

HB 3571 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Judiciary

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Meeting Dates: 3/16

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Provides that an animal holding agency taking possession of, keeping or disposing of a cat or dog does not commit theft in the first degree and is immune from prosecution or civil liability for the act. Requires the animal holding agency, upon taking possession of a cat or dog, to: verify that the person transferring the cat or dog to the agency believes the cat or dog to be lost, stray, or abandoned; keep it in a facility approved for that purpose; post information and a photo of the animal on the agency's website within 24 hours of taking possession; and take other reasonable steps to notify the owner. Specifies additional notice requirements if an owner is identified. Sets minimum number of business days that the agency must keep a cat or dog as five days if the animal has a license, identification tag or microchip, and three days if it does not; if no owner appears during that time, the agency becomes the owner and may offer the animal for adoption or euthanize the animal. Permits euthanasia of the cat or dog within the holding period if deemed necessary by a licensed veterinarian, after the agency has exhausted all reasonable steps to notify the owner. Requires the agency to keep certain related records for at least one year. Takes effect 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

House Bill 3571 immunizes animal holding agencies from criminal prosecution and civil liability for taking possession of a cat or dog, requires the agencies to make certain postings and notifications and hold the cat or dog for a minimum number of days, and transfers ownership of the animal to the agency if no owner has appeared within that time and the agency took all reasonable notification steps.