

By: Zaffirini

S.B. No. 908

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to establishment and functions of the Animal Welfare Commission.

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

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

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

(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.