

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Minimal fiscal impact, no statement issued

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| Action: | Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed |
| Vote: | 5 - 1 - 1 |
| Yeas: | Berger, Esquivel, Hunt, Roblan, Rosenbaum |
| Nays: | Thatcher |
| Exc.: | Buckley |
| Prepared By: | Jim Stenbridge, Administrator |
| Meeting Dates: | 6/4 |

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Prohibits individuals from acquiring exotic animals. Allows the Department of Agriculture to issue permits to keep exotic animals if application is made within 90 days of the effective date of the Act, or within one year if the applicant possessed the animal prior to the effective date of the Act. Exempts wildlife sanctuaries, law enforcement agencies, and other organizations from the permit requirement. Defines “wildlife sanctuary.” Prohibits breeding of exotic animals. Exempts persons breeding small exotic cats if the persons are exempt from the permit requirement, or—if the persons have permits to keep the animals and document that the offspring are for retail sale—breed the small exotic cats with domestic cats. Adds members of order Crocodylia to definition of exotic animal.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Meaning of domestication and the public hazards of released exotic animals
- Hybrid cats
- Licensing requirements
- Costs of keeping exotic animals; life cycle of the animals
- Role of sanctuaries, zoos, schools in accepting un-wanted animals
- Provisions of United States Department of Agriculture licensing

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Allows persons to breed small exotic cats if the persons are exempt from the permit requirement, or—if the persons have permits to keep the animals and document that the offspring are for retail sale—breed the small exotic cats with domestic cats. Allows the Department of Agriculture to issue permits to keep exotic animals if application is made within 90 days of the effective date of the Act, or within one year if the applicant possessed the animal prior to the effective date of the Act. Deletes provision for order Crocodylia permits. Deletes provisions for temporary authorization to possess offspring of exotic animal that are gestational on the effective date of the Act. Deletes provision limiting permits to two years. Deletes provision for renewal of permits. Deletes emergency clause.

BACKGROUND: Current statute defines “exotic animal” as including any member of the family Felidae (felines), except the domestic cat; non-human primates; wolves; non-wolf members of the family Canidae (canines) not indigenous to Oregon, except the domestic dog; and any bear, except the black bear. HB 3437-B adds the order Crocodylia (crocodiles) to the list of exotic animals in state law.

HB 3437-B also begins a phasing out of the state permitting program. Current statute prohibits any person from keeping an exotic animal without a state permit. HB 3437-B allows the Department of Agriculture to issue permits only during the first 90 days after the bill’s effective date, and allows exceptions for up to one year only for persons who possessed the exotic animals prior to the effective date of the Act. The permit requirement does not apply to wildlife rehabilitation centers, facilities operated under a valid license or research facility registration issued by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), exotic animal protection organizations, law enforcement agencies, licensed veterinary hospitals or clinics, or wildlife sanctuaries. The bill also exempts educational facilities that house a member of the order Crocodylia at the request of the state or local government.

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This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.