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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

### **sHB 5170**

#### ***AN ACT CONCERNING THE TETHERING AND SHELTERING OF DOGS.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill requires a dog to be given adequate shelter, as defined by the bill, when (1) the National Weather Service (NWS) issues a weather advisory or warning or (2) adverse outdoor environmental conditions pose a risk to the dog's health or safety, based on the dog's breed, size, age, coat thickness, or physical condition. This requirement applies only when the dog is outdoors for more than 15 minutes. The bill waives the requirement when the dog is in the presence of someone who is outside during the same weather warning or advisory or exposed to the same environmental conditions.

The bill also prohibits tethering a dog to a stationary object or mobile device (e.g., trolley or pulley) (1) in a way that places it at risk of injury by another animal or (2) for more than 15 minutes without giving it continuous access to sanitary drinking water that is not frozen.

Current law prohibits tethering a dog to a stationary object or mobile device for more than 15 minutes when (1) local, state, or federal authorities issue a weather advisory or warning or (2) adverse outdoor conditions pose a risk to the dog's health or safety based on the dog's breed, age, or physical condition. The bill requires (1) the weather advisory or warning to be from the NWS and (2) consideration of the dog's size and coat thickness.

The bill eliminates an exception to the ban on using a tether without swivels on both ends to prevent twisting and tangling, unless a person is in the dog's presence. The exception currently applies to: veterinarians and groomers in the course of their work; temporary events to showcase a dog's skill or ability (e.g., dog shows or contests);

temporary events to hunt wildlife in which a dog is trained for that purpose; and authorized temporary tethering at camping or recreation areas.

Anyone who violates these requirements is subject to a fine of \$100 for a first offense, \$200 for a second offense, and between \$250 and \$500 for a third or subsequent offense. This is the existing penalty for violations of the state's tethering law.

Lastly, the bill makes technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2022

### **ADEQUATE SHELTER SCOPE**

Under the bill, "adequate shelter" is a structure that:

1. provides natural or artificial light during daylight hours;
2. offers enough space for a dog to sit, lie down, and turn;
3. is soundly built, kept in good repair, and without accumulated animal waste, debris, precipitation, and moisture;
4. has sanitary drinking water that is not frozen;
5. has no space heater or wood or fuel burning equipment for space heating;
6. is not (a) under exterior stairs or (b) under or inside a motor vehicle; and
7. has appropriately sized wire or metal chain links so that a dog's paws cannot be caught in them, if constructed with the links.

The structure must also, during extreme outdoor heat, provide enough shade and ventilation for a dog to maintain normal body temperature. And during cold outdoor weather, a shelter must:

1. be raised off the ground and sufficiently enclosed and insulated to allow a dog to maintain normal body temperature,

2. have a solid roof and walls and a wind-protected opening for entry and exit, and
3. have dry bedding.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Planning and Development Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 23 Nay 3 (03/11/2022)