

VERMONT ANIMAL WELFARE LEGISLATION 2017/2018 SESSION

Bill Number and Title	Statement of Purpose	Sponsor(s)	Status, Committee Assignment and Action Steps
<p>H.60, An act relating to the hunting of coyotes</p>	<p>This bill proposes to require the Fish and Wildlife Department to conduct a study of the current coyote population and hunting/trapping regulations in Vermont, policies in place in other states, how those policies reflect proper wildlife management practices, and suggestions for reforms.</p>	<p>Rep. David Deen D, Windham-4</p>	<p>Assigned to the House Committee on Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife</p> <p>The Committee received testimony on the bill and decided, instead of advancing legislation, to direct the Fish and Wildlife Department to conduct the study directly through a letter to Commissioner Porter. The report is due by January 15, 2018.</p>
<p>S.12 and H.188, An act relating to increasing the penalties for animal cruelty</p>	<p>This bill increases the maximum prison sentence for animal cruelty and aggravated animal cruelty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raises the maximum sentence for misdemeanor animal cruelty from one to five years, and the felony maximum sentence from five to ten years. • H.188 creates a “reckless course of conduct” standard for actions that result in the death of the animal. 	<p>Sen. Robert Starr D, Essex-Orleans</p> <p>Rep. Kurt Wright R, Chittenden 6-1</p>	<p>S.12 has PASSED the SENATE and is now under consideration, along with H.188, by the House Committee on Judiciary</p> <p>Action Steps: Contact your legislators and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Contact the members of the House Committee on Judiciary and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Call the VT Sergeant-at-Arms at 802-828-2228 and tell them you SUPPORT S.12 and H.188. They will pass that message to the correct Committee.</p>

<p><u>H.204</u>, An act relating to standards for the care of domestic pets</p>	<p>This bill updates and improves various standards for the care of domestic pets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly defines and prohibits the abandonment of pets or poisoning of community cats. • Affirmatively bans the use of gas chambers by animal shelters and rescues. • Provides proper legal protections for humane population control programs for community cats (TNR). 	<p><u>Rep. Tommy Walz</u> D, Washington-3</p>	<p>Assigned to the House Committee on Agriculture and Forestry</p> <p><u>Action Steps:</u> Contact your legislators and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Contact members of the House Committee on Agriculture and Forestry and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Call the VT Sergeant-at-Arms at 802-828-2228 and tell them you SUPPORT H.204. They will pass that message to the correct Committee.</p>
<p><u>H.218</u>, An act relating to the adequate shelter of dogs and cats</p>	<p>This bill proposes to amend the requirements for the sheltering of dogs.</p>	<p><u>Rep. John Bartholomew</u> D, Windsor-1</p> <p><u>Rep. Gary Viens</u> R, Orleans-2</p>	<p>PASSED the HOUSE, pending in the Senate Committee on Agriculture</p> <p><u>Action Steps:</u> Contact your legislators and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Contact members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Call the VT Sergeant-at-Arms at 802-828-2228 and tell them you SUPPORT H.218. They will pass that message to the correct Committee.</p>

<p>H.219, An act relating to the Vermont spaying and neutering program</p>	<p>This bill would allow Vermont’s low-income spay and neuter program to be run directly by the Department for Children and Families if no qualified contractor is capable of running the program on its behalf. Current laws <u>requires</u> the program to be run by a third-party contractor, raising concerns about whether the program could continue to operate if no qualified contractor was available, potentially cutting off access to spay and neuter services.</p>	<p>Rep. John Bartholomew D, Windsor-1</p>	<p>PASSED the HOUSE, pending in the Senate Committee on Government Operations</p> <p>Action Steps: Contact your legislators and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Contact members of the Senate Committee on Government Operations and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Call the VT Sergeant-at-Arms at 802-828-2228 and tell them you SUPPORT H.219. They will pass that message to the correct Committee.</p>
<p>H.220 and S.117, An act relating to the sale of ivory or rhinoceros horn</p>	<p>This bill would limit the sale, purchase, or barter of ivory and items containing ivory or rhino horn.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elephant poaching in Africa is at a record high—one is slaughtered for its tusks every 15 minutes. Experts estimate they could be gone from the wild within decades. • Federal laws do not regulate ivory sales within Vermont. Prohibiting ivory sales within the state would reduce demand and cease Vermont’s participation in this bloody trade. 	<p>Rep. James McCullough D, Chittenden-2</p> <p>Rep. Kathryn Webb D, Chittenden 5-1</p> <p>Sen. Christopher Pearson P/D, Chittenden</p> <p>Sen. Ginny Lyons D, Chittenden</p>	<p>Assigned to the House Committee on Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife and the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing and General Affairs</p> <p>Action Steps: Contact your legislators and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Contact members of these Committees and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Call the VT Sergeant-at-Arms at 802-828-2228 and tell them you SUPPORT H.220 and S.117. They will pass that message to the correct Committee.</p>

<p>H.252, An act relating to pet specialty license plates</p>	<p>This bill would create pet vehicle registration plates and raise funding for animal shelters and rescues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The graphic design would be recommended by the Vermont Humane Federation to enhance public awareness of the work of animal shelters and rescue organizations. • \$15 from the sale of each plate would be used to provide grants to support the work of animal shelters and rescue organizations in Vermont. 	<p>Rep. Brian K. Savage R, Franklin-4</p> <p>Rep. Marianna Gamache R, Franklin-4</p>	<p>Assigned to the House Committee on Transportation</p> <p>Action Steps: Contact your legislators and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Contact members of the House Committee on Transportation and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Call the VT Sergeant-at-Arms at 802-828-2228 and tell them you SUPPORT H.252. They will pass that message to the correct Committee.</p>
<p>H.262, An act relating to the licensing of nuisance wildlife control operators</p>	<p>This bill would require the training and licensing of individuals who trap or kill nuisance wildlife for a fee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently, individuals who are paid to trap nuisance wildlife animals are not licensed by the state and undergo no specific training in humane standards or non-lethal conflict resolution options. They are not even required to have a VT trapping license. • According to the VT Fish and Wildlife Department, it “is reasonable to expect, therefore, that some of this work is being completed by people having little trapping experience and/or limited knowledge of the modern Best Management Practices trapping methods and devices.” • The bill directs the Fish and Wildlife Department to require licensing and training for commercial operators, encourage non-lethal options, require the use of humane trapping and dispatch methods, and mandate reporting of information about animals trapped. 	<p>Rep. James McCullough D, Chittenden-2</p>	<p>Assigned to the House Committee on Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife</p> <p>Action Steps: Contact your legislators and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Contact members of the House Committee on Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Call the VT Sergeant-at-Arms at 802-828-2228 and tell them you SUPPORT H.262. They will pass that message to the correct Committee.</p>

<p>H.310, An act relating to adequate shelter for livestock</p>	<p>This bill would improve and clarify the shelter standards that apply to livestock, including equines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lack of detail in the livestock statute makes the current shelter requirements difficult to understand, communicate, and enforce by animal control officers and law enforcement. • The bill provides a definition for adequate “natural” or “constructed” shelter, creates a requirement for exercise and proper ventilation, and sets standards for the use of a leash, rope, or chain. 	<p>Rep. David Ainsworth R, Windsor-Orange-1</p>	<p>Assigned to the House Committee on Agriculture and Forestry</p> <p>Action Steps: Contact your legislators and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Contact members of the House Committee on Agriculture and Forestry and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Call the VT Sergeant-at-Arms at 802-828-2228 and tell them you SUPPORT H.310. They will pass that message to the correct Committee.</p>
<p>H.325, An act relating to prohibiting bestiality</p>	<p>This bill would prohibit sexual contact between a person and an animal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal sexual abuse (bestiality) is the sexual molestation of an animal by a human, and like rape, is involves the eroticization of violence, control and exploitation. • Vermont is one of only eight states (the only north of West Virginia) where it is legal to have sex with an animal. • Animal sexual abuse is the single largest risk factor and strongest predictor of increased risk for committing child sexual abuse. • The bill would prohibit engaging in sexual contact with animals and trafficking, offering, soliciting, or advertising animals for sex. It includes an exemption for accepted and lawful animal husbandry and veterinary practices. 	<p>Rep. Curtis McCormack D, Chittenden 6-3</p> <p>Rep. Clement Bissonette D, Chittenden 6-7</p>	<p>Assigned to the House Committee on Judiciary</p> <p>Action Steps: Contact your legislators and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Contact the members of the House Committee on Judiciary and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Call the VT Sergeant-at-Arms at 802-828-2228 and tell them you SUPPORT H.325. They will pass that message to the correct Committee.</p>

<p>H.336, An act relating to membership of the Fish and Wildlife Board</p>	<p>This bill would establish a Wildlife Management Advisory Board to advise the Commissioner of Fish and Wildlife and the General Assembly on issues involving the protection, propagation, management, and conservation of all fish and wildlife in the State. The bill would rename the Fish and Wildlife Board as the Fish and Game Board. The bill also would require the appointment of six non-consumptive users of wildlife to the Fish and Game Board.</p>	<p>Rep. James McCullough D, Chittenden-2</p> <p>Rep. David Deen D, Windham-4</p>	<p>Assigned to the House Committee on Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife</p> <p>Action Steps: Contact your legislators and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Contact members of the House Committee on Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Call the VT Sergeant-at-Arms at 802-828-2228 and tell them you SUPPORT H.336. They will pass that message to the correct Committee.</p>
<p>H.416, An act relating to prohibiting the banning of specific breeds of dog</p>	<p>This bill would prohibit localities from creating discriminatory laws towards certain dog breeds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breed-discriminatory laws are bad policy because they infringe on our basic property rights. • They are also completely ineffective, as veterinary and health experts agree that there is no credible evidence that breed is an indicator of whether a dog is safe. • Rather than enact laws that punish innocent pets and their responsible owners, our communities should have breed-neutral comprehensive dog laws that hold negligent or reckless owners accountable for their dogs if their behavior is dangerous 	<p>Rep. Jean O'Sullivan D, Chittenden 6-2</p>	<p>Assigned to the House Committee on Government Operations</p> <p>Action Steps: Contact your legislators and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Contact members of the House Committee on Government Operations and ask them to SUPPORT the bill</p> <p>Call the VT Sergeant-at-Arms at 802-828-2228 and tell them you SUPPORT H.416. They will pass that message to the correct Committee.</p>

<p><u>S.123, An act relating to limiting liability for animal shelter and rescue organizations assisting law enforcement in animal cruelty investigations</u></p>	<p>This bill ensures an animal shelter or rescue organization assisting law enforcement in an animal cruelty investigation or seizure that, in good faith, provides care and treatment to an animal involved in the investigation or seizure shall not be held liable for civil damages by the owner of the animal unless such care and treatment constitutes gross negligence.</p>	<p>Sen. Dick Sears D, Bennington</p> <p>Sen. Tim Ashe D/P, Chittenden</p>	<p>Assigned to the Senate Committee on Judiciary</p> <p>Action Steps: Contact your legislators and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Contact members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and ask them to SUPPORT the bill.</p> <p>Call the VT Sergeant-at-Arms at 802-828-2228 and tell them you SUPPORT S.123. They will pass that message to the correct Committee.</p>
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