

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center

H.B. 3250  
By: Hartnett (Wentworth)  
Finance  
5-13-97  
Engrossed

### **DIGEST**

Each year in Texas, more than 750,000 companion animals (dogs and cats) are euthanized in local shelters not because they are sick or vicious, but because there are not enough willing and suitable adoptive homes in which to place these animals. The overpopulation of dogs and cats is a humane concern as well as a public health concern, and is a significant burden to local taxpayers. H.B. 3250 would generate revenue for the spaying and neutering of animals by creating an optional new "animal friendly" license plate for Texas vehicles. The Texas Department of Health (TDH) would administer the account with the assistance and recommendations of a seven-member animal friendly advisory committee, and would only be able to spend account money after \$500,000 has been credited to the account. If at least \$500,000 has not been generated for the account by September 1, 2001, the money deposited shall revert to the general revenue fund and the bill shall expire.

### **PURPOSE**

As proposed, H.B. 3250 provides for dog and cat sterilization and the issuance of animal friendly license plates.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

Rulemaking authority is granted to the Texas Board of Health in SECTION 1 (Section 828.014(c), Health and Safety Code) of this bill.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 828, Health and Safety Code, by adding Sections 828.014 and 828.015, as follows:

Sec. 828.014. ANIMAL FRIENDLY ACCOUNT. Provides that the Texas Department of Health animal friendly account (account) is a separate account in the general revenue fund composed of money deposited to the credit of the account under Section 502.291, Transportation Code, and gifts, grants, donations, and legislative appropriations. Provides that the Texas Department of Health (TDH) administers the account. Authorizes TDH to spend money credited to the account only to make grants to eligible organizations that sterilize animals owned by the general public at minimal or no cost and to defray the cost of administering the account. Authorizes the Texas Board of Health (TBH) to accept gifts, donations, and grants from any source for the benefit of the account; and requires TBH, by rule, to establish guidelines for spending money credited to the account. Defines "eligible organization."

Sec. 828.015. ANIMAL FRIENDLY ADVISORY COMMITTEE. Requires the commissioner of public health to appoint a seven-member animal friendly advisory committee composed of certain persons. Requires the committee to designate one member as presiding officer, and requires the committee to fulfill certain responsibilities. Sets forth provisions regarding the members' compensation and terms of service.

SECTION 2. Amends Chapter 502F, Transportation Code, by adding Section 502.291, as follows:

Sec. 502.291. ANIMAL FRIENDLY LICENSE PLATES. Requires TDH to issue specially

designed license plates for passenger cars and light trucks that include the words "Animal Friendly." Requires TDH to issue license plates to certain persons, and deposit a certain amount of each fee collected to the credit of the animal friendly account and the state highway fund.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 1997.

SECTION 4. Provides that if at least \$500,000 has not been deposited to the credit of the animal friendly account in the general revenue fund by September 1, 2001, Section 502.291, Transportation Code, and Sections 828.014 and 828.015, Health and Safety Code, are repealed; and money deposited to the credit of the account is required to be transferred to the undedicated portion of the general revenue fund.

SECTION 5. Emergency clause.