

2024 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 854

BY REPRESENTATIVES GEYMANN AND VENTRELLA

WILDLIFE & FISHERIES: Provides for exemption to wildlife rehabilitation program rules

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 56:125.1, relative to wildlife possession; to provide for an exemption to
3 Wildlife Rehabilitation Program rules for possession of wildlife; to provide for strict
4 liability of anybody in possession of certain animal species that cause damages to a
5 person or property; and to provide for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 56:125.1 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

8 §125.1. Wildlife Rehabilitation Program; exemption

9 Notwithstanding any local ordinance, administrative rule, or any other
10 provision of law to the contrary, individuals may possess in captivity any sick,
11 injured, or orphaned wildlife if they have satisfied the course requirements of the
12 Wildlife Rehabilitation Program, as provided for in LAC 76:V.131, and a licensed
13 veterinarian has determined that the animal is medically nonreleasable or exhibits
14 signs of adjusted life in captivity and poses minimum zoonotic potential. Wildlife
15 included under this exemption shall be limited to the following species: (1) squirrel,
16 (2) skunk, (3) opossum, (4) raccoon, (5) rabbit, or (6) chipmunk, with such
17 possession limited to one animal per individual. Individuals in possession of one of
18 these animals shall be held strictly liable for any damages for injuries to persons or
19 property caused by the animal.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 854 Engrossed

2024 Regular Session

Geymann

Abstract: Provides for exemption to Wildlife Rehabilitation Program rules.

Proposed law adds an exemption to the Wildlife Rehabilitation Program rules regarding possession of wildlife. Proposed law provides that, notwithstanding any law or rules to the contrary, individuals may possess in captivity any sick, injured or orphaned wildlife if they have satisfied the course requirements of the Wildlife Rehabilitation Program, as provided by administrative rule, and a licensed veterinarian has determined that the animal is medically non-releasable or exhibits signs of adjusted life in captivity and poses minimum zoonotic potential. Proposed law specifies that wildlife included under this exemption shall be limited to the following species: (1) squirrel, (2) skunk, (3) opossum, (4) raccoon, (5) rabbit, or (6) chipmunk, with such possession limited to one animal per individual. Proposed law provides for strict liability for individuals in possession of one of these animals if they cause any damages to persons or property.

(Adds R.S. 56:125.1)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment to the original bill:

1. Specify that proposed law supercedes any existing local ordinance, administrative rule, or any other provision of law to the contrary.
2. Make a technical change.