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LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate	.	House
Comm: RCS	.	
02/25/2022	.	
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The Committee on Appropriations (Powell) recommended the following:

1           **Senate Substitute for Amendment (689614) (with title**  
2 **amendment)**

3  
4           Delete lines 24 - 127  
5 and insert:

6 Police Dogs Program Act."

7           Section 2. Section 943.69, Florida Statutes, is created to  
8 read:

9           943.69 Care for Retired Police Dogs Program.—

10           (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.—The Legislature finds that:



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11           (a) Police dogs are an integral part of many law  
12 enforcement and correctional efforts statewide, including the  
13 apprehension of suspects through tracking and searching,  
14 evidence location, drug and bomb detection, and search and  
15 rescue operations.

16           (b) Law enforcement and correctional agencies agree that  
17 the use of police dogs is an extremely cost-effective means of  
18 crime control and that police dogs possess skills and abilities  
19 that frequently exceed those of existing technology.

20           (c) The service of police dogs is often dangerous and can  
21 expose them to injury at a rate higher than that of nonservice  
22 dogs.

23           (d) Police dogs provide significant contributions to the  
24 residents of this state.

25           (2) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:

26           (a) "Correctional agency" means a lawfully established  
27 state or local public agency having primary responsibility for  
28 the supervision, protection, care, custody, control, or  
29 investigation of inmates at a correctional institution.

30           (b) "Law enforcement agency" means a lawfully established  
31 state or local public agency having primary responsibility for  
32 the prevention and detection of crime or the enforcement of  
33 penal, traffic, highway, regulatory, game, immigration, postal,  
34 customs, or controlled substance laws.

35           (c) "Retired police dog" means a dog that was previously in  
36 the service of or employed by a law enforcement agency or a  
37 correctional agency in this state for the principal purpose of  
38 aiding in the detection of criminal activity, enforcement of  
39 laws, or apprehension of offenders and that received



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40 certification in obedience and apprehension work from a  
41 certifying organization, such as the National Police Canine  
42 Association, Inc., or other certifying organization.

43 (d) "Veterinarian" has the same meaning as in s. 474.202.

44 (e) "Veterinary care" means the practice, by a  
45 veterinarian, of veterinary medicine as defined in s. 474.202.  
46 The term includes annual wellness examinations, vaccinations,  
47 internal and external parasite prevention treatments, testing  
48 and treatment of illnesses and diseases, medications, emergency  
49 care and surgeries, veterinary oncology or other specialty care,  
50 euthanasia, and cremation.

51 (3) ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM.—The Care for Retired Police  
52 Dogs Program is created within the department to provide a  
53 stable funding source for the veterinary care for retired police  
54 dogs.

55 (4) ADMINISTRATION.—The department shall contract with a  
56 nonprofit corporation organized under chapter 617 to administer  
57 and manage the Care for Retired Police Dogs Program.  
58 Notwithstanding chapter 287, the department shall select the  
59 nonprofit corporation through a competitive grant award process.  
60 The nonprofit corporation must meet all of the following  
61 criteria:

62 (a) Be dedicated to the protection or care of retired  
63 police dogs.

64 (b) Be exempt from taxation under s. 501(a) of the Internal  
65 Revenue Code as an organization described in s. 501(c)(3) of  
66 that code.

67 (c) Have maintained such tax-exempt status for at least 5  
68 years.



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69 (d) Agree to be subject to review and audit at the  
70 discretion of the Auditor General in order to ensure accurate  
71 accounting and disbursement of state funds.

72 (e) Demonstrate the ability to effectively and efficiently  
73 disseminate information and to assist former handlers and  
74 adopters of retired police dogs in complying with this section.

75 (5) FUNDING.—

76 (a) The nonprofit corporation shall be the disbursing  
77 authority for funds the Legislature appropriates to the  
78 department for the Care for Retired Police Dogs Program. These  
79 funds must be disbursed to the former handler or the adopter of  
80 a retired police dog that served for 5 years or more as a police  
81 dog upon receipt of:

82 1. Valid documentation from the law enforcement agency or  
83 correctional agency from which the dog retired which verifies  
84 that the dog was in the service of or employed by that agency;  
85 and

86 a. That the dog served 5 years or more with that agency;

87 b. Documentation showing that the dog served a total of 5  
88 years or more with two or more law enforcement agencies or  
89 correctional agencies; or

90 c. That, notwithstanding the length of service requirements  
91 elsewhere in this paragraph, the dog served 3 years or more with  
92 one or more law enforcement agencies or correctional agencies,  
93 was injured in the line of duty while serving with a law  
94 enforcement agency or correctional agency, and retired from the  
95 agency the dog was serving with at the time of the injury due to  
96 such injury; and

97 2. A valid invoice from a veterinarian for veterinary care



98 provided in this state to a retired police dog and documentation  
99 establishing payment of the invoice by the former handler or the  
100 adopter of the retired police dog.

101 (b) Annual disbursements to a former handler or an adopter  
102 to reimburse him or her for the cost of the retired police dog's  
103 veterinary care may not exceed \$1,500 per dog. A former handler  
104 or an adopter of a retired police dog may not accumulate unused  
105 funds from a current year for use in a future year.

106 (c) A former handler or an adopter of a retired police dog  
107 who seeks reimbursement for veterinary care may not receive  
108 reimbursement if funds appropriated for the Care for Retired  
109 Police Dogs Program are depleted in the year for which the  
110 reimbursement is sought.

111 (6) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—The department shall pay to  
112 the nonprofit corporation, and the nonprofit corporation may  
113 use, up to 10 percent of appropriated funds for its  
114 administrative expenses, including salaries and benefits.

115 (7) RULEMAKING.—The department shall adopt rules to  
116 implement this section.

117 Section 3. For the 2022-2023 fiscal year, and each fiscal  
118 year thereafter, the sum of \$300,000 in recurring funds is  
119 appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Department of  
120 Law Enforcement for the purpose of implementing and  
121 administering the Care for Retired Police Dogs Program.

122  
123 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

124 And the title is amended as follows:

125 Delete lines 2 - 12

126 and insert:



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127 An act relating to care for retired police dogs;  
128 providing a short title; creating s. 943.69, F.S.;  
129 providing legislative findings; defining terms;  
130 creating the Care for Retired Police Dogs Program  
131 within the Department of Law Enforcement; requiring  
132 the department to contract with a nonprofit  
133 corporation to administer and manage the program;  
134 specifying requirements for the nonprofit corporation;  
135 specifying requirements for the disbursement of funds  
136 for the veterinary care of eligible retired police  
137 dogs; limiting annual