

SENATE ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 1034

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: OCTOBER 19, 2020

The Senate Environment and Energy Committee favorably reports Senate Bill No. 1034 with committee amendments.

The bill, designated as the “Compassion for Community Cats Law,” provides for the spaying and neutering of stray or feral cats.

In particular, the bill provides, with limited exceptions, that:

(1) no cat may be released for adoption from an animal rescue organization facility, shelter, pound, or kennel operating as a shelter or pound unless the cat has been spayed or neutered by a licensed veterinarian; and

(2) any community cat trapped and impounded at a shelter, pound, or kennel operating as a shelter or pound, or trapped and taken to an animal rescue organization facility, must be spayed or neutered, ear-tipped, and vaccinated against rabies before being returned to the location where the community cat was trapped or given to a person assuming ownership of the community cat.

The spaying and neutering requirements do not apply to a cat or a community cat that:

(1) is less than two months old;

(2) a licensed veterinarian determines cannot be spayed or neutered for other health reasons affecting the cat;

(3) is placed in a foster home or transferred to another shelter, pound, kennel operating as a shelter or pound, or animal rescue organization facility by a shelter, pound, or kennel operating as a shelter or pound; or

(4) is to be euthanized in accordance with the provisions of section 16 of P.L.1941, c.151 (C.4:19-15.16) and R.S.4:22-19, which provide for humanely euthanizing animals after a shelter, pound, or kennel operating as a shelter or pound has offered the animal for adoption for at least seven days.

The bill authorizes an animal rescue organization facility, shelter, pound, or kennel operating as a shelter or pound to charge the cost of spaying or neutering the cat to the person assuming ownership of the cat.

The bill also amends various sections of existing law to allow for the implementation of the new spaying and neutering requirements established by the bill and other provisions of the bill. The bill

authorizes the Department of Health (DOH) to adopt regulations necessary to implement grant programs and fund the spaying and neutering requirements established in the bill.

The bill establishes the “Compassion for Community Cats Fund” in the DOH to provide grants to municipalities and counties to establish programs to humanely trap community cats, and sterilize, ear-tip, and vaccinate them against rabies, and return each feral cat to the location where the cat was trapped. The “Compassion for Community Cats Fund” is to be credited with the monies collected for violations of the bill, the surcharge on dog licenses imposed by section 1 of P.L.1983, c.181 (C.4:19-15.3c), any moneys appropriated by the Legislature, and any return on investment of moneys deposited in the fund.

Finally, the bill repeals sections 2 and 3 of P.L.2011, c.142 (C.4:19-15.30 and 4:19-15.31), known as the “Pet Sterilization Pilot Program.”

The committee amendments to the bill:

- (1) correct cross-references and citations in the bill;
- (2) correct typographical errors in the bill’s reproduction of existing statutory text; and
- (3) delete a statutory reference to a program for aid to families with dependent children that was replaced by the Work First New Jersey program pursuant to P.L.1997, c.38.