

Public Safety and Security Committee
JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-339

AN ACT REQUIRING RESTITUTION WHEN A POLICE ANIMAL OR DOG IN A
Title: VOLUNTEER CANINE SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM IS INJURED OR KILLED.

Vote Date: 3/19/2024

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/7/2024

File No.:

***Disclaimer:** The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

SPONSORS OF BILL:

Rep. Craig C. Fishbein, 90th Dist.
Sen. Heather S. Somers, 18th Dist.
Sen. Tony Hwang, 28th Dist.
Sen. Paul Cicarella, 34th Dist.
Rep. Tony J Scott, 112th Dist.
Rep. Tammy Nuccio, 53rd Dist.
Rep. Nicole Klarides-Ditria, 105th Dist.
Rep. Ben McGorty, 122nd Dist.
Rep. Michael DiGiovancarlo, 74th Dist.
Rep. Kurt Vail, 52nd Dist.
Rep. Michael D Quinn, 82nd Dist.
Rep. Tom Delnicki, 14th Dist.
Rep. Greg S. Howard, 43rd Dist.
Rep. Rick L. Hayes, 51st Dist.
Rep. Gale L. Mastrofrancesco, 80th Dist.

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill would require compensation to a law enforcement unit, entity, or individual that owns a working or volunteer canine, if that animal is killed or injured during an investigative search. The bill would provide protections to the owners in the case that their canine was intentionally killed or injured during a work or volunteer search. It clarifies that the person who does such an act during active duty would be guilty of a Class D felony and lists the required restitution. For an injured animal, the compensation must cover the veterinary costs. For killing an animal, the guilty party should be fined no more than \$10,000, imprisoned no more than 10 years, and to pay for the costs of purchasing and training a new animal.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None Expressed

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Stacey Ober, New England Manager Govt. Relations, American Kennel Club (AKC):

Testified in supports of this bill via correspondence. Stacey testified that her organization is a trusted expert in canine health, breeding and training and the world's largest purebred dog registry, and that the AKC strongly supports this bill. They value the contribution that working, and detection dogs make to national security and the extraordinary role they play in protecting the peace and security of individuals, communities, and nations against extremist threats. Her organization also supports expanded scientific research and breeding programs to ensure enough high-quality domestically bred dogs are available. AKC has provided 11 police canines to 11 departments through their Adopt a K-9 Cop grant program.

Additional Testimony:

Testimony was offered by the following people in full support of this bill for the required compensation for someone who kills or injures a working or volunteer dog during a search and rescue mission, just like it the canine were a person.

1. Patricia A. Clark
2. Jonathan Ackerman
3. Jeffrey Atwood
4. Melissa Bettigole
5. Mary Ann Clark
6. Marilyn Douglas, Former Handler of Therapy Dogs
7. Robert and Sara Futh, Owners of Starberry Farm
8. Ann Compton, Legislative Liaison for Tri-State Shetland Sheepdog Club
9. Karen Ann Bachelles, Canine Sports Competitor for Talcott Mountain Agility Club
10. Carol Noyes, Former Dog Training Class Assistant
11. Theda Marinelli
12. David Wright
13. Stephanie Abraham
14. Anonymous, Therapy Dog Handler
15. Camryn O'Brien
16. Antje Fray
17. Jane Goodell
18. Amanda Vinal
19. Anonymous

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None Expressed

Reported by: Michelle Adams

Date: 4/1/2024