This bill increases, from $10,000 to $25,000, the maximum amount of compensatory damages that may be awarded to the owner of a pet from a person who tortiously causes an injury to or the death of the pet under specified circumstances.

**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** The bill is not expected to materially affect State finances or operations, as discussed below.

**Local Effect:** None. The bill does not materially affect local finances or operations.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

**Analysis**

**Current Law:** A person who tortiously causes an injury to or the death of a pet while acting individually or through an animal under the person’s ownership, direction, or control is liable to the owner of the pet for up to $10,000 in compensatory damages.

“Pet” means a domesticated animal and does not include livestock. “Compensatory damages” mean (1) the reasonable and necessary cost of veterinary care for a pet that was injured and (2) in a case involving the death of a pet, the fair market value of the pet before death and the reasonable and necessary cost of veterinary care.
**State Fiscal Effect:** The State assesses a 2% tax on gross or renewal insurance premiums. While the bill increases the cap on damages for tortious injury to or tortious death of a pet, the bill is likely to apply to a small pool of cases. Accordingly, any additional premium tax revenues that may accrue due to the bill are not expected to materially affect State finances.

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**Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Designated Cross File:** SB 997 (Senator Simonaire) - Rules.

**Information Source(s):** Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 24, 2020

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