

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2017 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 420 (Senator Hough, *et al.*)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Humane Adoption of Companion Animals Used in Research Act of 2017

This bill requires a “research facility” located in the State, in which dogs or cats are used for “scientific research purposes,” to take reasonable steps to provide for the adoption of a dog or cat that is no longer needed for scientific research purposes by (1) establishing a list of animal rescue organizations that are willing to take a dog or cat from the research facility and (2) offering the dog or cat to the organizations identified in the list. Beginning December 1, 2018, and annually thereafter, a research facility must submit specified information to the Secretary of Agriculture.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill is expected to be implemented with existing resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Minimal or none.

Analysis

Bill Summary: A “research facility” includes a higher education research facility, a scientific research facility, a medical research facility, and a product testing facility. “Scientific research purposes” includes investigation, experimentation, instruction, and testing.

A research facility may enter into a collaborative agreement with an animal rescue organization to carry out the bill’s provisions.

A research facility must submit the following information annually to the Secretary of Agriculture regarding the preceding 12-month period: (1) the number of dogs or cats owned by the facility and used for research purposes; (2) the number of dogs or cats released to an animal rescue organization and the name of the organization; and (3) the list of animal rescue organizations established by the research facility pursuant to the bill.

Current Law: Under the federal Animal Welfare Act, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) regulates commercial animal dealers, exhibitors (circuses, zoos, etc.), research facilities, and commercial businesses that transport animals. Research facilities that use or intend to use live animals in research, tests, or experiments must be registered with USDA and are inspected by APHIS at least once per year. A facility must also appoint an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) consisting of at least three members, including a veterinarian and one person who is not in any way affiliated with the facility. IACUC is responsible for, among other things, reviewing the facility's program for humane care and use of animals and inspecting the research facility's animal facilities.

Research facilities must submit an annual report to APHIS providing information that includes the types and numbers of animals used for teaching, testing, experiments, research, or surgery, by specified categories, and the types and numbers of animals being bred, conditioned, or held for use in teaching, testing, experiments, research, or surgery, but not yet used for such purposes.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: HB 594 of 2016 passed with amendments in the House and received a hearing in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, but no further action was taken.

Cross File: HB 528 (Delegate Kramer, *et al.*) - Appropriations.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Agriculture; Baltimore, Charles, Frederick, and Montgomery counties; University System of Maryland; Morgan State University; U.S. Department of Agriculture; Department of Legislative Services

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