

SENATE BILL 1957

By Haile

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 39;
Title 43; Title 44; Title 53; Title 63 and Title 68,
relative to veterinarians.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 63, Chapter 12, Part 1, is amended by adding the following as a new section:

(a) Notwithstanding § 63-12-124 or another provision of law to the contrary, a licensed veterinarian, while acting in a professional capacity and in a current veterinarian-client-patient relationship, having reasonable cause to believe that an animal has been subjected to animal cruelty in violation of § 39-14-202, § 39-14-214, or § 39-14-217, may make or cause to be made a report of such violation to the commissioner of agriculture or the commissioner's designee, an animal control officer, a law enforcement agency, or a district attorney and may appear and testify in a judicial or administrative proceeding concerning the care of the animal.

(b) A licensed veterinarian or person participating in the making of a report pursuant to subsection (a) is not in breach of veterinarian-client-patient confidentiality by making the report or participating in a judicial or administrative proceeding pursuant to subsection (a) and is immune from any civil or criminal liability or disciplinary action by the board, as long as such participation pursuant to subsection (a) is made in good faith.

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.