

Large-Scale Breeder Bill (SB 560) Introduced

Senate Bill 560, sponsored by Senator Bieda, has been introduced in Lansing. This bill would require large-scale dog breeders to register with the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and follow new guidelines to help ensure the humane treatment of the dogs and puppies in their facilities.

In addition to the new rules for large-scale dog breeders, the bill also clarifies stray animal holding periods for animal shelters. The shorter holding period for cats will result in many more feline lives being saved in Michigan by reducing the outbreak of infectious disease which is a huge problem with cats in shelters nationwide. Stray cats are reclaimed at a much lower rate (2%) than dogs in Michigan, so getting cats quickly into the adoption stream before they can become ill can save thousands of lives.

What's in the Bill?

Large-scale dog breeders:

- Defines large-scale commercial dog breeding kennels as facilities housing more than 15 intact female adult dogs for breeding
- Requires large-scale breeders to register with Michigan Dept. of Ag. and Rural Development
- Limits the size of commercial dog breeding kennels to 50 adult female breeding dogs
- Prohibits them from selling puppies less than 8 weeks of age
- Requires vaccination, parasite treatment and a health certificate signed by a veterinarian
- Requires annual statistical reporting and daily record-keeping
- Exempts small-scale hobby breeders

Holding of stray pets in registered animal shelters:

- Requires that any animal with traceable identification (tag, microchip, etc.) be held for at least 7 days
- Requires that animal shelters trace the identification using all reasonable means to contact the animal's owner
- Requires that dogs without traceable identification be held for at least 4 days and cats for at least 2 days so that owners can reclaim them
- Defines holding days to include any day or part of a day the animal is held and available for owners to come and reclaim their animal, including weekends
- Transfers the ownership of stray animals who are not reclaimed to the holding shelter at the end of the holding period so they may be adopted, transferred or otherwise dispositioned.

Other Components:

- Clarifies and updates vaccination requirements for dogs and cats in shelters, pet stores, and large-scale breeders
- Requires that shelters, pet stores, and large-scale breeders who must euthanize animals do so humanely in accordance with state law and current American Veterinary Medical Association guidelines
- Prevents puppies and kittens less than 8 weeks old from being imported without their mothers by pet shops and large-scale breeders
- Requires that dogs and cats imported into Michigan by pet shops, large-scale breeders, and animal shelters be accompanied by interstate health certificates