which vary based on the location of the land (i.e., within or outside of incorporated cities).

Lastly, the bill establishes a nine-member task force to study enforcement of the law prohibiting dogs and livestock from roaming at large. The task force must report its findings and recommendations to the Environment Committee by January 1, 2025. It ends on that date or the date it submits the report, whichever is later.

*Senate Amendment "A" adds the provisions that (1) authorize animal control officers to seek court orders to enforce the law prohibiting roaming dogs or livestock and (2) require land proprietors to install fences to contain livestock.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

TASK FORCE

Membership

The task force consists of the agriculture commissioner, or his designee, and eight members appointed as follows:

1. two by the House speaker, one with law enforcement expertise and one with livestock expertise;
2. two by the Senate president pro tempore; and
3. one by each of the other four legislative leaders.

The bill requires the appointing authorities to make their initial appointments within 30 days after the bill takes effect and fill any vacancies that arise.

Chairpersons and Meetings

The House speaker and Senate president pro tempore must select the chairpersons from among the task force members. The chairpersons must schedule and hold the task force's first meeting within 60 days after the bill takes effect.

Staff

The administrative staff of the Environment Committee must be the task force's administrative staff.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 34 Nay 0 (03/20/2024)