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LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate	.	House
Comm: RCS	.	
02/10/2026	.	
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	.	

The Committee on Rules (Gaetz) recommended the following:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Delete everything after the enacting clause
and insert:

Section 1. Subsection (7) of section 828.12, Florida
Statutes, is amended, and a new subsection (8) is added to that
section, to read:

828.12 Cruelty to animals.—

(7) By ~~Beginning~~ January 1, 2027 ~~2026~~, the Department of
Law Enforcement shall post on its website, in a searchable
format prescribed by the department, the names and any aliases,



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the date of birth, the race, the counties of conviction, the charges, the case numbers, the dispositions, the description of any identifying marks and tattoos, and a photograph taken at the time of booking related to the animal cruelty offense of each individual ~~those individuals~~ who has ~~have~~ been convicted of, or who has ~~have~~ entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to, regardless of adjudication, a violation of this section.

(8) Each clerk of court and county detention facility must provide the Department of Law Enforcement with the information, data, and images required in subsection (7).

Section 2. Subsections (5) through (8), (10), (12), (13), and (17) of section 828.29, Florida Statutes, are amended, and subsections (18) and (19) are added to that section, to read:

828.29 Dogs and cats transported or offered for sale; health requirements; consumer guarantee; disclosures.—

(5) If, within 30 ~~14~~ days after ~~following~~ the sale by a pet dealer of an animal subject to this section, a licensed veterinarian of the consumer's choosing certifies that, at the time of the sale, the animal was unfit for purchase due to illness or disease, the presence of symptoms of a contagious or infectious disease, or the presence of internal or external parasites, excluding fleas and ticks; or if, within 1 year after ~~following~~ the sale of an animal subject to this section, a licensed veterinarian of the consumer's choosing certifies such animal to be unfit for purchase due to a congenital or hereditary disorder which adversely affects the health of the animal; or if, within 1 year after ~~following~~ the sale of an animal subject to this section, the breed, sex, or health of such animal is found to have been misrepresented to the



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consumer, the pet dealer shall afford the consumer the right to choose one of the following options:

(a) The right to return the animal and receive a refund of the purchase price, including any interest accrued and the sales tax or fees paid or due from the purchaser, and reimbursement for reasonable veterinary costs directly related to the veterinarian's examination and certification that the animal ~~dog or cat~~ is unfit for purchase pursuant to this section or ~~and~~ directly related to necessary emergency services and treatment undertaken to relieve the suffering of such animal. If the consumer financed the animal pursuant to a financing agreement with the pet dealer, the pet dealer must ensure that the financing agreement is terminated without penalty to the consumer;

(b) The right to return the animal and receive an exchange animal ~~dog or cat~~ of the consumer's choice of equivalent value, and reimbursement for reasonable veterinary costs directly related to the veterinarian's examination and certification that the animal ~~dog or cat~~ is unfit for purchase pursuant to this section or ~~and~~ directly related to necessary emergency services and treatment undertaken to relieve the suffering of such animal; or

(c) The right to retain the animal and receive reimbursement for reasonable veterinary costs for necessary services and treatment related to the attempt to cure or curing of the animal, or necessary emergency services or treatment undertaken to relieve the suffering of such animal received within 1 year after purchase ~~dog or cat~~.



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~~Reimbursement for veterinary costs may not exceed the purchase price of the animal.~~ The cost of veterinary services is reasonable if comparable to the cost of similar services rendered by other licensed veterinarians in proximity to the treating veterinarian and the services rendered are appropriate for the certification by the veterinarian.

(6) All financing terms must be disclosed by the pet dealer to the consumer before the sale of the animal. A mandatory waiting period of at least 3 calendar days must be imposed between the date of an agreement to purchase an animal and the date on which the consumer takes possession of the animal, if the consumer is financing the animal. The consumer may not sign a financing agreement until the conclusion of the 3-day waiting period ~~A consumer may sign a waiver relinquishing his or her right to return the dog or cat for congenital or hereditary disorders. In the case of such waiver, the consumer has 48 normal business hours, excluding weekends and holidays, in which to have the animal examined by a licensed veterinarian of the consumer's choosing. If the veterinarian certifies that, at the time of sale, the dog or cat was unfit for purchase due to a congenital or hereditary disorder, the pet dealer must afford the consumer the right to choose one of the following options:~~

~~(a) The right to return the animal and receive a refund of the purchase price, including sales tax, but excluding the veterinary costs related to the certification that the dog or cat is unfit; or~~

~~(b) The right to return the animal and receive an exchange dog or cat of the consumer's choice of equivalent value, but not a refund of the veterinary costs related to the certification~~



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99 ~~that the dog or cat is unfit.~~

100 (7) Before the sale of an animal, a pet dealer must provide
101 to the consumer copies of records of all medical examinations or
102 tests that were conducted on the animal or any medication given
103 before the purchase of the animal. A pet dealer may specifically
104 state at the time of sale, in writing to the consumer, the
105 presence of specific congenital or hereditary disorders, in
106 which case the consumer has no right to any refund or exchange
107 for those identified disorders, if such consumer signs a
108 notification that indicates that the animal has been examined by
109 a veterinarian who determined that the animal has the identified
110 congenital or hereditary disorder.

111 (8) The refund or exchange required by subsection (5) must
112 ~~or subsection (6) shall~~ be made by the pet dealer not later than
113 10 business days after ~~following~~ receipt of a signed veterinary
114 certification as required in subsection (5) ~~or subsection (6).~~
115 The consumer must notify the pet dealer within 7 ~~2~~ business days
116 after receipt of the veterinarian's determination that the
117 animal is unfit. The written certification of unfitness must be
118 presented to the pet dealer not later than 3 business days
119 following receipt thereof by the consumer.

120 (10) If a pet dealer wishes to contest a demand for
121 veterinary expenses, refund, or exchange made by a consumer
122 under this section, the dealer may require the consumer to
123 produce the animal for examination by a licensed veterinarian
124 designated by the dealer. Upon such examination, if the consumer
125 and the dealer are unable to reach an agreement that constitutes
126 one of the options set forth in subsection (5) ~~or subsection (6)~~
127 within 10 business days after ~~following~~ receipt of the animal



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for such examination, the consumer may initiate an action in a court of competent jurisdiction, or the county court small claims court division, in the county where the animal owner resides, to recover or obtain reimbursement of veterinary expenses and a refund, or exchange, as set forth in subsection (5), and may collect punitive damages in an amount not less than \$2,500 at the discretion of the court.

(12) Every pet dealer who sells an animal to a consumer must provide the consumer at the time of sale with a printed, written notice in 14-point boldface type to be signed by the consumer, ~~printed or typed,~~ which is separate from the contract and reads as follows:

RIGHT TO CANCEL

Florida consumers have certain rights under section 828.29, Florida Statutes. You have the right to: 1) return the animal; 2) exchange the animal; and 3) receive reimbursement for certain veterinary expenses under certain circumstances. Please have your new pet seen by a veterinarian immediately. A copy of this law is attached to this notice.

It is the consumer's right, pursuant to section 828.29, Florida Statutes, to receive a certificate of veterinary inspection with each animal ~~dog or cat~~ purchased from a pet dealer. Such certificate shall list all vaccines and deworming medications administered to the animal and list any medical diagnosis and treatments ~~and shall state that the~~



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animal has been examined by a Florida-licensed
veterinarian who certifies that, to the best of the
veterinarian's knowledge, the animal was found to have
been healthy at the time of the veterinary
examination. In the event that the consumer purchases
the animal and finds it to have been unfit for
purchase as provided in section 828.29(5), Florida
Statutes, the consumer must notify the pet dealer
within 7 ~~2-business~~ days after ~~of~~ the veterinarian's
determination that the animal was unfit. The consumer
has the right to retain, return, or exchange the
animal and receive reimbursement for certain related
veterinary services rendered to the animal, subject to
the right of the dealer to have the animal examined by
another veterinarian.

...(Signature of Animal owner or Lessee, or Owner's or Lessee's
Authorized Person)...

(13) For the purposes of this section ~~subsections (5)-(12)~~
~~and (16)~~, the term "pet dealer" means any person, firm,
partnership, corporation, or other association which, in the
ordinary course of business, engages in the sale of more than
three ~~two~~ litters, or 30 ~~20~~ dogs or cats, per year, whichever is
greater, to the public. This definition includes breeders of
animals who sell such animals directly to a consumer. This
definition does not include not-for-profit entities that offer
animals for sale or adoption as long as the total cost of such
sale or adoption does not exceed \$500, including all taxes and



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fees, or other costs.

(17) Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, a person who violates ~~any provision of~~ this section commits a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

(18) Any record provided to a consumer pursuant to the sale of an animal under this section must be maintained by the pet dealer for a period of at least 7 years after the sale.

(19) A pet dealer who violates this section commits an unfair method of competition or an unfair or deceptive act or practice in violation of part II of chapter 501 and is subject to the penalties and remedies provided for such violations.

Section 3. Section 828.291, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

828.291 Best management practices for dog breeding.—

(1) The purpose of this section is to allow voluntary participation in best management practices relating to minimum standards of care, facility operations, and breeding practices for individuals or entities engaged in the breeding of dogs in order to protect animal welfare, promote responsible breeding, and ensure the health and safety of animals and consumers.

(2) This section may not be construed to prohibit a local jurisdiction from implementing requirements for individuals or entities engaged in the breeding of dogs.

(3) The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall develop a list of best management practices that individuals or entities engaged in the breeding of dogs may voluntarily adopt and implement. Such best management practices must include minimum standards of care, facility operations, and



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breeding practices for individuals or entities engaged in the
breeding of dogs, including, but not limited to, standards
relating to all of the following:

(a) Breeding.

(b) Feeding.

(c) Housing.

(d) Health.

(e) Enrichment.

(f) Selling and transferring, in accordance with s. 828.29.

(g) Recordkeeping, in accordance with s. 828.29.

(4) The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
shall post on its website guidance for the public about how to
identify the breeders that are following best breeder practices
and provide a checklist to use when purchasing an animal.

(5) The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
shall post on its website information regarding animal cruelty,
including a description of conduct constituting animal cruelty
under ss. 828.12 and 828.13, the penalties for such conduct, and
instructions for reporting suspected animal cruelty or abuse to
the appropriate local authorities, including the contact
information for at least one appropriate authority for each
county in the state.

Section 4. Section 828.2911, Florida Statutes, is created
to read:

828.2911 Dog Awareness and Welfare Guidelines (DAWG)
Breeder Program.—

(1) The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
shall establish the Dog Awareness and Welfare Guidelines (DAWG)
Breeder Program to recognize dog breeders who have voluntarily



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adopted and implemented the best management practices for dog breeding. The department shall certify any individual or entity that the department has determined has voluntarily adopted and implemented the best management practices for dog breeding pursuant to s. 828.291 and that has complied with this section. Such certification is good for 2 years, and dog breeders may reapply at the expiration of such certification.

(2) Participants in the DAWG Breeder Program must agree to submit to inspection by the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, or its designee, and pay the actual cost for such inspection. Subject to appropriations, the department, or its designee, may conduct an inspection of the applicant's dog breeding program, including, but not limited to, all animals located on an applicant's premises, the breeding and housing facilities of such animals, and any records of health or sale maintained by the applicant.

(a) The department may contract with and designate local law enforcement or animal services, when local staff and resources are available, or any other public or private entity that the department determines regularly conducts animal welfare investigations, to perform inspections or related investigative activities. Private service providers may include Florida licensed veterinarians currently in good standing who have been licensed for at least 10 years.

(b) If a local government or enforcement authority determines that it lacks the staff or resources to perform the inspections, such inspections may be conducted by a private provider under contract with the department, provided that the breeder bears the cost of inspection.



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(c) If sufficient resources are not available, the applicant must wait until such resources are available or contract with a private provider designated and approved by the department in order to obtain certification.

(3) If the applicant passes the inspection, the department must provide the applicant with a DAWG Breeder Program Certificate.

(4) The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services may suspend or revoke the DAWG Breeder Program certification of any dog breeder at any time if the department discovers that such breeder has failed to maintain best management practices pursuant to s. 828.291.

(5) A dog breeder that is certified by the program may identify such certification in its professional practice, including in marketing and advertising materials.

(6) Program certification is not required for a dog breeder to engage in dog breeding in this state.

(7) The department shall adopt rules to implement this section.

Section 5. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

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

And the title is amended as follows:

Delete everything before the enacting clause
and insert:

A bill to be entitled
An act relating to domestic animals; amending s.
828.12, F.S.; requiring the Department of Law
Enforcement to post on its website specified



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information relating to each individual convicted of
specified animal cruelty offenses; requiring the clerk
of each court and county detention facility to provide
the Department of Law Enforcement with such
information; amending s. 828.29, F.S.; extending the
timeframe for which a consumer may pursue remedies for
the sale of an animal certifiably unfit for purchase;
revising such remedies; requiring that all financing
terms be disclosed to the consumer by the pet dealer
before the sale of the animal; requiring a specified
mandatory waiting period between the purchase and
receipt of an animal if the transaction is financed by
the consumer; prohibiting a consumer from signing a
financing agreement until the conclusion of the
specified waiting period; deleting certain provisions
relating to a consumer's waiver relinquishing his or
her rights to return an animal; requiring a pet dealer
to provide copies of specified medical records to a
consumer; denying a consumer the right to a refund or
an exchange for a pet sale under certain
circumstances; extending the timeframe within which a
consumer must notify the pet dealer of a
veterinarian's determination that the animal is unfit;
authorizing the consumer to initiate an action in
certain courts for any contestation of veterinary
expenses or demands of the pet dealer for a refund or
exchange; providing for the award of punitive damages;
revising requirements for a required notice to a
consumer; revising the text of the required notice;



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revising the definition of the term "pet dealer";
requiring a pet dealer to retain a copy of a specified
notice for a specified period; providing that
violations constitute an unfair method of competition
or an unfair or deceptive act or practice in violation
of specified provisions and subject to penalties;
creating s. 828.291, F.S.; providing a legislative
purpose; providing construction; requiring the
Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to
develop a list of best management practices for
adoption and implementation; providing requirements
for such best management practices; requiring the
department to post guidance on its website related to
the selection of breeders and the purchase of an
animal; requiring the department to post information
on its website relating to animal cruelty; providing
requirements for such information; creating s.
828.2911, F.S.; requiring the Department of
Agriculture and Consumer Services to establish the Dog
Awareness and Welfare Guidelines (DAWG) Breeder
Program; providing the purpose of the program;
requiring the department to certify certain
individuals and entities; providing requirements for
such certification; requiring participants in the DAWG
Breeder Program to submit to inspection by the
department and pay the costs for such inspection;
authorizing the department to inspect an applicant's
dog breeding program; authorizing the department to
contract with specified entities to perform such



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360 inspections or related investigative activities;
361 authorizing a department private provider to perform
362 such inspections under certain circumstances;
363 requiring the department to certify an applicant that
364 passes the inspection; authorizing the department to
365 suspend or revoke such certification under certain
366 circumstances; authorizing a dog breeder to advertise
367 and market such certification; specifying that a dog
368 breeder may engage in dog breeding without a
369 certification; requiring the department to adopt
370 rules; providing an effective date.