

By: Bonnen

H.B. No. 1505

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to developing and administering an animal control officer training program.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Title 10, Health and Safety Code, is amended by adding Chapter 829 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 829. ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICERS

Sec. 829.001. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

(1) "Animal control" means the enforcement of state and local laws relating to prevention of animal and human rabies episodes, prevention of zoonotic diseases, protection of community health and safety in relation to animals, and other animal-related problems.

(2) "Animal control officer" means an officer or employee of this state or of a political subdivision of this state who has responsibility for animal control.

(3) "Department" means the Department of State Health Services.

(4) "Executive commissioner" means the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission.

Sec. 829.002. ANIMAL CONTROL TRAINING PROGRAM. (a) The department shall work with the Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education and the Parks and Wildlife Department to develop and administer a voluntary training program

1 for animal control officers. The training program must include
2 basic coverage of the following legal topics relevant to the
3 performance of an animal control officer's duties:

4 (1) criminal procedure, including general duties of
5 officers, search and seizure, and crime victims' rights;

6 (2) offenses against persons and property;

7 (3) health and safety of animals; and

8 (4) violations of the Parks and Wildlife Code.

9 (b) The department shall administer the animal control
10 officer training program.

11 (c) The executive commissioner by rule shall establish fees
12 in amounts reasonable and necessary to cover the costs of
13 administering the training program.

14 (d) An animal control officer training program developed
15 under this section is not intended to replace an existing program
16 administered by the department. The department may incorporate
17 aspects of an existing animal control officer training program into
18 a program developed under this section.

19 SECTION 2. The Department of State Health Services shall
20 develop an animal control officer training program as required by
21 Section 829.002, Health and Safety Code, as added by this Act, not
22 later than March 1, 2006.

23 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2005.