

## RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

ACT 422 (HB 466)

2017 Regular Session

Chaney

Prior law provided for the La. Animal Welfare Commission (commission), which assisted 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.

New law removes prior law and abolishes the La. Animal Welfare Commission 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.

New law specifies that the task force shall consist of seven 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, two individuals 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.

New law empowers the state veterinarian to carry out the purposes of new law, 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.

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

Prior law provided for the La. Pet Registry. Required 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 provided 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.

New law repeals prior law.

Prior law provided 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.

New law modifies prior 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 prior 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.

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

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

Prior law (R.S. 36:4(W)) placed the La. Animal Welfare Commission within the office of the governor.

New law repeals prior law and transfers the La. Animal Welfare Commission, renamed the La. Animal Control Advisory Task Force, to the Dept. of Agriculture and Forestry.

New law requires the Dept. of Agriculture and Forestry to submit an annual report to the House and Senate committees on agriculture, forestry, aquaculture, and rural development no later than Feb. 1<sup>st</sup> of each year regarding the status of the animal control program as provided for in new law.

Effective August 1, 2017.

(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); Adds R.S. 36:629(C)(9); Repeals R.S. 3:2365 and R.S. 36:4(W))