
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5223 (as amended by House "A")*

AN ACT CONCERNING MINOR REVISIONS TO AGRICULTURE RELATED STATUTES.

SUMMARY

This bill makes numerous unrelated changes to agriculture-related statutes. It primarily does the following:

1. requires businesses to get separate commercial kennel, grooming facility, and training facility licenses from the Department of Agriculture (DoAg) by removing current exemptions in the definitions of grooming facility and training facility;
2. specifies that a grooming facility, which is a place maintained to groom dogs, includes a vehicle or trailer used for a dog grooming business;
3. removes the requirement that the governor's eight appointees to the Milk Regulation Board (which is responsible for adopting regulations on the sale and production of milk and milk products) be confirmed by either General Assembly chamber, allowing them to be seated without legislative review;
4. allows a municipal pound to use a voucher from the Animal Population Control Program (see BACKGROUND) to get any dog or cat, rather than only ones with pyometra, sterilized and vaccinated before the animal is purchased or adopted from the pound;
5. removes a requirement that the state veterinarian sign a health certificate that a state-licensed veterinarian issues for an equine (e.g., horse) being brought to public auction and defines "Coggins test" as the official test for equine infectious anemia (for which equines being auctioned must test negative by law);

6. removes the minimum qualifications for a person to be appointed by the state entomologist as an apiary inspector; and
7. specifies that dogs and cats that must receive a rabies vaccination (i.e., those at least 12 weeks of age or the vaccine manufacturer's recommended age as approved by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, rather than at least three months old as under current law) must be vaccinated before the animal is 14 weeks old.

Additionally, the bill requires the insurance commissioner, in consultation with the agriculture commissioner, to study the feasibility of establishing a captive insurance company to provide financial help to farmers in Connecticut who are impacted by severe weather. The insurance commissioner must report recommendations to the Insurance and Real Estate Committee by January 1, 2025.

The bill also makes technical changes.

*House Amendment "A" adds provisions on (1) rabies vaccinations and (2) a farmers captive insurance study.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 1 — COMMERCIAL KENNEL, GROOMING, AND TRAINING SERVICES

By removing the exemption for commercial kennels from the definitions of "grooming facility" and "training facility" and removing the exemption for grooming facilities from the definition of "training facility," the bill requires a business to get a license from DoAg for each activity it conducts. Correspondingly, it requires the business to comply with the statutory requirements for each license type as a separate entity. Under current law, commercial kennels that also groom or train dogs, and grooming facilities that also train dogs, are exempt from the additional licensure requirements.

By law, a commercial kennel license costs \$400. Grooming facility and training facility licenses cost \$200 each. Each license expires the

December 31st following its issuance and may be renewed every two years. Licensees must comply with state regulations on sanitation, disease, humane treatment of animals, and public safety as well as municipal zoning regulations (CGS § 22-344).

§ 6 — APIARY INSPECTOR

The bill removes the minimum qualifications for an apiary inspector. Under current law, to be appointed as an inspector by the state entomologist, a person must meet the qualifications of an Agricultural Research Technician II at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station and have at least five years of beekeeping experience or three years of experience as a bee inspector.

BACKGROUND

Animal Population Control Program Vouchers

By law, municipal pounds cannot sell or give away an unspayed or unneutered dog or cat unless the person buying or adopting the animal pays \$45 for a spay and neuter voucher. The person can redeem the voucher at a participating veterinarian for sterilization and vaccination services, or the pound can arrange for the services before releasing the animal. If the veterinarian determines the animal is medically unfit for sterilization, the person may apply to DoAg for a refund.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 34 Nay 0 (03/08/2024)