

HB 2813 -- ANIMAL WELFARE

SPONSOR: Mann

Currently, the State veterinarian or an animal welfare official must inspect each licensed animal care facility at least once per year or upon a complaint. This bill requires follow up inspections until any violations found during an inspection have been resolved. The State veterinarian or animal welfare official must provide a copy of all records documenting the violation to the appropriate animal control or law enforcement agency within 24 hours of the investigation.

The bill also specifies that verified delivery of a report of violation constitutes a notice to the facility operator of the intent to confiscate the animals and prohibits a facility from destroying the animals until the confiscation is complete.

The bill adds requirements for animals in facilities regulated under the Canine Cruelty Prevention Act to have meaningful socialization with humans and compatible dogs. In addition, a person with custody of the animals must make reasonable efforts to find humane placement for retired breeding dogs. The bill also modifies the definition of several terms including "adequate rest between breeding cycles", "necessary veterinary care", "regular exercise", and "sufficient housing".

The bill also establishes the "Healthy Pets Act", which requires commercial breeders to maintain healthy breeding practices by completing certain requirements, as specified in the bill, on all animals used for breeding, which will be considered records of parentage on any animal resulting from a breeding pair. Commercial breeders must also complete specified requirements prior to selling any animal to an individual, dealer, or pet shop.

Dealers and pet shops may not purchase, exchange, or otherwise obtain animals from a commercial breeder that has been found to be in violation of any State or Federal law or regulation relating to the care or keeping of animals within the previous three years or been found guilty of animal abuse or neglect. Any dealer or pet shop who knowingly purchases an animal for a commercial breeder in violation of these requirements is guilty of a class A misdemeanor and subsequent offenses may be enhanced to a class E felony. Any dealer or pet shop found guilty of a third offense will have its licensed revoked and be prohibited from selling animals.

Dealers may not buy, transfer, or exchange animals with a third party or final consumer without providing specified information.

Pet shops must display prominently on each enclosure the total price of the animal and certain information about the commercial breeder from which the animal was obtained.

Each animal purchased from a dealer or pet shop must be warrantied to be free from genetic or major medical conditions for one year from the date of purchase.