

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT

HB 466

2017 Regular Session

Chaney

June 7, 2017

To the Honorable Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives and the Honorable President and Members of the Senate.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We, the conferees appointed to confer over the disagreement between the two houses concerning House Bill No. 466 by Representative Chaney, recommend the following concerning the Reengrossed bill:

1. That the set of Senate Committee Amendments by the Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture, and Rural Development (#2446) be adopted.
2. That Senate Floor Amendment Nos. 1 and 3 by Senator Gatti (#2675) be adopted.
3. That Senate Floor Amendment No. 2 by Senator Gatti (#2675) be rejected.
4. That the following amendment to the Reengrossed bill be adopted:

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 6, between lines 14 and 15, insert the following:

"F. The department shall submit an annual report to the House and Senate committees on Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture, and Rural Development no later than February first of each year regarding the status of the animal control program as provided for in this Section."

Respectfully submitted,

Representative Charles R. Chaney

Senator Ryan Gatti

Representative Clay Schexnayder

Senator Francis Thompson

Representative John F. "Andy" Anders

Senator Jim Fannin

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT DIGEST

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Keyword and oneliner of the instrument as it left the House

AGRICULTURE: Provides relative to animal control

Report adopts Senate amendments to:

1. Increase the membership of the La. Animal Control Advisory Task Force from six to seven.
2. Add an additional individual from the public at large to the task force.
3. Repeal the provision which places the La. Animal Welfare Commission within the office of the governor and transfers the commission, renamed the La. Animal Control Advisory Task Force, to the Dept. of Agriculture and Forestry.
4. Make technical changes.

Report rejects Senate amendments which would have:

1. Required the Dept. of Agriculture and Forestry to submit a report to the House and Senate committees on Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture, and Rural Development annually on February 15th outlining the status and funds spent in the performance of duties specified in proposed law.

Report amends the bill to:

1. Require 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 February first of each year regarding the status of the animal control program as provided for in proposed law.

Digest of the bill as proposed by the Conference Committee

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 abolishing the La. Animal Welfare Commission and removing provisions relative to the creation, membership, inspection authority, transaction of business, duties, and functions, 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 must 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.

Proposed law empowers the state veterinarian to carry out the purposes of proposed 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.

Proposed 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.

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.

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

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

Proposed 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 February first of each year regarding the status of the animal control program as provided for in proposed law.

(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))