## ASSEMBLY, No. 4504 STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED AUGUST 10, 2020

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Sponsored by: Assemblywoman CAROL A. MURPHY District 7 (Burlington) Assemblyman JAMEL C. HOLLEY District 20 (Union)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes "Stray Animal Study Commission."

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT** 

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 8/10/2020)

AN ACT establishing the "Stray Animal Study Commission." 1 2 3 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State 4 of New Jersey: 5 6 1. a. There is created, within the Department of Health, the 7 "Stray Animal Study Commission." b. The study commission shall consist of 11 members as 8 9 follows: 10 (1) The Commissioner of Health, the Commissioner of 11 Community Affairs, and the Executive Director of the State 12 Commission of Investigation, or their designees, who shall serve ex 13 officio; 14 (2) A representative of the Humane Society of the United States, 15 a representative of the American Society for the Prevention of 16 Cruelty to Animals, a representative of the New Jersey Animal 17 Control Officers Association, and a representative of a county prosecutor's office, each of whom shall be appointed by the 18 19 Governor; and 20 (3) four directors or chief operating officers of animal shelters or pounds in the State, of whom one shall be appointed by the 21 22 President of the Senate, one shall be appointed by the Minority 23 Leader of the Senate, one shall be appointed by the Speaker of the 24 General Assembly, and one shall to be appointed by the Minority 25 Leader of the General Assembly. 26 Any vacancy in the membership of the commission shall be c. 27 filled in the same manner as the original appointment. 28 d. Members of the commission shall be appointed within 30 29 days after the effective date of this act, and shall hold their initial organizational meeting as soon as practicable, but no later than 30 30 31 days following appointment of a majority of its authorized 32 membership. At the initial organizational meeting, the members 33 shall elect a chairperson and vice-chairperson from among the 34 members of the study commission by a majority vote of the 35 members present. 36 e. Members of the study commission shall serve without 37 compensation. 38 f. A majority of all the authorized members of the study 39 commission shall constitute a quorum, and no action of the study 40 commission shall be taken without the affirmative vote of a 41 majority of all the authorized members of the study commission, 42 except for the election of the chairperson and vice-chairperson at 43 the initial organizational meeting pursuant to subsection d. of this 44 section. 45 g. The Department of Health shall provide primary staff 46 support to the study commission.

1 2. a. The purpose of the Stray Animal Study Commission 2 shall be to: 3 (1) identify and study stray animal and animal control issues in the State, including issues surrounding stray and feral cats 4 5 colloquially referred to as "community cats" and "cat colonies," and any funding shortfalls with regard to the issues identified; 6 7 (2) study, explore, and develop solutions to (a) stray animal or 8 animal control problems identified, and (b) problems in 9 municipalities concerning feral cats, community cats, or cat 10 colonies; and 11 (3) provide recommendations for legal action, legislation, and 12 possible funding sources to address stray animal or animal control problems in the State, including, but not limited to, those associated 13 14 with feral cats, community cats, or cat colonies. 15 b. The study commission shall consult with professionals in the 16 field of animal control and in the scientific and academic 17 community for expertise and input concerning paragraphs (1) through (3) of subsection a. of this section. 18 19 The study commission shall prepare a report on its findings, c. 20 conclusions, and recommendations and shall submit the report to the Governor and to the Legislature in accordance with the 21 22 requirements of section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), no 23 later than 18 months following its organizational meeting. 24 25 3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall expire on the 26 30th day after the study commission submits its final report. 27 28 29 **STATEMENT** 30 31 This bill establishes an 11-member "Stray Animal Study Commission." 32 33 The purpose of the Stray Animal Study Commission is to: 34 (1) identify and study stray animal and animal control issues in the State, including issues surrounding stray and feral cats 35 colloquially referred to as "community cats" and "cat colonies," and 36 37 any funding shortfalls with regard to the issues identified; 38 (2) study, explore, and develop solutions to (a) stray animal or 39 animal control problems identified, and (b) problems in 40 municipalities concerning feral cats, community cats, or cat 41 colonies; and 42 (3) provide recommendations for legal action, legislation, and possible funding sources address stray animal or animal control 43 44 problems in the State, including, but not limited to, those associated 45 with feral cats, community cats, or cat colonies.

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1 The bill requires the study commission to consult with 2 professionals in the field of animal control and in the scientific and 3 academic community for expertise and input concerning its 4 purpose. Finally, the bill directs the study commission to prepare a 5 report on its findings, conclusions, and recommendations and to 6 submit the report to the Governor and to the Legislature no later 7 than 18 months following its organizational meeting.

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