

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Agriculture

BILL: SB 240

INTRODUCER: Senator Rader

SUBJECT: State Symbols

DATE: January 17, 2020

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	_____	Becker	AG	Pre-meeting
2.	_____	_____	GO	_____
3.	_____	_____	RC	_____

I. Summary:

SB 240 designates any shelter animal that resides at or has been adopted from an animal shelter or an animal rescue organization as the official Florida state pet.

II. Present Situation:

Currently, there is no designated official state pet symbol for animals that reside in shelters or that have been adopted from an animal shelter or an animal rescue organization.

Chapter 15, F.S., designates official state emblems. To date, there are designations for a state motto, tree, fruit,¹ beverage,² citrus archive, anthem, song, shell, stone, gem, wildflower, play, animal, freshwater fish, saltwater fish, marine mammal, saltwater mammal, butterfly, reptile, saltwater reptile, tortoise, air fair, rodeo, festival, moving image center and archive, litter control symbol, pageant, opera program, renaissance festival, railroad museums, transportation museum, flagship, soil, fiddle contest, band, sports hall of fame, pie, honey, horse, and cattle breed.

Shelter Animals

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was founded on the belief that animals are entitled to kind and respectful treatment at the hands of humans and must be protected under the law. It indicates that approximately 6.5 million companion animals enter U.S. animal shelters nationwide every year. Of those, approximately 3.3 million are dogs and 3.2 million are cats.

¹ Section 15.0315, F.S., designates the orange as the official fruit of Florida.

² Section 15.032, F.S., designates orange juice as the official beverage of Florida.

Each year, approximately 1.5 million shelter animals are euthanized (670,000 dogs and 860,000 cats). The number of dogs and cats euthanized in United States shelters annually has declined from approximately 2.6 million in 2011. This decline can be partially explained by an increase in the percentage of animals adopted and an increase in the number of stray animals successfully returned to their owners.

Approximately 3.2 million shelter animals are adopted each year (1.6 million dogs and 1.6 million cats).

About 710,000 animals who enter shelters as strays are returned to their owners. Of those, 620,000 are dogs and only 90,000 are cats.³

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Section 1 creates s. 15.0528, F.S., to designate any shelter animal that resides at or has been adopted from an animal shelter or an animal rescue organization as the official Florida state pet.

Section 2 provides that this act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None identified.

³ See <https://www.asPCA.org/animal-homelessness/shelter-intake-and-surrender/pet-statistics> (Last visited January 16, 2020).

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill creates section 15.0528 of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.