

Department of Legislative Services

Maryland General Assembly

2002 Session

FISCAL NOTE

Revised

House Bill 600

(Dorchester County Delegation)

Commerce and Government Matters

Judicial Proceedings

Dorchester County - Animal Control - Civil Penalties

This bill authorizes the Commissioners of Dorchester County to prosecute violations of county dog and cat control ordinances as an infraction with a fine not to exceed \$1,000 for each violation.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Minimal increase in general fund revenues due to citations not paid within 20 days that are heard in District Court.

Local Effect: The Dorchester County Humane Society would issue citations for violations of Dorchester County dog and cat control ordinances. Violators would pay the fines to the county clerk's office but all revenue would be remitted to the Dorchester County Humane Society. Citations not paid after 20 days would go to District Court.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Dorchester County has an ordinance for animal control, but the County Commissioners of Dorchester County do not have the authority to impose civil penalties for violations of county animal control ordinances. Per local ordinance, a person who violates the Dorchester County animal control ordinance is guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a fine of at least \$15 and not exceeding \$50. Dorchester, Garrett, and Somerset counties may, by ordinance, provide for a comprehensive system for the regulation of dogs and cats within their county, including licensing and control.

Background: Dorchester County provides partial funding to the Dorchester County Humane Society and has delegated authority to the Human Society to enforce the county's dog and cat control ordinances.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 696 (Senator Colburn) – Judicial Proceedings.

Information Source(s): Dorchester County, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 12, 2002
ncs/hlb Revised - House Third Reader - March 25, 2002
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