

By: Reynolds

H.B. No. 2722

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the trap, sterilize, and release program for stray cats in certain counties.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 828, Health and Safety Code, is amended by adding Section 828.015 to read as follows:

Sec. 828.015. TRAP, STERILIZE, AND RELEASE PROGRAM FOR CERTAIN COUNTIES. (a) In this section:

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

(2) "Program" means the trap, sterilize, and release program established under this section.

(b) This section applies only to a county with a population of 550,000 or more that is adjacent to a county with a population of 3.3 million or more.

(c) The department shall establish the trap, sterilize, and release program to protect the public safety by controlling the stray cat population in a county in which the program is established.

(d) The department shall contract with appropriate releasing agencies to operate the program. In the contract, the department must maintain sufficient control to ensure the public purpose of improved public safety is accomplished and the state receives the return benefit.

1 (e) In operating the program, a releasing agency shall:

2 (1) humanely trap stray cats located in a county for
3 which the program is established;

4 (2) transport the trapped stray cat to a veterinarian
5 or animal clinic for:

6 (A) sterilization and vaccination of the cat; and

7 (B) removal of a quarter-inch from the tip of the
8 cat's left ear while the cat is anesthetized as a sign of the
9 sterilization and vaccination; and

10 (3) return the sterilized and vaccinated cat to the
11 location where the cat was trapped or appropriately relocate the
12 cat provided that the location is not:

13 (A) public land for wildlife or outdoor
14 recreation activities, including lands owned or managed by:

15 (i) the Parks and Wildlife Department;

16 (ii) the Department of Agriculture;

17 (iii) the National Park Service; or

18 (iv) the United States Fish and Wildlife
19 Service of the United States Department of the Interior; or

20 (B) a land recognized as located within coastal
21 migratory bird pathways.

22 SECTION 2. Not later than January 1, 2020, the Department of
23 State Health Services shall establish the trap, sterilize, and
24 release program required by Section 828.015, Health and Safety
25 Code, as added by this Act.

26 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.