

2015 -- H 5799

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2015

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A N A C T

RELATING TO ANIMALS AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

Introduced By: Representatives Bennett, Melo, Solomon, McNamara, and Hull

Date Introduced: March 05, 2015

Referred To: House Health, Education & Welfare

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Chapter 4-1 of the General Laws entitled "Cruelty to Animals" is hereby  
2 amended by adding thereto the following section:

3           **4-1-37.1. Reports of abandoned, neglected or abused animals. -- (a) Any Rhode Island**  
4 licensed veterinarian, veterinarian technician, animal shelter, animal kennel or other person  
5 charged with the care or custody of an animal shall report to any police department (local or  
6 state), animal control officials or officers of private organizations devoted to the humane  
7 treatment of animals, the condition of any animal that the parties entrusted with care or custody of  
8 an animal knows or reasonably believes to be abandoned, neglected, or abused, and shall be  
9 immune from suit by reason of making the report; provided, however, that any party under this  
10 section who participates or reports in bad faith or with malice shall not be protected under the  
11 provisions of this section. As used in this section, the term "abandoned" means the desertion or  
12 willful forsaking, without justification, of an animal, or to leave or quit an animal with the  
13 intention to cause permanent separation. The term does not include a situation where an animal  
14 has escaped or run away from his or her owner or a person or entity with whom the owner has  
15 placed the animal on a temporary basis.

16           (b) Any party who fails to report pursuant to this section shall be fined not exceeding five  
17 hundred dollars (\$500).

18           (c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to impose a duty to further investigate  
19 observed or reasonably suspected animal abandonment, cruel neglect, or abuse.

1 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
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- 1           This act would require certain persons entrusted with the care of animals to report any
- 2 neglect or abuse reasonably believed to have been inflicted upon the animal.
- 3           This act would take effect upon passage.

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