

HB 1847 -- Wild Animals

Sponsor: Low (39)

This bill prohibits a person from knowingly possessing, harboring, selling, bartering, transferring, exchanging, or importing any wild animal for use as a pet in Missouri. Certain federally licensed entities, research facilities, nonresidents, state universities or other state agencies, and wildlife sanctuaries are exempt from the prohibition. Licensed veterinarians and certain animal welfare organizations in temporary possession of wild animals are also exempt if they notify the Department of Agriculture within 48 hours of obtaining custody of the animal.

Persons currently in possession of a wild animal may retain possession for the remainder of the animal's life if the owner has not been convicted of any offense related to animal cruelty; applies to the department within 60 days for a permit authorizing possession; does not breed the animal; and complies with the rules established by the department regarding the care, treatment, handling, control, documentation, required liability insurance, and reporting of a wild animal. Annual permit fees of not less than \$20 will be established by the department. Fines for certain violations of the law regarding wild animals are specified.

Nothing in the bill restricts any city, town, or village from passing more restrictive provisions governing the possession of wild animals for use as pets.