

ASSEMBLY ENVIRONMENT, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 287

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: FEBRUARY 10, 1997

The Assembly Environment, Science and Technology Committee favorably reports Assembly Bill No. 287 with committee amendments.

This bill as amended by the committee would require local health officials, who would be designated by local health officers, to receive training on animal control, animal welfare, and animal cruelty law with respect to the operation of kennels, pet shops, shelters, and pounds. The bill as amended would also provide that the training required of certain animal control officers include material on animal cruelty laws, especially as they pertain to kennels, pet shops, shelters, and pounds.

The bill as amended would require designated local health officials to inspect annually, and in response to received complaints, every kennel, pet shop, shelter, and pound located within the jurisdiction of the local health official for compliance with all laws, rules, regulations, and ordinances concerned with animal control, animal welfare, and animal cruelty. Any animal cruelty violation discovered in the course or as a result of any such inspection would be required to be immediately reported to the New Jersey Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the district (county) society for the prevention of cruelty to animals if one exists for the area within which the violation occurred.

The bill as amended would provide that any civil penalty or criminal fine collected for a violation of any law, rule, regulation, or ordinance pertaining to animal control, animal welfare, or animal cruelty that (1) occurred within a kennel, pet shop, shelter, or pound, and (2) was discovered in the course or as a result of an inspection conducted pursuant to the bill, would be required to be paid to the municipality employing, or contracting for, the local health official who conducted the inspection and discovered the violation. Additionally, any such monies paid to a municipality would be required to be allocated by the municipality to defray the cost of the training required for certified animal control officers and local health officials pursuant to the bill and the cost of any enforcement action brought in

response to a violation discovered in the course or as a result of an inspection conducted pursuant thereto. The provision concerning payment of collected penalties and fines to a municipality would not apply to civil actions brought pursuant to R.S.4:22-26 in the name of the New Jersey Society for the Prevention of Animals.

This bill as amended also provides that kennels in which less than four female dogs are boarded or bred, or in which less than four distinct breeds are boarded or bred, would not be subject to the requirement of annual inspections of kennels by local health officials.

The committee also amended the effective date of the bill and made a technical amendment to clarify the relationship between the local government reimbursement provision of the bill and current law addressing the disposition of collected fines.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 1996-1997 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.