

By: Farrar

H.B. No. 234

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the costs associated with proceedings regarding cruelly treated animals; authorizing fees and costs.

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

SECTION 1. Section 821.023(e), Health and Safety Code, is amended to read as follows:

(e) After a court finds that an animal's owner has cruelly treated the animal, the court may order the owner to pay the county's or municipality's reasonable attorney's fees, and shall order the owner to pay all court costs, including:

(1) the administrative costs of:

(A) investigation;

(B) expert witnesses; and

(C) conducting any public sale ordered by the court; and

(2) the costs incurred by a municipal or county animal shelter or a nonprofit animal welfare organization in:

(A) housing and caring for the animal during its impoundment; and

(B) humanely destroying the animal if destruction is ordered by the court.

SECTION 2. Section 821.025, Health and Safety Code, is amended by adding Subsection (i) to read as follows:

(i) After a county court or county court at law finds that an

1 animal's owner has cruelly treated the animal, the court may order  
2 the owner to pay the county's or municipality's reasonable  
3 attorney's fees and court costs, including the costs of  
4 investigation and expert witnesses.

5         SECTION 3. The change in law made by this Act applies only  
6 to a proceeding commenced under Section [821.023](#) or [821.025](#), Health  
7 and Safety Code, on or after the effective date of this Act. A  
8 proceeding commenced before the effective date of this Act is  
9 covered by the law in effect at the time the proceeding is  
10 commenced, and the former law is continued in effect for that  
11 purpose.

12         SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2015.