

2012 -- S 2193

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LC00170
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2012

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A N A C T

RELATING TO ANIMALS AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY - CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

Introduced By: Senators Ruggerio, Perry, Sosnowski, Tassoni, and Miller

Date Introduced: January 24, 2012

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 **4-1-41. Devocalization prohibited.** – (a) No person shall surgically debark or silence a
4 dog or cat, or cause the surgical debarking or silencing of a dog or cat, unless a veterinarian
5 licensed in this state has filed a written certification with the applicable animal control officer
6 stating that the surgical debarking or silencing is medically necessary to treat or relieve an illness,
7 disease, or injury, or correct a congenital abnormality that is causing or will cause the dog or cat
8 medical harm or pain.

9 (b) The written certification described in subsection (a) above shall contain the date and
10 description of the veterinarian's examination and evaluation of the dog or cat, a statement
11 certifying that surgical debarking or silencing is medically necessary to treat or relieve an illness,
12 disease, or injury, or correct a congenital abnormality that is causing or will cause the dog or cat
13 harm or pain, any supporting diagnosis and findings, the name and current address and telephone
14 number of the dog or cat's owner or keeper, and the name and current address and telephone
15 number, state license number, and signature of the veterinarian.

16 (c) No person except a veterinarian licensed in this state, using anesthesia, may surgically
17 debark or silence a dog or cat.

18 (d) Any person found guilty of violating this section shall be fined not more than one
19 thousand dollars (\$1,000). In addition to any other penalty provided by law, a person convicted

1 under this section may be barred from owning or possessing any animals, or living on the same
2 property with someone who owns or possesses animals, for a period of time deemed appropriate
3 by the court, and required to take humane education, pet ownership and dog training classes as
4 ordered by the court.

5 (e) Any person or business selling a dog or cat for profit shall disclose whether the dog or
6 cat has been surgically debarked or silenced and provide the purchaser with a copy of the
7 veterinarian certification required by subsection (a) above.

8 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 - CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

- 1 This act would provide penalties for the devocalization of dogs and cats.
- 2 This act would take effect upon passage.

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