

1 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2 1st Session of the 59th Legislature (2023)

3 HOUSE BILL 1992

By: Dollens

4
5
6 AS INTRODUCED

7 An Act relating to animals; creating the Dog and Cat
8 Bill of Rights Act; providing purpose; requiring
9 shelters, rescues, humane societies and other
10 organizations shall provide a certain notice;
11 providing manners of notice; providing fines for
violations; providing specific notice; providing for
civil actions; providing that this section not create
a private right of action; providing for
codification; and providing an effective date.

12
13
14 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

15 SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
16 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 901 of Title 4, unless there is
17 created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

18 A. This section shall be known and may be cited as the
19 "Dog and Cat Bill of Rights Act".

20 B. The purpose of this act is to promote that:

21 1. Dogs and cats have the right to be respected as sentient
22 beings that experience complex feelings that are common among living
23 animals while being unique to each individual animal.

1 2. With the availability of free registries, microchipping with
2 updated contact information is a key component to reuniting dogs and
3 cats with their owners and keeping them out of shelters.

4 3. Local animal welfare agencies in Oklahoma are forced to
5 spend taxpayer dollars every year to collect, control, care for, and
6 euthanize the state's unwanted overpopulation of dogs and cats.

7 4. Sterilizing dogs and cats is a key component to reducing
8 the state's overpopulation of dogs and cats.

9 5. Lifelong care of a dog or cat should be a commitment to
10 that animal for the entirety of its life.

11 6. Ownership of a dog or cat requires an investment of time
12 and resources. Selecting a dog or cat that is suited to one's home
13 and lifestyle will lead to a more rewarding relationship between
14 owner and animal, while reducing relinquished or abandoned animals
15 in our communities.

16 7. Dogs and cats thrive with regular enrichment that is
17 appropriate for their age and health to maintain their physical and
18 emotional well-being.

19 8. While requirements for basic physical care, such as the
20 provision of food, water, and shelter, are set forth in most
21 jurisdictions, Oklahoma can and should strive to recognize the
22 importance of animals' mental and emotional well-being.

23 9. Prioritizing the mental and emotional well-being of dogs
24 and cats can increase the animal-human bond, increase dog and cat

1 retention, reduce neglect and cruelty, and can contribute towards a
2 more humane and compassionate society.

3 C. Each public animal control agency or shelter, Society for
4 the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals shelter, humane society
5 shelter, or rescue group in the state shall make a copy of the
6 notice specified in subsection E of this act available through at
7 least one of the following methods:

8 1. By posting the notice on the facility's website in a clear
9 and conspicuous manner;

10 2. By posting a written copy of the notice in the facility
11 where it is accessible to public view; or

12 3. By including the notice on the application for adoption in a
13 clear and conspicuous manner;

14 D. A fine shall not be assessed for a first time offense for
15 failure to comply with this section. Each additional violation of
16 this section occurring after sixty (60) days from the first offense
17 is punishable by a fine not exceeding One Hundred Fifty Dollars
18 (\$150.00).

19 E. The notice required by subsection B of this act shall read
20 as follows: "Dogs and cats deserve to be free from exploitation,
21 cruelty, neglect, and abuse. Dogs and cats deserve a life of
22 comfort, free of fear and anxiety. Dogs and cats deserve daily
23 mental stimulation and appropriate exercise considering the age and
24 energy level of the dog or cat. Dogs and cats deserve nutritious

1 food, sanitary water, and shelter in an appropriate and safe
2 environment. Dogs and cats deserve regular and appropriate
3 veterinary care. Dogs and cats deserve to be properly identified
4 through tags, microchips, or other humane means. Dogs and cats
5 deserve to be spayed and neutered to prevent unwanted litters."

6 F. The Attorney General, or the district attorney or city
7 attorney in whose jurisdiction the violation is alleged to have
8 occurred may bring a civil action to enforce a violation of
9 subsection B of this act.

10 G. This section does not create or imply a private right of
11 action for a violation of this section. It is the sole intent to
12 inform potential owners of the standards for basic physical care and
13 emotional well-being of dogs and cats.

14 H. This section does not create a crime or a penalty other than
15 the penalty provided in subsection D of this section regarding
16 posting requirements for educational purposes.

17 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2023.

18
19
20
21
22
23
24

59-1-5944 JL 12/15/22