
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5170 (as amended by House "A")*

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) without providing it potable water at least twice in each 24-hour period.

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.

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.

*House Amendment "A" principally (1) removes the original bill's ban on tethering a dog in a way that puts it at risk of injury by another animal; (2) requires the provision of potable water for tethered dogs at least twice in each 24-hour period, instead of continuously provided sanitary liquid water for dogs tethered for more than 15 minutes; (3) restores an exemption for the use of tethers with swivels by veterinarians and groomers or at certain temporary events and campsites that the original bill eliminated; and (4) modifies the definition of "adequate shelter" to, among other things, specify that a structure must be raised at least two inches off the ground during cold weather.

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, and moisture (e.g., standing water and mud), both inside and in the shelter's immediate vicinity;
4. provides access to potable water at least twice in each 24-hour period;
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 a floor with 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 at least two inches 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)