



HOUSE BILL 553: Ordinances Regulating Animals

2015-2016 General Assembly

Committee:		Date:	
Introduced by:		Prepared by:	Layla Cummings
Analysis of:	S.L. 2015-192		Staff Attorney

SUMMARY: *S.L. 2015-192 prohibits cities and counties from adopting ordinances regulating standards of care for farm animals.*

This act became effective August 5, 2015.

EXISTING LAW: Cities and counties are authorized by ordinance to:

- Define, regulate, prohibit, or abate acts, omissions, or conditions detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of its citizens and the peace and dignity of the county; and may define and abate nuisances (G.S. 160A-174; G.S. 153A-121).
- Define and prohibit the abuse of animals (G.S. 160A-182; G.S. 153A-127).
- Regulate, restrict, or prohibit the possession or harboring within the city of animals which are dangerous to persons or property (G.S. 160A-187; G.S. 153A-131).

Farm animals are covered by the criminal prohibition against cruelty to animals (G.S. 14-360) subject to the exceptions in that section, but there are no other State standards of care for farm animals.

SESSION LAW ANALYSIS: S.L. 2015-192 would prohibit cities and counties from adopting ordinances regulating standards of care for farm animals. Under the act, “farm animals” include the following domesticated animals: cattle, oxen, bison, sheep, swine, goats, horses, ponies, mules, donkeys, hinnies, llamas, alpacas, lagomorphs, ratites, and poultry. However, cities would retain the authority to regulate poultry flocks of 20 birds or fewer. “Standards of care for farm animals” includes the construction, repair, or improvement of farm animal shelter or housing, restrictions on the type of feed or medicines that may be administered to farm animals, and exercise and social interaction requirements.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This act became effective when the Governor signed it on August 5, 2015.

Chris Saunders, committee counsel to House Agriculture, substantially contributed to this summary.

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