By: Hinojosa of Hidalgo S.B. No. 420

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the stray dog and cat sterilization grant program and county and municipal sterilization operations.

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

SECTION 1. Title 10, Health and Safety Code, is amended by adding Chapter 828A to read as follows:

CHAPTER 828A. COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL STRAY DOG AND CAT STERILIZATION

SUBCHAPTER A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 828A.001. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

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

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

(3) "Grant program" means the stray dog and cat sterilization grant program established under Subchapter B.

(4) "Sterilization" has the meaning assigned by Section 828.001.

SUBCHAPTER B. GRANT PROGRAM

Sec. 828A.051. DEPARTMENT-ADMINISTERED GRANT PROGRAM. (a) The department or the department's designee, in cooperation with the governing bodies of counties and municipalities in this state, shall establish and administer the stray dog and cat sterilization grant program to award grants to counties and municipalities for assistance with controlling local stray dog and cat populations.

(b) The department or the department's designee may contract with a public or private entity to implement the activities authorized by this chapter.

(c) The department or the department's designee may seek, receive, and spend money through appropriations, grants, or donations from public or private sources for the grant program.

Sec. 828A.052. MINIMUM STANDARDS. (a) The executive commissioner by rule shall establish minimum standards for the use by grant recipients of money awarded under the grant program to fund local sterilization operations.

(b) The rules must require grant recipients to perform surgery or nonsurgical sterilization in accordance with Chapter 828.

Sec. 828A.053. COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION. (a) The governing body of a county or municipality may apply to the department for a grant under the grant program in the form and manner prescribed by the department.

(b) The department may award a grant to an applicant that submits a completed application and complies with the requirements of this chapter and rules adopted under this chapter.

Sec. 828A.054. REPORT REQUIRED. Not later than September 1 of each year, the governing body of a county or municipality awarded a grant under the grant program shall submit a written report to the department in the form and manner the department prescribes that states:

(1) the total amount of grant money received and spent to administer local dog and cat sterilization operations; and

(2) the number of stray dogs and cats sterilized using grant money.

SUBCHAPTER C. LOCAL AUTHORITY FOR DOG AND CAT STERILIZATION

Sec. 828A.101. GENERAL COUNTY AUTHORITY. (a) The commissioners court of a county may conduct or fund voluntary dog and cat sterilizations in the county and by order set sterilization standards compatible with and equal to or more stringent than department rules adopted under this chapter.

(b) The commissioners court of a county may not require a dog or cat owner to surrender a dog or cat for sterilization under the county's voluntary dog and cat sterilization program.

Sec. 828A.102. GENERAL MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY. (a) The governing body of a municipality may conduct or fund voluntary dog and cat sterilizations in the municipality and by ordinance set sterilization standards compatible with and equal to or more stringent than:

(1) any orders adopted by a county in which the municipality is located; and

(2) department rules adopted under this chapter.

(b) The governing body of a municipality may not require a dog or cat owner to surrender a dog or cat for sterilization under the municipality's voluntary dog and cat sterilization program.

Sec. 828A.103. LOCAL CONTRACTING AUTHORITY. The governing body of a county or municipality may contract with a public or private entity to implement the activities authorized by this chapter.

SECTION 2. As soon as practicable after the effective date

of this Act, the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission shall adopt the rules necessary to implement the changes in law made by this Act.

SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2027.