



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 221

February Session, 2026

Substitute Senate Bill No. 318

Senate, March 30, 2026

The Committee on Environment reported through SEN. LOPES of the 6th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING ANIMAL WELFARE.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2026*) The Commissioner of
2 Agriculture, in consultation with the Office of Victim Services, shall
3 study the impact of the need for placement of companion animals on
4 victims of domestic violence. Such study shall include, but not be
5 limited to, the: (1) Existing resources available for victims of domestic
6 violence to find temporary or permanent placements for a companion
7 animal, (2) identification of one or more persons who may serve as a
8 contact person for victims of domestic violence in the state who need to
9 place their companion animal in the care of another person due to such
10 circumstance, and (3) feasibility of establishing a phone number or other
11 electronic communication line that is accessible twenty-four hours a day
12 for victims of domestic violence in the state who need to place their
13 companion animal in the care of another person due to such
14 circumstance. Not later than January 1, 2027, the commissioner shall
15 submit the findings and any associated recommendations concerning

16 such study to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly
17 having cognizance of matters related to the environment, in accordance
18 with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

19 Sec. 2. Subsection (d) of section 22-26f of the 2026 supplement to the
20 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
21 thereof (*Effective October 1, 2026*):

22 (d) The State Veterinarian may issue orders to prevent the spread of
23 [contagious and infectious diseases] disease among animals and poultry
24 and may protect the public from such diseases as may be transmissible
25 to human beings, either directly or through the products of such
26 animals.

27 Sec. 3. (*Effective from passage*) Not later than July 1, 2026, the
28 Commissioner of Agriculture shall convene a working group within the
29 Department of Agriculture to study the animal population control
30 program, established pursuant to section 22-380g of the general statutes,
31 and develop recommendations concerning such program, including,
32 but not limited to, ways to augment and stabilize the funding of such
33 program. Such working group shall consist of: (1) The Commissioner of
34 Agriculture, or the commissioner's designee, (2) the executive director
35 of the Connecticut Humane Society, or the executive director's designee,
36 (3) a representative from an animal welfare organization, as appointed
37 by the commissioner, (4) a representative from the Connecticut
38 Veterinary Medical Association, (5) a representative of an organization
39 that represents animal control officers, and (6) any additional members,
40 as deemed necessary by the commissioner. The commissioner, on or
41 before January 1, 2027, shall submit the recommendations of such
42 working group to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly
43 having cognizance of matters related to the environment, in accordance
44 with section 11-4a of the general statutes.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2026	New section

Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2026</i>	22-26f(d)
Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>	New section

ENV *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note**State Impact:** None**Municipal Impact:** None**Explanation**

The bill clarifies the state veterinarian's role to issue orders for preventing disease spread among animals and poultry and does not result in a fiscal impact. Additionally, the bill requires the Department of Agriculture (DoAg) to study how the need for companion animal placement affects domestic violence victims and does not result in a fiscal impact as DoAg has the staff and resources necessary to complete the study.

The Out Years**State Impact:** None**Municipal Impact:** None

OLR Bill Analysis**SB 318*****AN ACT CONCERNING ANIMAL WELFARE.*****SUMMARY**

This bill expands the state veterinarian's authority to issue orders for preventing disease spread among animals and poultry by allowing her to issue them for any disease, rather than just for those that are contagious and infectious. It correspondingly allows her to protect the public from this broader category of disease.

The bill also requires the Department of Agriculture (DoAg) commissioner to (1) study how the need for companion animal placement affects domestic violence victims and (2) create a working group to study the state's animal population control program.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026, except the working group provision is effective upon passage.

COMPANION ANIMAL PLACEMENT STUDY

The bill requires the DoAg commissioner, in consultation with the Office of Victim Services, to study how the need for companion animal placement affects domestic violence victims and submit a report on the study and any recommendations to the Environment Committee by January 1, 2027.

Under the bill, the study must:

1. include resources currently available for domestic violence victims to find temporary or permanent placements;
2. identify at least one contact person for victims in Connecticut who need to place their companion animal in another person's care due to a domestic violence situation; and

3. examine the feasibility of establishing a phone number or other electronic communications line accessible 24 hours a day for victims who need to place their companion animal in another person's care.

ANIMAL POPULATION CONTROL PROGRAM WORKING GROUP

The bill requires the DoAg commissioner to create, by July 1, 2026, a working group to study the state's animal population control program, which funds spaying or neutering for dogs and cats. The group must make recommendations about the program, including ways to increase and stabilize its funding, and the commissioner must submit them to the Environment Committee by January 1, 2027.

The working group's members include the following:

1. the DoAg commissioner or his designee;
2. the Connecticut Humane Society's executive director or his designee;
3. an animal welfare organization representative, appointed by the commissioner;
4. a Connecticut Veterinary Medical Association representative;
5. an animal control officers' organization representative; and
6. any other members the commissioner determines are needed.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 34 Nay 0 (03/13/2026)