

HCS HB 1828 -- ANIMAL CARE TRAINING

SPONSOR: Houghton

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Agriculture Policy by a vote of 8 to 4. Voted "Do Pass" by the Rules- Legislative Oversight Committee by a vote of 7 to 2.

This bill requires individuals, or organizations on behalf of a group of individuals, seeking to train peace officers in responding to animal neglect and abuse incident reports to submit all training materials relating to animal care to the State Veterinarian and all training materials relating to offenses involving animals to the Department of Public Safety for review on an annual basis. The State Veterinarian and Department of Public Safety must review and either approve or disapprove the materials within 14 days. Upon approval, the State Veterinarian or the Department of Public Safety will issue a certification.

Engaging in the business of animal care training using training materials that have not been certified by either the State Veterinarian or the Department of Public Safety is an infraction for the first offense, and a class D misdemeanor for the second or any subsequent offense.

This bill has an effective date of January 1, 2019.

PROponents: Supporters say that this bill gives clarity and stability to the person who provides training relating to animal care for public officials responding to reports of animal abuse and neglect. The information presented would be accurate and consistent between trainers.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Houghton; Missouri Cattlemen's Association; and Missouri Farm Bureau.

OPponents: Those who oppose the bill say that the bill stifles an organization's ability to interpret the law through its training.

Testifying against the bill were the Humane Society of The United States and the Humane Society of Missouri.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say there needs to be accurate information taught to officials responding to animal abuse and neglect claims.

Testifying on the bill was the Missouri Federation of Animal Owners.