

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

BILL NO. House Bill 1917

PRINTER NO. 2815

AMOUNT

No Fiscal Impact

FUND

General Fund

DATE INTRODUCED

November 13, 2017

PRIME SPONSOR

Representative Ryan

DESCRIPTION

House Bill 1917 amends Title 22 (Detectives and Private Police) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to provide for the Humane Society Police Officer Advisory Board and for the appointment, training and registration of humane society police officers.

This legislation amends Title 22 (Detectives and Private Police) as follows:

- Requires a county Clerk of Courts, upon action by the court of common pleas, to forward humane society police officer appointment information to the Department of Agriculture (department) for purposes of including it in the statewide registry;
- Adds an additional requirement for a society or association to submit proof satisfactory to the court of common pleas and the district attorney that an individual under consideration for appointment as a humane society police officer has not had an appointment as a humane society police officer revoked for cause in another county or another state;
- Permits the court of common pleas to suspend, revoke, limit or restrict appointment of an individual to act as a humane society police officer in the county for the following reasons:
 - 1) The individual is not a resident of this Commonwealth; or
 - 2) The individual has had an appointment as a humane society police officer revoked for cause in another county or another state.
- Requires the following minimum requirements to be added to the training program:
 - 1) Increases the number training hours from 60 to 80 hours;
 - 2) Increases the number of hours in certain instructional areas from 36 to 40 hours and requires the training to include the proper procedure for filing citations and warrants, including how and when to contact Federal, State or local law enforcement;

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- 3) Increases the number of hours in certain instructional areas from 24 to 40 hours and requires the training to include the agricultural biosecurity protocols and general farm orientation on safety and security practices, including instruction in measures for discovery of conditions and implementation of precautionary actions to prevent harm or damage to persons, animals or property;
 - 4) Requires that the training listed in paragraph (3), include at least one on-site visit to a normal agricultural operation that includes agricultural animals and is at least ten acres in contiguous area; and
 - 5) Provides an exemption from the initial training requirements for individuals who have successfully completed initial training under this chapter prior to June 30, 2018 and can provide proof of such to the Secretary of Agriculture within six months of the effective date.
- Makes the following changes to the continuing education program:
 - 1) Increases the number of instructional hours from ten to 16;
 - 2) Requires at least eight hours of instruction in proper procedure for filing citations and warrants, including how and when to contact Federal, State or local law enforcement, agricultural biosecurity protocols and general farm orientation on safety and security practices, including instruction in measures for discovery of conditions and implementation of precautionary actions to prevent harm or damage to persons, animals or property; and
 - 3) Requires that the training listed in paragraph (2) include at least one on-site visit to a normal agricultural operation that includes agricultural animals and is at least ten acres in contiguous area.
 - Requires the department to notify, within one week of an automatic suspension for failure to complete the continuing education program, the court of common pleas and district attorney of each county to which the suspended individual is appointed as a humane society police officer of the suspension;
 - Requires humane society police officers to submit an application that includes a confirmation of appointment by the court of common pleas, proof of completion of the necessary education, and a criminal history report from the Pennsylvania State Police to the department for inclusion in the registry;
 - Requires all applications to be renewed every two years on the officer's date of appointment;
 - Requires one member of the Humane Society Police Officer Advisory Board (board) to be a representative of an organization in this Commonwealth of societies or associations for the prevention of cruelty to animals;

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- Requires the board to review and recommend programs related to training and continuing education programs; and
- Requires the board to meet at least once annually or as necessary to comply with the requirement to review and recommend programs related to training and continuing education programs.

This act shall take effect in one year.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Title 22 (Detectives and Private Police), Chapter 37 provides that the Secretary of Agriculture, with the advice of the Humane Society Police Officer Advisory Board, shall contract with an accredited college or university, including a community college or other public or private entity, for the establishment of a program for the training of individuals to act as humane society police officers. Humane society police officers may not be self-employed but rather be employed by a humane society or other similar animal welfare organization. The majority of humane society police officers in the Commonwealth obtain their initial mandatory training and continuing education training at the expense of their employer.

According to the Federated Humane Societies of Pennsylvania, the cost for initial mandatory humane society police officer training is \$1,300 for members. Continuing education training costs \$75.

Enactment of this bill will have no adverse fiscal impact on Commonwealth funds.

Costs related to training and the increased number of hours of training will be borne by the individual humane society police officers, humane societies or other similar animal welfare organizations.