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Introduced and read first time: January 29, 1996

Assigned to: Environmental Matters

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Disease Prevention - Rabies - Ferrets**

3 FOR the purpose of excluding domestic ferrets from the animals that the Secretary of
4 Health and Mental Hygiene may find to be dangerous to human health and safety;
5 requiring certain ferrets to be vaccinated against rabies; requiring a person that
6 owns or keeps a ferret to submit proof of vaccination with an application for county
7 registration or licensing; requiring a licensed veterinarian who vaccinates a ferret to
8 provide the owner with a certain vaccination certificate; requiring the quarantine of
9 certain animals that have been vaccinated against rabies that bite or expose a
10 human to rabies; limiting the authority of a public health veterinarian or local
11 health officer to destroy an animal for rabies testing to animals clinically suspected
12 of rabies; and generally relating to the vaccination and rabies testing of dogs, cats,
13 and ferrets.

14 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
15 Article - Health - General
16 Section 18-219, 18-318, 18-319, and 18-320
17 Annotated Code of Maryland
18 (1994 Replacement Volume and 1995 Supplement)

19 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
20 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

21 **Article - Health - General**

22 18-219.

23 (a) The Secretary may prohibit the importation, selling, trading, purchasing,
24 bartering, breeding, raising, keeping, or possession of any animals found to be dangerous
25 to human health and safety.

26 (b) This section does not apply to:

27 (1) Domestic cats;

28 (2) Domestic dogs;

2

1 (3) DOMESTIC FERRETS;

2 (4) Animals used for agricultural purposes;

3 [(4)] (5) Animals used for scientific purposes;

4 [(5)] (6) Animals used for educational purposes;

5 [(6)] (7) Animals used for public exhibitions; or

6 [(7)] (8) Any animal that the Secretary determines is not a threat to human
7 health and safety.

8 18-318.

9 (a) Each person who owns or keeps a dog [or], cat [or both], OR FERRET that
10 is 4 months old or older shall have the dog [or], cat, OR FERRET vaccinated adequately
11 against rabies.

12 (b) (1) A county may not register or license a dog [or], cat, OR FERRET unless
13 the person who owns or keeps the dog [or], cat, OR FERRET submits, with the
14 application for registration or license, proof that the dog [or], cat, OR FERRET has been
15 vaccinated adequately against rabies.

16 (2) The public health veterinarian shall determine the proof of vaccination
17 that is acceptable.

18 18-319.

19 (a) A licensed veterinarian who vaccinates a dog [or], cat, OR FERRET against
20 rabies:

21 (1) May select the vaccine to be used;

22 (2) Shall administer the vaccine in a manner that is consistent with the
23 recommendations of the National Association of State Public Health Veterinarians;

24 (3) Shall issue to the owner of the dog [or], cat, OR FERRET a vaccination
25 certificate, on the form that the Department approves; and

26 (4) Shall keep a record of the vaccination for a period of 5 years.

27 (b) The information in the rabies vaccination record that a licensed veterinarian
28 keeps may not be used:

29 (1) To license the dog [or], cat, OR FERRET; or

30 (2) To tax the owner of the dog [or], cat, OR FERRET.

31 18-320.

32 (a) AN APPARENTLY HEALTHY DOG, CAT, OR FERRET THAT HAS BEEN
33 ADEQUATELY VACCINATED AGAINST RABIES AS PROVIDED IN § 18-318 OF THIS
34 SUBTITLE THAT BITES OR OTHERWISE EXPOSES A HUMAN TO RABIES SHALL BE
35 QUARANTINED AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION.

1 (B) Except as provided in subsection [(d)] (F) of this section, an animal THAT IS
2 NOT SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION that bites a
3 human or otherwise exposes a human to rabies shall be quarantined AS PROVIDED IN
4 SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION.

5 (C) AN ANIMAL UNDER QUARANTINE SHALL BE QUARANTINED in a place,
6 which may include the residence of the owner, in the manner designated by the local
7 health officer or the public health veterinarian for a suitable period as determined by the
8 health officer or the public health veterinarian.

9 [(b)] (D) (1) At any time during the quarantine period, the public health
10 veterinarian or local health officer may order the owner of a biting animal to have the
11 animal monitored for rabies by a licensed veterinarian.

12 (2) The owner of the animal shall pay for the cost of any examination or
13 other associated cost.

14 [(c)] (E) An animal under quarantine may not be moved from the place of
15 quarantine without the written permission of the local health officer or public health
16 veterinarian.

17 [(d)] (F) The public health veterinarian or local health officer may order the
18 immediate and humane destruction of a biting animal THAT IS CLINICALLY SUSPECTED
19 TO BE RABID for rabies testing if:

20 (1) It is necessary to preserve human health;

21 (2) A licensed veterinarian determines that a quarantined animal is
22 inhumanely suffering; or

23 (3) The animal is considered wild and is not claimed by an owner within 24
24 hours.

25 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
26 October 1, 1996.