THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 82

Session of 2013

INTRODUCED BY GREENLEAF, FARNESE, ALLOWAY, MENSCH, TARTAGLIONE, TEPLITZ, BREWSTER, WASHINGTON, YUDICHAK, SOLOBAY, SMITH, FERLO, WOZNIAK, COSTA AND BOSCOLA, JANUARY 9, 2013

REFERRED TO CONSUMER PROTECTION AND PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE, JANUARY 9, 2013

AN ACT

Amending the act of December 17, 1968 (P.L.1224, No.387), 1 entitled "An act prohibiting unfair methods of competition and unfair or deceptive acts or practices in the conduct of 3 any trade or commerce, giving the Attorney General and District Attorneys certain powers and duties and providing 5 penalties," further providing for dog purchaser protection. 6 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows: Section 1. Section 9.3(a)(2), (b), (c), (d) and (i) of the 9 10 act of December 17, 1968 (P.L.1224, No.387), known as the Unfair 11 Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Law, reenacted and 12 amended November 24, 1976 (P.L.1166, No.260) and added June 25, 1997 (P.L.287, No.27), are amended and the section is amended by 13 adding a subsection to read: 14 15 Section 9.3. Dog Purchaser Protection. -- (a) * * * 16 (i) [A] Except as provided under subsection (b.2)(3) of 17 this section, a health certificate issued by a veterinarian shall certify the dog sold by the seller to be apparently free 18

of any contagious or infectious illness and apparently free from

- 1 any defect which is congenital or hereditary and diagnosable
- 2 with reasonable accuracy and does not appear to be clinically
- 3 ill from parasitic infestation at the time of the physical
- 4 examination. The health certificate shall include the name,
- 5 address and signature of the veterinarian and the date the dog
- 6 was examined.
- 7 (ii) [A] Except as provided under subsection (b.2)(3) of
- 8 this section, a guarantee of good health issued by the seller,
- 9 and dated and signed by the seller and the purchaser on the date
- 10 of the sale, warranting that the dog being sold is apparently
- 11 free of and does not exhibit any signs of any contagious or
- 12 infectious disease, is apparently free from and does not exhibit
- 13 any signs of any defect which is congenital or hereditary; and
- 14 does not exhibit any signs of being clinically ill or exhibit
- 15 any signs of a parasitic infestation on the date of the sale.
- 16 The quarantee of good health shall clearly state in bold type:
- 17 THIS GUARANTEE DOES NOT WARRANT THAT THIS DOG HAS BEEN
- 18 EXAMINED BY A VETERINARIAN. THE PURCHASER IS ENCOURAGED
- 19 TO HAVE THIS DOG EXAMINED BY A VETERINARIAN AS SOON AFTER
- 20 PURCHASE AS IS FEASIBLE.
- 21 The seller shall also verbally state these facts to the
- 22 purchaser.
- 23 (b) If, within [ten] <u>fourteen</u> days after the date of
- 24 purchase, a dog purchased from a seller is determined, through
- 25 physical examination, diagnostic tests or necropsy by a
- 26 veterinarian, to be clinically ill or [dies] to have died from
- 27 any contagious or infectious illness or any parasitic illness
- 28 which renders it unfit for purchase [or results in its death],
- 29 the purchaser may exercise one of the following options:
- 30 (1) Return the dog to the seller for a complete refund of

- 1 the purchase price, not including the sales tax.
- 2 (2) Return the dog to the seller for a replacement dog of
- 3 equal value of the purchaser's choice, providing a replacement
- 4 dog is available.
- 5 (3) Retain the dog and be entitled to receive reimbursement
- 6 from the seller for reasonable veterinary fees incurred in
- 7 curing [or] attempting to cure or treating the affected dog,
- 8 subject to the limitation that the seller's liability for
- 9 reimbursement shall not exceed the purchase price, not including
- 10 sales tax, of the dog. This clause shall apply only if the
- 11 purchaser's veterinarian determines the dog's illness can be
- 12 treated [and corrected] by procedures that are appropriate and
- 13 customary. The value of these services is considered reasonable
- 14 if comparable to the value of similar services rendered by other
- 15 licensed veterinarians in reasonable proximity to the treating
- 16 veterinarian. Reimbursement shall not include the costs of the
- 17 initial veterinary examination fee and diagnostic or treatment
- 18 fees not directly related to the veterinarian's certification
- 19 that the animal is unfit for purchase pursuant to this section.
- 20 [If, however, the purchaser's veterinarian determines the dog's
- 21 illness is incurable, only the options in clauses (1) and (2) of
- 22 this subsection shall apply.
- 23 For the purposes of this subsection, veterinary findings of
- 24 intestinal and external parasites shall not be grounds for
- 25 declaring the dog unfit for purchase unless the dog is
- 26 clinically ill or dies due to that condition. A dog shall not be
- 27 found unfit for purchase on account of injury sustained or
- 28 illness most likely contracted subsequent to the date of sale.]
- 29 (b.1) (1) If, within [thirty] ninety days after the date of
- 30 purchase, a dog purchased from a seller is [certified]

- 1 <u>determined</u>, through physical examination, diagnostic tests or
- 2 necropsy by a veterinarian [that the dog has or] to have a
- 3 <u>defect or to have</u> died from a defect which is congenital or
- 4 hereditary and which [adversely affects or affected the health
- 5 of the animal] <u>renders it unfit for purchase</u>, the purchaser may
- 6 exercise one of the options as provided in [clauses (1), (2) and
- 7 (3) of this subsection.] <u>subsection (b) of this section.</u>
- 8 (2) Remedies available under [clauses (1), (2) and (3) of
- 9 this] subsection (b) of this section shall also apply to
- 10 replacement dogs.
- 11 (b.2) (1) A dog shall not be found unfit for purchase for
- 12 the purposes of subsection (b) of this section because of
- 13 <u>veterinary findings of intestinal or external parasites unless</u>
- 14 the dog is clinically ill or dies due to the condition.
- 15 (2) A dog shall not be found unfit for purchase on account
- 16 of injury sustained or illness most likely contracted subsequent
- 17 to the date of sale.
- 18 (3) A dog shall not be found unfit for purchase because of a
- 19 health problem which, in addition to a health certificate or
- 20 guarantee of good health required under subsection (a) of this
- 21 section, is separately disclosed by the seller in writing at the
- 22 time of sale. Such disclosure shall be signed by both the seller
- 23 and the purchaser at the time of sale and shall be documented in
- 24 the health certificate or quarantee of good health.
- 25 (c) A veterinarian's certification of illness, congenital or
- 26 hereditary defects or death shall be necessary for a refund or
- 27 replacement or to receive reimbursement for veterinary costs if
- 28 the dog is retained by the purchaser and treated for illness or
- 29 congenital or hereditary defect as provided in this section. The
- 30 veterinarian's certification shall be supplied at the

- 1 purchaser's expense. The veterinarian's certification shall
- 2 state the following information:
- 3 (1) The purchaser's name and address.
- 4 (2) The date the dog was examined.
- 5 (3) The breed and age of the dog.
- 6 (4) (i) That the veterinarian examined the dog.
- 7 (ii) That the dog has or had an illness as described in
- 8 subsection (b) of this section or a defect as described in
- 9 subsection (b) of this section which renders it unfit for
- 10 purchase or which resulted in its death.
- 11 (iii) The precise findings of the examination, diagnostic
- 12 tests or necropsy.
- 13 (5) The treatment recommended, if any, and an estimate or
- 14 the actual cost of the treatment should the purchaser choose to
- 15 retain the dog and seek reimbursement for veterinary fees to
- 16 cure or attempt to cure the dog.
- 17 (6) The veterinarian's name, address, telephone number and
- 18 signature.
- 19 Within [two] <u>five</u> business days of a veterinary examination
- 20 which certifies illness, defect or death, the purchaser shall
- 21 notify the seller of the name, address and telephone number of
- 22 the examining veterinarian. Failure to notify the seller or to
- 23 carry out the recommended treatment prescribed by the examining
- 24 veterinarian who made the initial diagnosis until a remedy as
- 25 provided for in subsection (b) of this section is agreed upon
- 26 shall result in the purchaser's forfeiture of rights under this
- 27 section. [Subsection (b) of this section shall not apply where a
- 28 seller who has provided a health certificate issued by a
- 29 veterinarian discloses in writing at the time of sale the health
- 30 problem for which the buyer later seeks to return the dog. Such

- 1 disclosures shall be signed by both the seller and purchaser.
- 2 Where the seller has provided a guarantee of good health,
- 3 subsection (b) of this section shall apply regardless of whether
- 4 the seller disclosed the health problem at the time of sale.]
- 5 (d) The refund or reimbursement required by this section
- 6 shall be made by the seller not later than fourteen days
- 7 following receipt of the veterinarian's certification that the
- 8 dog is unfit for purchase or has died from a condition defined
- 9 as unfit for purchase in this section. The certification shall
- 10 be presented to the seller not later than [five] seven days
- 11 following receipt thereof by the purchaser.
- 12 * * *
- 13 (i) As used in this section:
- "Seller" means a kennel, pet shop operator or other
- 15 individual who sells dogs to the public and who owns or operates
- 16 a kennel or pet shop which is required to be licensed by the
- 17 Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture or the United States
- 18 Department of Agriculture. The term shall not include nonprofit
- 19 kennels as defined under the act of December 7, 1982 (P.L.784,
- 20 No.225), known as the "Dog Law."
- "Unfit for purchase" means any disease, deformity, injury,
- 22 physical condition, illness or any defect which is congenital or
- 23 hereditary and which [severely affects] has a significant
- 24 adverse effect on the health of the animal or which was
- 25 manifest, capable of diagnosis or likely to have been contracted
- 26 on or before the sale and delivery of the animal to the
- 27 consumer.
- "Veterinarian" means an individual licensed under the laws of
- 29 this Commonwealth or any other state to practice veterinary
- 30 medicine and surgery.

1 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.