

By: Farrar

H.B. No. 3963

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT  
2 relating to establishment and functions of the Animal Welfare  
3 Commission.

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

5 SECTION 1. ANIMAL WELFARE COMMISSION. (a) The Animal  
6 Welfare Commission is created to study and provide recommendations  
7 to the legislature regarding animal welfare issues, including the:

- 8 (1) regulation of the ownership of exotic animals;
- 9 (2) transfer of animal ownership from an owner to an  
10 animal shelter after the shelter's acquisition of the animal;
- 11 (3) inspection of animal shelters;
- 12 (4) regulation of veterinarians under the Occupations  
13 Code in relation to animal shelters;
- 14 (5) management of the coyote population in urban  
15 areas;
- 16 (6) welfare of circus animals in this state;
- 17 (7) definition of "animal shelter" in Title 10, Health  
18 and Safety Code;
- 19 (8) definition of "dangerous dog" in Title 10, Health  
20 and Safety Code;
- 21 (9) efficacy of trap, sterilize, and return programs;
- 22 and
- 23 (10) protocols for animal euthanasia.

24 (b) The Animal Welfare Commission consists of the following

1 members:

2 (1) three members appointed by the governor, one of  
3 whom must represent the interests of animal shelters and another of  
4 whom must represent the interests of law enforcement in this state;

5 (2) the lieutenant governor or a designee of the  
6 lieutenant governor;

7 (3) the speaker of the house of representatives or a  
8 designee of the speaker;

9 (4) the commissioner of state health services or a  
10 designee of the commissioner;

11 (5) the executive director of the Texas State Board of  
12 Veterinary Medical Examiners or a designee of the executive  
13 director;

14 (6) the executive director of the Animal Health  
15 Commission or a designee of the executive director; and

16 (7) the executive director of the Parks and Wildlife  
17 Department or a designee of the executive director.

18 (c) When making initial appointments under Subsection (b)  
19 of this section, the governor shall designate one of the governor's  
20 appointees as the presiding officer of the Animal Welfare  
21 Commission.

22 (d) Each appointing official shall appoint members to the  
23 Animal Welfare Commission not later than December 31, 2015.

24 (e) If a vacancy arises on the Animal Welfare Commission,  
25 the vacancy must be filled as soon as practicable in the same manner  
26 as the original appointment as provided by Subsection (b) of this  
27 section.

1 (f) The Animal Welfare Commission shall meet not later than  
2 the 30th day after the date the final initial appointment is made  
3 under Subsection (b) of this section and shall meet regularly as  
4 necessary at the call of the presiding officer.

5 (g) An Animal Welfare Commission member is not entitled to  
6 reimbursement of expenses or to compensation.

7 (h) On the Animal Welfare Commission's request, the  
8 comptroller of public accounts or a state agency, department, or  
9 office shall provide any assistance the commission requires to  
10 perform the commission's duties.

11 SECTION 2. REPORT ON ANIMAL WELFARE. Not later than January  
12 1, 2017, the Animal Welfare Commission shall provide to the  
13 governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house of  
14 representatives a final report on animal welfare in this state. The  
15 report must include:

16 (1) recommendations for efficient and effective  
17 solutions to the commission's charge, in addition to solutions to  
18 other animal welfare issues identified by the commission;

19 (2) proposed legislation necessary to implement the  
20 recommendations described by Subdivision (1) of this section;

21 (3) administrative recommendations; and

22 (4) a complete explanation of each of the commission's  
23 recommendations.

24 SECTION 3. APPLICABILITY OF OTHER LAW. The Animal Welfare  
25 Commission is not subject to Chapter 2210, Government Code.

26 SECTION 4. EXPIRATION. This Act expires and the Animal  
27 Welfare Commission is abolished June 1, 2017.

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1           SECTION 5.   EFFECTIVE DATE.   This Act takes effect September  
2 1, 2015.