
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 6240

AN ACT CONCERNING THE HEALTH AND WELFARE OF ANIMALS SOLD AT PET STORES.

SUMMARY

This bill extends, from two to three years, the look-back period for violations by breeders selling cats or dogs to licensed pet shops. By law, a pet shop licensee that buys dogs or cats must buy them from a licensed breeder who, during the look-back period, has not committed (1) a direct violation of United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) pet dealer regulations or (2) three or more indirect USDA violations relating to the health or welfare of an animal that were not administrative (see BACKGROUND). A pet shop licensee who violates this requirement is subject to a fine of up to \$1,000 per violation, and each day of a continuing violation is a separate offense.

The bill also requires the state Department of Agriculture (DoAg) commissioner to report to the Environment Committee annually by February 1. Each report must include the:

1. place of origin of all dogs a pet shop licensee sold in the prior year based on the certificates of origin that licensees must file with DoAg and
2. number and nature of violations DoAg issued in the prior year under the statute that requires pet shop licensees to (a) file certificates of origin for dogs the pet shop sourced and sold and (b) source dogs and cats from licensed breeders with a minimum number of USDA regulation violations.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025

BACKGROUND***USDA Violations***

USDA-licensed breeders must comply with standards of care outlined in federal regulations under the Animal Welfare Act. These standards set minimum requirements for humane handling, shelter, space requirements, feeding, watering, sanitation, and veterinary care, among other things. To ensure breeders comply with the requirements, USDA inspectors perform compliance inspections. The USDA typically classifies regulatory violations into two categories: direct and indirect. Direct violations are violations that, at the time of inspection, are causing or have a high potential to cause a serious or severe adverse effect on animal welfare. Indirect violations do not directly harm an animal's health, but could potentially impact their health or welfare.

Related Bill

HB 6832 (File 306), favorably reported by the Planning and Development Committee, authorizes municipalities to prohibit the sale of dogs, cats, and rabbits in pet shops in their jurisdiction.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 33 Nay 0 (03/28/2025)