

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

BILL NO. Senate Bill 155

PRINTER'S NO. 368

AMOUNT

No Fiscal Impact

FUND

General Fund
Dog Law Restricted Account

DATE INTRODUCED

January 15, 2013

PRIME SPONSOR

Senator Greenleaf

HISTORY OF BILL

Referred to AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS, Jan. 15, 2013
Reported as amended, Feb. 6, 2013
First consideration, Feb. 6, 2013
Re-referred to APPROPRIATIONS, Feb. 13, 2013
Re-reported as committed, March 18, 2013

DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE OF BILL

Senate Bill 155 amends the Rabies Prevention and Control in Domestic Animals and Wildlife Act to modernize the act and provide an exemption for dogs and cats in cases when a vaccination would be detrimental to the health of the animal.

Requires a rabies vaccination for a dog or cat that spends part of the day in a kennel, colony facility or residence within four weeks of the animal attaining 12 weeks of age. Allows for vaccination prior to 12 weeks of age, if such use is approved by the manufacturer and the vaccine is licensed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and listed in the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians Rabies Compendium. Requires revaccination 12 to 14 months from the initial vaccination and subsequent vaccinations as required by the manufacturer.

Provides for an exemption from vaccination if a veterinarian determines there is a legitimate medical reason not to vaccinate. Provides for the exemption to be valid for one year and requires the veterinarian to maintain a signed copy of the exemption certificate and provide two copies to the owner. Requires the owner to maintain a copy of the certificate and mail a copy to the department's Office of Dog Law Enforcement. Requires the owner of a dog or cat to produce either proof of vaccination or exemption status within 48 hours of a request by law enforcement or an animal control officer.

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Provides for a limited certificate to vaccinate for the owner of a kennel, other than a commercial kennel. Requires the person seeking the certificate to provide the Department of Agriculture with verification from a veterinarian confirming the applicant received a demonstration of the vaccination procedures and demonstrated competence in administering the vaccine. Presently, these kennel owners may be examined and certified by the department to administer vaccinations to animals which they own or are in their possession.

Provides for the department to coordinate and cooperate with Federal, state and local health or animal health authorities as necessary to perform its responsibilities with regard to rabies control, including entering into agreements to facilitate the distribution of vaccine impregnated baits.

Repeals provisions requiring rabies testing be completed free of charge at state laboratories and other facilities designated by the Secretary of Agriculture. Repeals provisions providing for anti-rabies clinics and veterinarians participation in the operation of such clinics. Repeals provisions providing for the department to enter into a contract with the Wistar Institute to conduct a multiyear wildlife vaccine research program.

The legislation is scheduled to take effect in 60 days.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The enactment of Senate Bill 155 will have no adverse impact on Commonwealth funds. Administrative responsibilities related to maintaining rabies vaccine exemptions should be minimal and can be accomplished within the department's existing operating budget for the Office of Dog Law Enforcement.