
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 521 Session of
2019

INTRODUCED BY SCHLOSSBERG, BERNSTINE, BIZZARRO, DONATUCCI,
GILLEN, HILL-EVANS, HOWARD, ISAACSON, KORTZ, MARKOSEK,
MCNEILL, MURT, NEILSON, READSHAW AND SCHWEYER,
FEBRUARY 19, 2019

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, FEBRUARY 19, 2019

AN ACT

1 Designating the "shelter pet" as the official pet of the
2 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

3 The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

4 WHEREAS, Approximately 68% of all households in the United
5 States have a pet; and

6 WHEREAS, About 78 million dogs and about 86 million cats are
7 owned in the United States; and

8 WHEREAS, The growing pet population continues to be a problem
9 in this Commonwealth and across the nation, placing an
10 increasing strain on local animal shelters; and

11 WHEREAS, The Humane Society of Central Texas estimates there
12 are 13,600 animal shelters across the United States; and

13 WHEREAS, Approximately 6.5 million companion animals enter
14 animal shelters nationwide every year; and

15 WHEREAS, An estimated 1.5 million healthy, adoptable cats and
16 dogs are euthanized by shelters each year; and

17 WHEREAS, Thousands of other dogs and cats are classified as

1 unadoptable and euthanized annually for reasons such as illness,
2 aggression and owner request; and

3 WHEREAS, Nationally, 23% of owned dogs and 31% of owned cats
4 are adopted from an animal shelter; and

5 WHEREAS, Most shelters perform health examinations and give
6 vaccinations to animals when they arrive, and most spay or
7 neuter them before being adopted; and

8 WHEREAS, Adopting a pet from an animal shelter is less
9 expensive than buying a pet at a pet store or through a breeder;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, The number of euthanized animals could be reduced
12 dramatically if more people adopted pets instead of buying them.

13 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
14 hereby enacts as follows:

15 Section 1. Official State pet.

16 The "shelter pet" is hereby designated as the official pet of
17 the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

18 Section 2. Effective date.

19 This act shall take effect immediately.