



VERMONT LEGISLATIVE Joint Fiscal Office

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Fiscal Note

March 19, 2024

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H.626 – An act relating to animal welfare

As recommended by the House Committee on Government Operations and Military Affairs, Draft 2.3

Bill Summary

This bill would create a Division of Animal Welfare within the Department of Public Safety. The Division would be staffed by a single employee – a Director of Animal Welfare. The Director would be responsible for developing a plan for the development, implementation, and enforcement of animal welfare laws. The Director would also consult with State agencies that respond to animal welfare complaints. The Animal Welfare Fund would be created to fund the expenses of the Division. The fund would receive the proceeds of a \$1 surcharge placed on town dog or wolf-hybrid licenses.

Fiscal Impact

The Joint Fiscal Office (JFO) estimates the bill would raise an additional \$70,000 of annual revenue through the \$1 surcharge on dog and wolf-hybrid licenses. These funds would flow to the newly created Animal Welfare Fund to support the Division. These funds are additional to the \$1 license fee that is currently allocated to the Department of Fish and Wildlife, Department of Public Safety, and the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets for rabies control. This fee has not been changed since its initial enactment in 1994.

	Current Law Allocations – \$1 License Fee	Revenue – Current Law (FY 2022)	Proposed Allocations - \$2 License Fee	Estimated Revenue As Proposed in H.626 (FY 2025)
Department of Fish and Wildlife	45%	\$29,940	22.5%	\$31,600
Department of Public Safety (DPS)	45%	\$29,940	22.5%	\$30,000
Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets	10%	\$6,653	5%	\$7,000
DPS Division of Animal Welfare	--	-	50%	\$70,000
Total		\$66,533		\$140,000

The position that would be created by H.626 is only funded through revenues from the \$1 license surcharge. Since this funding likely would not cover the full costs of the position, the bill would likely create budget pressures on the Department of Public Safety.