

2020 -- S 2463

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2020

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A N A C T

RELATING TO ANIMALS AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY -- THE ANIMAL WELFARE  
ADVISORY COUNCIL

Introduced By: Senators McKenney, Coyne, Cano, Euer, and Sosnowski

Date Introduced: February 13, 2020

Referred To: Senate Environment & Agriculture

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 **4-1-44. Animal welfare advisory council established.**

4 (a) There is hereby created and established an advisory council to be known as "The Rhode  
5 Island animal welfare advisory council" (the "council"). The purpose of the council shall be to  
6 advise the governor and the general assembly on matters relating to animal welfare, treatment,  
7 health, and abuse, and to provide recommendations on how best to promote the health and safety  
8 of companion animals in the state. As used in this section, "companion animal" means any animal  
9 that is kept inside a residential dwelling and any dog or cat regardless of where it is kept.  
10 "Companion animal" does not include livestock or any wild animal.

11 (b) The council shall consist of eleven (11) members as follows:

12 (1) The Rhode Island state veterinarian, or designee;

13 (2) A family court magistrate, to be appointed by the governor;

14 (3) An animal control officer employed by a municipality within the state, to be appointed  
15 by the governor;

16 (4) A Rhode Island licensed veterinarian, to be appointed by the governor;

17 (5) A representative from the Potter League for Animals, to be appointed by the league's  
18 governing body;

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(6) A representative from the Providence Animal Rescue League, to be appointed by the league's governing body;

(7) A representative from the Rhode Island Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, to be appointed by the society's governing body;

(8) A representative from the Rhode Island Veterinary Medical Association, to be appointed by the association's governing body;

(9) A representative from the RIVMA Companion Animal Foundation, to be appointed by the foundation's governing body;

(10) A representative from the Rhode Island Kennel Club, to be appointed by the club's local governing body; and

(11) A representative from PawsWatch, to be appointed by the organization's governing body.

(c) The membership of the council shall receive no compensation for their services.

(d) Commencing on December 1, 2020, and in the month of December of each year thereafter, the council shall submit a written report to the governor and to the general assembly detailing its activities in that year and providing recommendations on matters relating to companion animal welfare, treatment and abuse, and on how best to promote and enhance the health and safety of companion animals in the state.

(e) The Rhode Island state veterinarian or designee shall serve on the council so long as he/she holds that position. The family court magistrate shall serve on the council for a term of five (5) years and may be reappointed by the governor. The remaining members shall be appointed to the council for terms of four (4) years, except that the initial terms of those members shall be as follows: five (5) members appointed pursuant to §§ 4-1-44(b)(3) through (b)(7) shall serve an initial term of three (3) years; and four (4) members appointed pursuant to §§ 4-1-44(b)(8) through (b)(11) shall serve initial terms of two (2) years. Any member may be reappointed. Any vacancy in the office of a member shall be filled in the same manner as provided for the original appointment, and any such appointment shall be for the balance of the then current term of that office.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO ANIMALS AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY -- THE ANIMAL WELFARE  
ADVISORY COUNCIL

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1           This act would establish an animal welfare advisory council to advise the governor and the  
2 general assembly on matters relating to animal welfare, treatment, health, and safety of companion  
3 animals.

4           This act would take effect upon passage.

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