

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2006 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 1017

(Senators Stone and Klausmeier)

Judicial Proceedings

Ferret Protection Act

This bill provides that a person in the business of breeding, distributing, or aiding in the wholesale or retail distribution of ferrets may not transport, sell, or offer for sale a ferret that is under 10 weeks of age or has not been spayed or neutered. However, a ferret that has not been spayed or neutered may be transported, sold, or offered for sale to a ferret breeder. Such a person may not spay or neuter a ferret that is less than eight weeks old; and may not transport, sell, or offer for sale a spayed or neutered ferret until more than seven days after the spaying or neutering procedure; and must provide certification dating the procedure.

A person in the business of breeding, distributing, or aiding in the wholesale or retail distribution of ferrets who transports, sells, or offers a ferret for sale must provide certification with each ferret that the person is in compliance with the provisions of the bill. A person who violates these provisions is guilty of a misdemeanor and is subject to a maximum fine of \$100 for each violation.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill would not materially affect State finances or operations.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: A person is prohibited from hunting with a ferret. A person who owns or keeps a ferret that is at least four months old must have the ferret adequately vaccinated against rabies.

A ferret that has been vaccinated against rabies and bites a human or exposes a human to rabies must be quarantined in a manner designated by the local health officer or the public health veterinarian.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: This bill is similar to HB 620 of 2005, which was heard in the House Judiciary Committee, but received no further action. This bill is similar to HB 1136 of 2004, which was heard in the House Judiciary Committee, but received no further action. Another similar bill, HB 975 of 2002, was referred to the House Judiciary Committee, but was not reported out. HB 1359 of 2002 was referred to the Environmental Matters Committee, but was not reported out.

Cross File: HB 1292 (Delegate McComas, *et al.*) – Judiciary.

Information Source(s): Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts), Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 14, 2006
ncs/jr

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