

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1696 Session of  
1989

INTRODUCED BY FOX, RICHARDSON, SAURMAN, DIETTERICK, VROON,  
JOHNSON, TRELLO, BATTISTO, HECKLER, YANDRISEVITS, HERMAN,  
E. Z. TAYLOR, GRUPPO, BUNT, VEON, LASHINGER, BILLOW, ADOLPH,  
GIGLIOTTI, NAHILL, MORRIS, SEMMEL, CIVERA, MELIO AND FLICK,  
JUNE 14, 1989

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS,  
JUNE 14, 1989

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of December 15, 1986 (P.L.1610, No.181),  
2 entitled "An act providing for the establishment and  
3 operation of a Statewide system for the prevention and  
4 control of rabies; imposing additional powers and duties on  
5 the Departments of Agriculture and Health; providing for  
6 emergency declarations; fixing penalties for violations; and  
7 making an appropriation," providing for additional powers and  
8 duties of the Department of Agriculture, for the  
9 establishment of a rabies hotline and for the purchase of  
10 antirabies vaccines and supplies; and making an  
11 appropriation.

12 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
13 hereby enacts as follows:

14 Section 1. Sections 6 and 9 of the act of December 15, 1986  
15 (P.L.1610, No.181), known as the Rabies Prevention and Control  
16 in Domestic Animals and Wildlife Act, are amended to read:

17 Section 6. Powers and duties of department.

18 The department shall have the following powers and duties:

19 (1) Monitor, in cooperation with the Department of  
20 Health and the Pennsylvania Game Commission, the confirmed

1 incidences of rabies in both domestic and wild animals.

2 (2) Determine, based on the number of confirmed cases,  
3 the number of projected incidences, the probability of human  
4 contact and the rapidity of the spread of the rabies, where a  
5 public risk may exist.

6 (3) Institute the relevant actions outlined in this act,  
7 as well as others determined by the department until it is  
8 determined that the threat of the rabies epidemic no longer  
9 exists.

10 (4) Institute an intensive public education campaign on  
11 rabies through newspapers, radio and television  
12 announcements. Such public education campaign shall include,  
13 at a minimum, information concerning the appropriate actions  
14 to be taken by a person when there has been contact with an  
15 animal which is believed to be infected with the rabies  
16 virus.

17 (5) Provide for and publicize the existence of a 24-hour  
18 telephone hotline, the purpose of which shall be to answer  
19 questions from the public concerning possible rabies exposure  
20 by humans or pets. The department is authorized to enter into  
21 agreements with other State or local agencies or  
22 organizations to operate such a hotline in accordance with  
23 this section.

24 (6) Where feasible and when appropriate, provide for the  
25 pickup and disposition of suspected rabid animals in areas of  
26 this Commonwealth with a high incidence of confirmed rabies  
27 cases. The department is authorized to enter into agreements  
28 with other State and local agencies or organizations to  
29 provide this service on behalf of the department, to limit  
30 this service to incidents where there has been suspected

1 human or animal exposure, and to limit this service to  
2 animals shown to be most likely to be infected with the  
3 rabies virus, such as skunks, raccoons and foxes.

4 Section 9. Antirabies clinics.

5 (a) Establishment.--The department shall assist in the  
6 establishment of low-cost antirabies clinics. These clinics  
7 shall be offered at locations and on dates as appropriate. The  
8 department shall establish vaccination procedures for cats and  
9 dogs to be used at the clinics. In assisting in the  
10 establishment of antirabies clinics, the department shall  
11 cooperate with local veterinarians and other local  
12 organizations.

13 (b) Purchase of vaccine.--Upon request, the department shall  
14 purchase animal rabies vaccines and syringes and supply them, at  
15 no charge, to the sponsors of low-cost antirabies clinics for  
16 administration of the vaccine by licensed veterinarians. The  
17 sponsors of clinics requesting that supplies be purchased by the  
18 department shall be required to limit the fee charged for the  
19 administration of the vaccine to an amount to be determined by  
20 the department, but no greater than \$5, and to document to the  
21 department the number of animals vaccinated during the low-cost  
22 antirabies clinic.

23 Section 2. The sum of \$500,000, or as much thereof as may be  
24 necessary, is hereby appropriated to the Department of  
25 Agriculture for implementation of this act.

26 Section 3. This act shall take effect immediately.