

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 762
By: Israel
Judiciary & Civil Jurisprudence
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The American Veterinary Medical Association estimates that each year, hundreds of animals die in hot cars. These deaths are entirely avoidable. Often pet owners leave their animals locked in cars while running errands, unaware that temperatures inside a vehicle can rise by 20 degrees in as little as 10 minutes. Even when the temperature is as low as 70 degrees, the interior of a parked car can reach 104 degrees in just half an hour. This danger can be avoided by allowing "Good Samaritans" to rescue domestic animals trapped in hot cars without fear of being sued for property damage. H.B. 762 provides civil liability protections to persons who enter a vehicle to remove a domestic animal they have reason to believe is in imminent danger if certain conditions are satisfied.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 762 amends the Civil Practice and Remedies Code to extend the immunity from civil liability applicable to a person who, by force or otherwise, enters a motor vehicle for the purpose of removing a vulnerable individual to apply to a person who does so for purposes of removing a dog, cat, or other domesticated animal that may be kept as a household pet, excluding a livestock animal, if the person's actions and state of mind meet the requisite conditions and the person places a note on the motor vehicle's windshield with information specified by the bill. The bill expressly does not grant immunity from civil liability to a person who, on notifying law enforcement or calling 911, was advised by law enforcement personnel not to enter the motor vehicle.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.