

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Judiciary

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 04/14/15

Action: Do Pass.

Meeting Dates: 03/18, 04/14

Vote:

Yeas: 9 - Barker, Barton, Greenlick, Krieger, Lininger, Olson, Post, Sprenger, Williamson

Prepared By: Laura Handzel, Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Adds threatening to cause physical injury to animal to induce other person to engage in certain conduct as conduct constituting crime of coercion.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Link between domestic violence and animal abuse (The Link)
- Examples of domestic violence involving animals
- Statistics and studies on The Link
- Impact of violence and threats of violence against animals
- Challenges of holding perpetrators accountable for threats of harming animals
- Victim safety and protection bill offers victims
- Importance of companion animals to domestic violence victims
- Importance of companion animals as leverage to abusers
- Animal abuse as indicator and predictor of violence against humans
- Barriers to leaving domestic abuse situation, including companion animal concerns

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Multiple studies show a direct link between violence against animals and violence against humans, especially within the context of domestic violence where abusers use animals – specifically the threat of harming an animal – as a means of achieving submission.

House Bill 3468 makes it a crime of coercion when one compels or induces another person to engage in certain conduct by instilling fear that they will cause physical injury to an animal.