

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to pet rabbits; creating s. 828.1618,
 3 F.S.; prohibiting the sale of rabbits in specified
 4 locations and during specified months; specifying
 5 unlawful acts relating to the sale, offer for sale,
 6 and give away for merchandising premiums of certain
 7 rabbits; providing requirements for rabbits offered
 8 for sale at retail pet stores; requiring retail pet
 9 stores to maintain and make available specified
 10 records; providing for the retrieval, return, and
 11 placement of abandoned rabbits; authorizing specified
 12 officials to enter retail pet stores and conduct
 13 compliance inspections; prohibiting persons from
 14 refusing or interfering with such inspections;
 15 providing penalties; providing exceptions; providing
 16 an effective date.

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 18 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 20 Section 1. Section 828.1618, Florida Statutes, is created
 21 to read:

22 828.1618 Rabbits.—

23 (1) The sale of rabbits is prohibited:

24 (a) On any public or private streets and rights-of-way,
 25 within 50 feet of any right-of-way, at any flea market, in a

26 private parking lot, or at any open-air venue, such as a parade,
27 concert, or festival.

28 (b) In retail pet stores during the months of March and
29 April. During the months of March and April, retail stores shall
30 keep rabbits in a separate area, off the sales floor and out of
31 view of the public, and label each cage, kennel, or enclosure
32 with signage indicating that the rabbits are not for sale until
33 May 1.

34 (2) It is unlawful to sell, offer for sale, or give away
35 as a merchandising premium any rabbit under 2 months of age to
36 be used as a pet, toy, or retail premium. Rabbits under 2 months
37 of age may not be kept on the premises of a retail pet store.

38 (3) Each rabbit offered for sale at a retail pet store
39 must:

40 (a) Be kept one per cage, kennel, or enclosure to avoid
41 unwanted pregnancies. The cage, kennel, or enclosure must be
42 kept clean and dry and may not have wire floors.

43 (b) Have proper food, water, and hay for digestion at all
44 times.

45 (c) Have signage posted on the cage, kennel, or enclosure
46 which includes the date of birth; name, city, and state of the
47 breeder; and microchip number of the rabbit.

48 (d) Be microchipped and have its microchip registered with
49 the name, city, and state of the retail pet store and breeder.

50 (4) (a) Each retail pet store shall maintain records

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51 documenting the source of each rabbit acquired by the retail pet
52 store. The records must:

53 1. Include a certificate of source and veterinary
54 inspection.

55 2. Be located in close proximity to the rabbit enclosure.

56 3. Be available for review by potential purchasers.

57 (b) Records must be kept for at least 2 years following
58 the date of acquisition and must be made available, immediately
59 upon request, to any police officer, code enforcement officer,
60 animal control officer, humane law enforcement officer, or other
61 investigating official.

62 (5) Abandoned rabbits must be retrieved by local
63 authorities, and if an owner is not found, the rabbit must be
64 returned to the retail store that registered the microchip. If
65 the retail store is no longer in business, the rabbit must be
66 returned to the breeder. If the breeder is no longer in
67 business, authorities must find a legitimate rabbit rescue or
68 animal shelter to care for the rabbit.

69 (6) A city, county, or any investigating official may
70 enter the premises of any retail pet store during regular
71 business hours to conduct reasonable inspections to ensure and
72 verify compliance with this section. A person may not refuse or
73 interfere with a lawful inspection of a retail pet store by
74 investigating officials.

75 (7) A person who violates this section commits a

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76 misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s.
77 775.082 or s. 775.083.

78 (8) This section does not apply to rabbits raised for:

79 (a) Agricultural purposes by persons with proper
80 facilities to care for them.

81 (b) Livestock exhibitions.

82 (c) Future Farmers of America or 4-H activities.

83 Section 2. This act shall take effect October 1, 2024.