

HCS HB 617 -- VACCINATION OF DOGS AND CATS AGAINST RABIES

SPONSOR: Wright (Brown, 149)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Special Committee on Emerging Issues in Animal Agriculture by a vote of 4 to 3.

This substitute requires the owner of every dog or cat in this state to have his or her animal vaccinated against rabies by a veterinarian and to have the vaccination repeated periodically based on the age of the animal and type of vaccine administered or as required by an applicable municipal or county ordinance. Entities licensed by the Department of Agriculture are exempt from the requirements of the substitute.

Any owner violating the provisions of the substitute will be guilty of an infraction.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2010, FY 2011, and FY 2012.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill makes vaccination for rabies uniform for the entire state and penalizes any dog or cat owner who fails to have his or her pets vaccinated. Many governmental entities require dogs and cats to be vaccinated, but unincorporated areas do not.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Brown (149); Scott Fray, DVM; Ronald Palmer, DVM; James Crago, DVM; Department of Health and Human Services; and Chuck Barry, DVM.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that it opens the door for overzealous law and animal control officers to enter upon private property. There were no cases of rabies in humans in Missouri last year.

Testifying against the bill was Missouri Federation of Animal Owners.