

2019 -- S 0082

LC000466

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2019

A N A C T

RELATING TO ANIMALS AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY - CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

Introduced By: Senators Lombardi, McCaffrey, Felag, Ciccone, and Lombardo

Date Introduced: January 16, 2019

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 4-1 of the General Laws entitled "Cruelty to Animals" is hereby
2 amended by adding thereto the following section:

3 **4-1-37.1. Reports of abandoned, neglected or abused animals.**

4 (a) Any Rhode Island licensed veterinarian, veterinarian technician, animal shelter,
5 animal kennel or other person charged with the care or custody of an animal shall report to any
6 police department (local or state), animal control officials or officers of private organizations
7 devoted to the humane treatment of animals, the condition of any animal that the parties entrusted
8 with care or custody of an animal knows or reasonably believed to be abandoned (as defined in §
9 4-1-26), neglected, or abused, and shall be immune from suit by reason of making the report;
10 provided, however, that any party under this section who participates or reports in bad faith or
11 with malice shall not be protected under the provisions of this section. Any party who fails to
12 report pursuant to this section shall be fined not exceeding five hundred dollars (\$500).

13 (b) Nothing in this section shall be construed to impose a duty to further investigate
14 observed or reasonably suspected animal abandonment, cruel neglect, or abuse.

15 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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1 This act would require all persons or entities caring for or having custody of an animal to
2 report animal abuse, cruel neglect or abandonment to the police. The party who files a report
3 would be protected from liability unless the report was made in bad faith or with malice. The act
4 would impose a fine, not to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500), for failure to report but does not
5 impose a duty to further investigate.

6 This act would take effect upon passage.

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