

By Senator Rader

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Companion Animal Public-Private
3 Partnership Act; providing legislative findings;
4 defining terms; prohibiting animal shelters from
5 euthanizing animals under certain conditions;
6 requiring animal shelters to release animals to rescue
7 organizations under certain conditions; providing
8 exceptions; providing an effective date.

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

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12 Section 1. Companion Animal Public-Private Partnership
13 Act.—

14 (1) The Legislature finds that public-private partnerships
15 between local government shelters, private shelters, and
16 nonprofit organizations provide millions of dollars in cost
17 savings to local governments in other states which have
18 implemented such partnerships and that such partnerships reduce
19 the costs associated with holding and euthanizing animals to
20 taxpayers by transferring such costs from public agencies to
21 private organizations, generate revenue for local governments
22 through adoption fees, and reduce the number of animals
23 euthanized.

24 (2) As used in this section, the term:

25 (a) "Animal shelter" means a public or private facility
26 that:

27 1. Has a physical structure that provides temporary or
28 permanent shelter for stray, abandoned, abused, or owner-
29 surrendered animals.

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30 2. Is operated, owned, or maintained by a society for the
31 prevention of cruelty to animals, a humane society, a pound, an
32 animal control officer, a governmental entity, or a contractor
33 for a governmental entity.

34 (b) "Irremediable suffering" means a poor or grave
35 prognosis for being able to live without severe, unremitting
36 physical pain, even with comprehensive, prompt, and necessary
37 veterinary care, as certified in writing by a licensed
38 veterinarian.

39 (c) "Licensed veterinarian" means a person licensed to
40 practice veterinary medicine in this state.

41 (d) "Rescue organization" means an animal rescue
42 organization, animal adoption organization, or organization
43 formed for the prevention of cruelty to animals which is
44 described in s. 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and
45 exempt from taxation under s. 501(a) of the Internal Revenue
46 Code.

47 (3) An animal shelter may not euthanize an animal if a
48 rescue organization has indicated it will take custody of the
49 animal. The animal shelter shall release the animal to the
50 rescue organization.

51 (4) This section does not apply to:

52 (a) An animal suspected of carrying and exhibiting signs of
53 rabies, as determined by a licensed veterinarian.

54 (b) A dog classified as dangerous pursuant to s. 767.12,
55 Florida Statutes.

56 (c) An animal experiencing irremediable suffering.

57 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2020.