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## DIGEST

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HB 466 Reengrossed

2017 Regular Session

Chaney

**Abstract:** Modifies provisions of law providing for the La. Animal Welfare Commission and the La. Animal Shelter Registry, and repeals the La. Pet Registry.

Present law provides for the La. Animal Welfare Commission (commission), which assists the governor's office of community programs with ensuring and promoting the proper treatment and well-being of animals by supporting local and municipal animal control efforts, making recommendations concerning the care and keeping of animals, and establishing the La. Animal Welfare Fund to be used solely to carry out the functions and duties of the commission.

Proposed law modifies present law by removing provisions relative to the creation, membership, inspection authority, public records request authority, and funding relative to the commission and instead creates the La. Animal Control Advisory Task Force under the direction of the state veterinarian within the Dept. of Agriculture and Forestry to ensure and promote the proper treatment and well-being of animals.

Proposed law specifies that the task force shall consist of six members appointed by the commissioner as follows: one member who is a small animal veterinarian, one member who is a director of a public animal control agency, one individual from the public at large, one representative from the La. Animal Control Assoc., one representative from the La. Veterinary Medical Assoc., and the state veterinarian. Specifies that the members serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority. Specifies that members must serve without compensation. Further requires the task force act in an advisory capacity to the state veterinarian and report activities periodically.

Proposed law empowers the state veterinarian to carry out its purpose, including but not limited to the following: support local and municipal animal control efforts; support law enforcement in the investigation and prosecution of animal cruelty cases; make recommendations concerning the care and keeping of animals; coordinate a statewide pet database; formulate and implement proposals to deal with animal overpopulation; promulgate rules and regulations which may be adopted by parish and local authorities for the proper care and treatment of animals; inspect any animal impoundment facilities for the purpose of making recommendations for improvement to those facilities and their operations to the appropriate governing authority under certain circumstances; and request any animal control agency to produce public records pertaining to animal intake, adoption, and euthanasia.

Proposed law provides that if the department does not receive the necessary funds or receives insufficient monies to fund the program, the program will become inactive.

Present law provides for the La. Pet Registry. Requires the commission to establish and maintain a voluntary registry for animals, and provides that the current owner of any animal may register that animal with the commission. Further provides registration requirements, registration identification numbers, animal license tags and procedures for affixing the tag to the registered animal, notification of animal registration by the owner to the commission, a registration fee, directions for where the fees should be deposited, and where applications for registration and public notices pertaining to the registry must be provided.

Proposed law repeals present law.

Present law provides for the La. Animal Shelter Registry, a voluntary animal shelter registry used by the commission to carry out its duties by requiring each parish to submit to the commission a list of all public animal shelters located within the parish's jurisdiction.

Proposed law modifies present law by removing the commission and replacing it with the La. Animal Control Task Force, removing the definition of commission and any references to commission in present law, and removing the option granted to public animal shelters that allows them to manually fill out the basic animal data matrix and mail it in.

Present law provides that an individual may donate all or a portion of his income tax refund to the La. Animal Welfare Commission.

Proposed law modifies present law by changing the La. Animal Welfare Commission to the La. Pet Overpopulation Advisory Council for purposes of income tax refund donation.

(Amends R.S. 3:2364 and 2366(A), (B), (C), (D)(intro. para.), and (E)(intro. para.) and (1) and R.S. 47:120.71(section heading) and (A); Repeals R.S. 3:2365)

#### Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture, and Rural Development to the original bill:

1. Make technical changes.
2. Increase the membership on the La. Animal Control Advisory Task Force from five to six.
3. Replace the private animal shelter member on the task force with an individual from the public at large.
4. Add the state veterinarian to the task force.
5. Clarify that the governing authority of an animal impoundment facility grants the state veterinarian access to its records and personnel within seven days of receipt of a written request.

6. Repeal requirements relative to the La. Pet Registry and remove any references to the law.
7. Add the La. Animal Shelter Registry to proposed law and change reference to the La. Animal Welfare Commission to the La. Animal Control Advisory Task Force.
8. Remove the definition of commission and any reference to the commission under the La. Animal Shelter Registry law.
9. Change the La. Animal Welfare Commission to the La. Pet Overpopulation Advisory Council for income tax refund donation purposes.

The House Floor Amendments to the engrossed bill:

1. Make technical changes.