

By Senator Rich

34-1351-06

See CS/HB 563

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to juvenile animal cruelty;  
3           providing legislative findings; providing  
4           definitions; creating a task force on juvenile  
5           cruelty to animals; providing powers and  
6           duties; requiring the task force to consider  
7           specified issues and make recommendations;  
8           providing membership; requiring a report;  
9           providing for administrative support and travel  
10          reimbursement; providing for dissolution of the  
11          task force; providing an effective date.

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13 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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15           Section 1. Task force on juvenile cruelty to  
16 animals.--

17           (1) The Legislature recognizes that multiple research  
18 studies have found statistically significant correlations  
19 between acts of animal cruelty by juveniles and violent  
20 behavior against persons and that a literature review  
21 conducted by the federal Office of Juvenile Justice  
22 Delinquency Prevention found that juvenile animal cruelty may  
23 be characteristic of the developmental histories of 25 to 60  
24 percent of violent adult offenders. The Legislature further  
25 recognizes that it is critical for the rehabilitation of  
26 juvenile animal cruelty offenders and for the protection of  
27 society that the Legislature establish a policy requiring the  
28 Department of Juvenile Justice to assess the specific  
29 rehabilitation needs of juvenile animal cruelty offenders and  
30 to provide programs that will treat these offenders and halt  
31 further antisocial conduct.

1           (2) For purposes of this section, the term:

2           (a) "Department" means the Department of Juvenile  
3 Justice.

4           (b) "Juvenile animal cruelty offender" means a  
5 juvenile referred to the department who has violated s.  
6 828.12, Florida Statutes, or who otherwise has a history of  
7 engaging in one or more acts of animal cruelty.

8           (3) There is created a task force to review and  
9 evaluate the state's laws that define and address animal  
10 cruelty and the department's practices for treating and  
11 rehabilitating juvenile animal cruelty offenders. The task  
12 force shall make findings that include, but are not limited  
13 to:

14           (a) Identification of statutes that address animal  
15 cruelty.

16           (b) Compilation of statistics regarding the number of  
17 juveniles in this state who have been found, between July 1,  
18 2001, and June 30, 2006, to have committed an act of animal  
19 cruelty in violation of s. 828.12, Florida Statutes, and  
20 identification of the disposition imposed in each of those  
21 cases.

22           (c) A profile of the delinquency and criminal  
23 histories of the juveniles involved in the cases identified in  
24 paragraph (b) before and after commission of the act of animal  
25 cruelty.

26           (d) A summary of the department's methods for  
27 identifying juvenile animal cruelty offenders who are referred  
28 to the department for a delinquent act other than a violation  
29 of s. 828.12, Florida Statutes.

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1           (e) Identification of the department's practices,  
2 procedures, and programs for the treatment and rehabilitation  
3 of juvenile animal cruelty offenders.

4           (f) A summary of research regarding juvenile animal  
5 cruelty offenders and of any recommendations contained therein  
6 for the treatment and rehabilitation of these offenders.

7           (g) Identification of best and evidence-based  
8 practices and model programs used in other jurisdictions for  
9 the treatment and rehabilitation of juvenile animal cruelty  
10 offenders.

11           (4) Based on its findings, the task force shall make  
12 recommendations for the improvement of the state's policies  
13 and laws that address juvenile animal cruelty. Such  
14 recommendations shall specifically include, but are not  
15 limited to, identification of methods to assess the needs of  
16 juvenile animal cruelty offenders, treatment programs that  
17 will best rehabilitate juvenile animal cruelty offenders,  
18 service delivery mechanisms to ensure that recommended  
19 treatment programs are available statewide, and any funding  
20 needs above existing resources to ensure adequate availability  
21 of recommended treatment programs.

22           (5) On or before August 1, 2006, the secretary of the  
23 department shall appoint up to 12 members to the task force.  
24 The task force membership shall include, but is not limited  
25 to: three persons who collectively have experience with the  
26 conduct of juvenile animal cruelty research and with the  
27 treatment and rehabilitation of juvenile animal cruelty  
28 offenders; two department employees who collectively are  
29 responsible for research and planning and delinquency  
30 prevention and treatment programming; and two representatives  
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1 of providers of juvenile delinquency prevention, treatment,  
2 and rehabilitation services.

3 (6) The task force shall submit a written report of  
4 its findings and recommendations to the Governor, the  
5 President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of  
6 Representatives by January 1, 2007.

7 (7) Administrative support for the task force shall be  
8 provided by the department. Members of the task force shall  
9 serve without compensation, but are entitled to reimbursement  
10 under s. 112.061, Florida Statutes, for travel and per diem  
11 expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties.  
12 The task force shall strive to minimize travel and per diem  
13 expenses by performing, when practicable, its duties in the  
14 location where the majority of task force members reside.

15 (8) The task force shall be dissolved upon submission  
16 of its report.

17 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2006.  
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