
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 493 Session of
2017

INTRODUCED BY SCHLOSSBERG, BIZZARRO, DAY, DONATUCCI, FARRY,
FRANKEL, GILLEN, McNEILL, O'BRIEN, READSHAW, SCHWEYER AND
SIMS, FEBRUARY 14, 2017

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, FEBRUARY 14, 2017

AN ACT

1 Designating the "shelter pet" as the official pet of the
2 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

3 The General Assembly finds and declares as follows:

4 WHEREAS, Approximately 65% of all households in the United
5 States have a pet; and

6 WHEREAS, About 78 million dogs and about 86 million cats are
7 owned in the United States; and

8 WHEREAS, The growing pet population continues to be a problem
9 in this Commonwealth and across the nation, placing an
10 increasing strain on local animal shelters; and

11 WHEREAS, The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty
12 to Animals estimates there are 13,600 animal shelters across the
13 United States; and

14 WHEREAS, Approximately 7.6 million companion animals enter
15 animal shelters nationwide every year; and

16 WHEREAS, An estimated 2.4 million healthy, adoptable cats and
17 dogs are euthanized by shelters each year; and

1 WHEREAS, Thousands of other dogs and cats are classified as
2 unadoptable and euthanized annually for reasons such as illness,
3 aggression and owner request; and

4 WHEREAS, Nationally, 37% of owned dogs and 46% of owned cats
5 are adopted from an animal shelter; and

6 WHEREAS, Most shelters perform health examinations and give
7 vaccinations to animals when they arrive, and most spay or
8 neuter them before being adopted; and

9 WHEREAS, Adopting a pet from an animal shelter is less
10 expensive than buying a pet at a pet store or through a breeder;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, The number of euthanized animals could be reduced
13 dramatically if more people adopted pets instead of buying them.

14 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
15 hereby enacts as follows:

16 Section 1. Official State Pet.

17 The "shelter pet" is hereby designated as the official pet of
18 the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

19 Section 2. Effective date.

20 This act shall take effect immediately.