

ASSEMBLY ENVIRONMENT, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

**ASSEMBLY, No. 2251**

with committee amendments

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: FEBRUARY 10, 1997

The Assembly Environment, Science and Technology Committee favorably reports Assembly Bill No. 2251 with committee amendments.

This bill as introduced would create a right of action for any person who owns a domestic companion animal that has been subjected to an act of cruelty in violation of R.S.4:22-17 or R.S.4:22-26 against the person committing the act of cruelty. Damages may include, but shall not be limited to, the monetary value of the animal, veterinary expenses incurred by the owner in treating the animal, and emotional distress suffered by the owner.

The committee amended the bill to clarify that damages may be recovered for loss of companionship of the animal and to add several other types of animal cruelty to those covered by the bill, i.e., carrying an animal in a cruel manner (R.S.4:22-18), failure to care for an impounded or confined animal (R.S.4:22-19), improper destruction of an animal (R.S.4:22-19), and abandonment of an animal (R.S.4:22-20). The committee also made other amendments to clarify the intent of the sponsor that the person committing the act of cruelty in question must have been found guilty or liable for violating any of the animal cruelty laws cited in the bill before damages may be found in a separate civil action.