

HOUSE BILL 85

M4
HB 365/23 – ENT

(PRE-FILED)

4r0526
CF 4r1128

By: **Delegates Lehman, Ruth, Kaufman, Palakovich Carr, Pasteur, Taylor, Terrasa, and Ziegler**

Requested: August 22, 2023

Introduced and read first time: January 10, 2024

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Department of Agriculture – Spay/Neuter Fund**

3 FOR the purpose of altering the contents and authorized uses of the Spay/Neuter Fund;
4 requiring the Department of Agriculture to establish a process through which a
5 person may make a voluntary donation to the Fund; requiring the Department to
6 give additional consideration to certain competitive grant proposals that meet
7 certain criteria; altering a certain fee on commercial feed prepared and distributed
8 for consumption by dogs or cats and registered in the State in a certain manner; and
9 generally relating to the Spay/Neuter Fund.

10 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
11 Article – Agriculture
12 Section 2–1601
13 Annotated Code of Maryland
14 (2016 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

15 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
16 Article – Agriculture
17 Section 2–1602 and 2–1603
18 Annotated Code of Maryland
19 (2016 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

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

22 **Article – Agriculture**

23 2–1601.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

2 (b) “Advisory Board” means the Spay/Neuter Fund Advisory Board established
3 under § 2–1604 of this subtitle.

4 (c) “Fund” means the Spay/Neuter Fund established under § 2–1602 of this
5 subtitle.
6 2–1602.

7 (a) There is a Spay/Neuter Fund in the Department.

8 (b) The purpose of the Fund is to reduce animal shelter overpopulation and cat
9 and dog euthanasia rates by financing grants to local governments and animal welfare
10 organizations for programs that most efficiently and effectively facilitate and promote the
11 provision of spay and neuter services for cats and dogs in the State.

12 (c) The Department shall [administer]:

13 (1) **ADMINISTER** the Fund; AND

14 (2) **ESTABLISH A PROCESS THROUGH WHICH A PERSON MAY MAKE A**
15 **VOLUNTARY DONATION TO THE FUND.**

16 (d) (1) The Fund is a special, nonlapsing fund that is not subject to § 7–302 of
17 the State Finance and Procurement Article.

18 (2) The State Treasurer shall hold the Fund separately, and the
19 Comptroller shall account for the Fund.

20 (e) The Fund consists of:

21 (1) Revenue distributed to the Fund from the fee established under §
22 2–1603 of this subtitle;

23 (2) **REVENUE COLLECTED BY THE DEPARTMENT IN THE FORM OF A**
24 **DONATION TO THE FUND;**

25 (3) Money appropriated in the State budget to the Fund;

26 [(3)] (4) Any investment earnings of the Fund; and

27 [(4)] (5) Any other money from any other source accepted for the benefit
28 of the Fund.

1 (f) (1) The Fund may be used only as described in this subsection.

2 (2) (i) The Fund may be used to finance selected competitive grant
3 proposals submitted by a local government or an animal welfare organization to facilitate
4 and promote the provision of spay and neuter services for cats and dogs, **INCLUDING**
5 **FINANCING THE COSTS RELATED TO:**

6 1. **ROUTINE VACCINATIONS FOR CATS AND DOGS AT THE**
7 **TIME OF A SPAY OR NEUTER SERVICE;**

8 2. **MOBILE VETERINARY CLINIC TRANSPORTATION; AND**

9 3. **TRANSPORTATION SERVICES TO BRING ANIMALS TO A**
10 **CLINIC FROM AN UNSERVED AREA.**

11 (ii) The Department shall solicit and evaluate competitive grant
12 proposals.

13 (iii) A competitive grant proposal:

14 1. Shall target low-income communities and populations to
15 the maximum extent possible and detail how that goal is to be accomplished;

16 2. May target feral cat populations if the Department
17 determines that this targeting does not violate local law;

18 3. Shall efficiently and effectively facilitate and promote the
19 provision of spay and neuter services for cats and dogs; and

20 4. May include public education and outreach components.

21 (iv) The Department shall evaluate a competitive grant proposal
22 based on:

23 1. The standards established under [subparagraph]
24 **SUBPARAGRAPHS (iii) AND (v)** of this paragraph; and

25 2. Any additional standards the Department adopts by
26 regulation consistent with this section.

27 **(v) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL GIVE ADDITIONAL**
28 **CONSIDERATION TO COMPETITIVE GRANT PROPOSALS THAT WILL:**

29 1. **PROVIDE ELIGIBLE SERVICES THROUGH THE USE OF**
30 **A MOBILE VETERINARY CLINIC;**

1 (1) A description of all grant proposals selected for funding and grant
2 programs implemented;

3 (2) A statement of the number of spay and neuter surgeries performed
4 under each grant proposal selected;

5 (3) A description of and accounting for any public education and outreach
6 efforts made for the benefit of Fund programs; and

7 (4) A summary of the information reported to the Department by local
8 animal control shelters and organizations that contract with local governments for animal
9 control under subsection (h) of this section.

10 2–1603.

11 (a) (1) In accordance with paragraph (2) of this subsection, the Secretary shall
12 establish a fee on each brand name or product name of commercial feed that is:

13 (i) Prepared and distributed for consumption by a dog or cat; and

14 (ii) Registered in the State under § 6–107 of this article.

15 (2) (I) The fee established under this subsection is:

16 [(i)] 1. From October 1, 2013, through September 30, 2014,
17 inclusive, \$50;

18 [(ii)] 2. From October 1, 2014, through September 30, 2015,
19 inclusive, \$75; [and]

20 [(iii)] 3. [After September 30, 2015] **FROM OCTOBER 1, 2015,**
21 **THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2024, INCLUSIVE, \$100; AND**

22 4. **AFTER SEPTEMBER 30, 2024:**

23 **A. SUBJECT TO SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS**
24 **PARAGRAPH AND EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN ITEM B OF THIS ITEM, \$130; OR**

25 **B. FOR PET FOOD MANUFACTURERS WHO**
26 **DEMONSTRATE TO THE DEPARTMENT, IN A MANNER PRESCRIBED BY THE**
27 **DEPARTMENT, THAT THE MANUFACTURER HAS A GROSS INCOME FROM THE**
28 **DISTRIBUTION OF PET FOOD PRODUCTS OF NOT MORE THAN \$500,000, \$100.**

29 (II) **THE INITIAL ADJUSTMENT TO THE FEE SHALL BE PHASED**

1 **IN OVER A PERIOD OF 3 YEARS, BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2024.**

2 (b) The fee established under subsection (a) of this section shall be paid by the
3 person registering the commercial feed in accordance with the collection and reporting
4 guidelines established by the Department by regulation.

5 (c) Any fee collected under this section shall be paid into the Fund.

6 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
7 1, 2024.