

# Legislative Analysis



## DOGS AND CATS USED IN RESEARCH

Phone: (517) 373-8080  
<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

**Senate Bill 148 (S-1) as passed by Senate**  
**Sponsor: Sen. Dayna Polehanki**

Analysis available at  
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

**Senate Bill 149 (proposed substitute H-2)**  
**Sponsor: Sen. Kevin Hertel**

**House Committee: Agriculture**  
**Senate Committee: Natural Resources and Agriculture**  
**Complete to 10-3-23**

### SUMMARY:

Senate Bills 148 and 149 would each amend 1969 PA 224, which licenses and regulates research facilities that use dogs and cats for research purposes and dealers in those animals, to do the following:

- Require a research facility to offer a dog or cat no longer needed for research to an animal protection shelter before euthanizing it. (SB 149)
- Allow for written agreements that could waive the right of an animal protection shelter or an individual adopting a laboratory animal to hold the research facility or the animal protection shelter, respectively, responsible for any behavioral or health issues of a laboratory animal subject to an adoption. (SB 149)
- Establish administrative fines for a violation of SB 149, with fine revenue to be deposited in the proposed Laboratory Animal Fund. (SB 148)
- Require a research facility to report annually on the number of dogs and cats it released to a shelter in the previous year. (SB 148)

**Senate Bill 149** would require a *research facility* to offer a *laboratory animal* that is no longer needed for *laboratory research* for adoption, first to its employees if it so chooses, and then to an *animal protection shelter*, before euthanizing the animal. However, if an *attending veterinarian* determines that euthanasia is required for health or safety reasons, then that animal would not need to be offered to a shelter.

*Research facility* would mean a school, hospital, laboratory, institution, organization, or person that is licensed under the act or otherwise registered with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, that uses or intends to use a laboratory animal in laboratory research, and that does either or both of the following:

- Purchases or transports laboratory animals.
- Receives funds from the state, a local government, or an agency or instrumentality of the state or a local government to finance its operations through grants, loans, or other funds.

*Laboratory animal* would mean a dog or cat (of any age) that is used or intended to be used for laboratory research at a research facility.

*Laboratory research* would mean research, tests, or experiments conducted for education, scientific, medical, or experimental purposes.

***Animal protection shelter*** would mean a facility registered under 1969 PA 287 that is operated by any of the following:

- A ***person***.
- A humane society.
- A society for the prevention of cruelty to animals.
- Any other nonprofit organization for the care of homeless animals.

***Person*** would mean an individual, estate, business or nonprofit entity, public corporation, government or governmental subdivision, agency, or instrumentality, or other legal entity.

***Attending veterinarian*** would mean (as defined in 9 CFR 1.1) a person who has graduated from a veterinary school accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association's Council on Education, has a certificate issued by the American Veterinary Medical Association's Education Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates, or has received equivalent formal education as determined by the administrator of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture; who has received training or experience in the care and management of the species being attended; and who has direct or delegated authority for activities involving animals at a facility subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.

A research facility could enter into a written agreement with a shelter to carry out the purposes of these provisions. The agreement could include the following:

- An acknowledgment that the animal protection shelter accepts responsibility for all risks that may be associated with a laboratory animal that is the subject of an adoption.
- A waiver of the right to hold the research facility liable for the behavioral or health issues of a laboratory animal that is the subject of an adoption.

An animal protection shelter that offers a laboratory animal for adoption would have to enter into a written agreement with the individual who adopts the animal that includes an acknowledgment that the individual understands that the animal subject to adoption is a former laboratory animal and may have unique needs as a result of that experience. The agreement also could include the following:

- An acknowledgment that the individual accepts responsibility for all risks that may be associated with the laboratory animal that is the subject of the adoption.
- A waiver of the right to hold the animal protection shelter liable for the behavioral or health issues of the laboratory animal that is the subject of the adoption.

The provisions described above would be known as "Teddy's Law."

The bill also would require the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) to maintain a list of all research facilities operating in Michigan and make the list available on its website.

MCL 287.381 and 287.387 and proposed MCL 287.388a

**Senate Bill 148** would allow MDARD to impose an administrative fine, after notice and opportunity for a hearing, on a research facility that violates the Teddy's Law provisions of Senate Bill 149. The fine would be deposited into the Laboratory Animal Fund (see below). The amount of the fine would be based on the number of laboratory animals involved in the violation, as well as any prior violations of those provisions, as follows:

- One dog or cat and no prior violation: up to \$1,000.
- Two or three dogs or cats and no prior violation: up to \$2,000.
- Four to nine dogs or cats and no prior violation, or any number of animals and one prior violation involving dogs or cats or the reporting requirement: up to \$3,000.
- Ten to 24 dogs or cats and no prior violation, or any number of animals and two prior violations involving dogs or cats or the reporting requirement: up to \$5,000.
- More than 24 dogs or cats and no prior violation, or any number of animals and three or more prior violations: up to \$10,000.

One year after the bill's effective date, MDARD could issue a warning for a violation of the reporting requirement or of the provisions in Senate Bill 149 instead of imposing an administrative fine as described above.

If a person failed to pay an administrative fine imposed as described above, MDARD would have to advise the attorney general, who would have to bring an action to enforce compliance recover the fine, as well as costs and fees. Administrative fees would be tripled as part of any monetary judgment made by the court.

#### Laboratory Animal Fund

The bill would create the Laboratory Animal Fund in the state treasury. The state treasurer could receive the administrative fines described above for deposit into the fund, as well as money or other assets from any other source, and would have to credit to the fund interest and earnings from fund investments. Money in the fund at the close of the fiscal year would remain in the fund and would not lapse to the general fund. MDARD would be the administrator of the fund for auditing purposes and would have to spend money from the fund to administer the Teddy's Law provisions of Senate Bill 149 as well as the reporting requirements and applicable fines for violations.

#### Report

Finally, the bill would require a research facility that uses laboratory animals to submit a report to MDARD by March 31 of each year that includes the following information regarding the previous calendar year:

- The total number of laboratory animals released by the research facility.
- The name and address of each animal protection shelter to which a laboratory animal was released.

MCL 287.392 and proposed MCLs 287.391a and 287.392a

The bills are tie-barred to each other, which means that neither bill will go into effect unless the other bill is also enacted.

## **BACKGROUND:**

The bills are similar to House Bills 4277 and 4278 of the current session, which are currently in the House Regulatory Reform committee.

## **FISCAL IMPACT:**

The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has authority over administration of 1969 PA 224, the act that provides for the licensing and regulation of research facilities using dogs and cats for research purposes. As described above, the bills would establish new authorities and responsibilities for MDARD under that act. MDARD has estimated that administering the new program responsibilities would require one full-time equated position and funding of \$200,000. Although the bill establishes a restricted fund in support of those regulatory activities, the only fund source appears to be administrative fines assessed for violations of the “Teddy’s Law” provisions. Identification of violations appears to be complaint-based. The amount of fine revenue each year would likely be variable and cannot be readily estimated. Note that the enacted FY 2023-24 MDARD budget included a \$500,000 one-time general fund appropriation and \$200,000 in ongoing general fund support for the program, as well as authorization for one full-time equated position.

The Department of Attorney General (AG) may experience an increase of cases related to the bills to the extent that it takes civil action against individuals who are reported to the department for failing to pay a civil fine. In addition to recovering the civil fine, the bills would require the AG to collect an amount for actual costs and attorney fees, which would offset direct costs of the case for the AG. The AG would likely be able to absorb any increased caseload resulting from the bills with ongoing staff and funding. If existing AG staff is insufficient to comply with the bills, additional state costs of approximately \$120,000 annually for any additional administrative FTE position and \$185,000 for any additional attorney FTE position may be required.

Legislative Analyst: Josh Roesner  
Fiscal Analysts: William E. Hamilton  
Michael Cnossen

---

■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.