
SENATE BILL 5106

State of Washington

60th Legislature

2007 Regular Session

By Senators Jacobsen, Kohl-Welles, Murray and Rasmussen

Read first time 01/10/2007. Referred to Committee on Agriculture & Rural Economic Development.

1 AN ACT Relating to emergency preparedness planning for service
2 animals and household pets; adding a new section to chapter 38.52 RCW;
3 and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

6 (1) Efforts to evacuate New Orleans in response to Hurricane
7 Katrina revealed that many pet owners were unwilling to abandon their
8 pets; some pet owners were willing to risk their lives to protect their
9 pets; and emergency shelters' inability to accept pets dissuaded many
10 pet owners from seeking safety;

11 (2) With advance planning, these issues can be addressed before
12 evacuations are necessary;

13 (3) Pets are important to their owners, and their presence may
14 bring comfort and enhance recovery efforts;

15 (4) The federal pets evacuation and transportation standards act of
16 2006, 109 P.L. 308, 120 Stat. 1725, requires that state and local
17 emergency preparedness operational plans address the needs of
18 individuals with household pets and service animals and grants the
19 director of the federal emergency management agency the authority to

1 make financial contributions to state and local authorities for animal
2 emergency preparedness purposes, including procuring, constructing,
3 leasing, or renovating emergency shelter facilities and materials that
4 will accommodate people with pets and service animals; and

5 (5) The Washington state department of agriculture is the primary
6 agency for the state comprehensive emergency plan's Washington animal
7 response management team, which conducts state level planning regarding
8 issues involving animals affected by disasters.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 38.52 RCW
10 to read as follows:

11 (1) The state comprehensive emergency management plan shall address
12 the needs of individuals with household pets and service animals in a
13 disaster or emergency. The plan shall include provisions for the
14 humane evacuation, transport, and temporary sheltering of service
15 animals and household pets and shall, without limitation:

16 (a) Require that county emergency operations plans include an
17 animal response component addressing the humane evacuation, transport,
18 and temporary sheltering of service animals and household pets and
19 mandate that such plans be submitted to the Washington state department
20 of agriculture;

21 (b) Require that individuals who use service animals be allowed to
22 be evacuated, transported, and sheltered with such animals;

23 (c) Identify and establish a sufficient number of evacuation
24 shelters equipped to temporarily house household pets and service
25 animals in close proximity to human sheltering facilities;

26 (d) Enable joint pet and owner evacuation whenever possible without
27 endangering human life;

28 (e) Establish an identification system to ensure that household pet
29 owners who are separated from their pets during an evacuation are given
30 sufficient information, including tracking numbers, to subsequently
31 locate and reclaim their pets;

32 (f) Allow household pets that are safely and securely confined in
33 cages or carriers to be transported using public transportation during
34 an impending disaster when doing so does not endanger human life and,
35 if such animals are not allowed to use public transportation, provide
36 separate transportation for such animals to evacuation shelters in

1 close proximity to human sheltering facilities in which their owners or
2 custodians will be temporarily housed;

3 (g) Direct animal shelters, humane societies, veterinary offices,
4 boarding kennels, breeders, grooming facilities, hospitals, schools,
5 animal testing facilities, and any other entity that normally houses
6 household pets or service animals to create evacuation plans for such
7 animals; and

8 (h) Identify and establish a sufficient number of evacuation
9 shelters that are equipped to house other companion animals, such as
10 horses, in close proximity to human sheltering facilities.

11 (2) When engaged in emergency management activities, an emergency
12 responder may make every practicable attempt under the circumstances,
13 without endangering human life, to rescue a service animal or household
14 pet.

15 (3) For the purposes of this section:

16 (a) "Service animal" has the same meaning as set forth in RCW
17 70.84.021; and

18 (b) "Household pet" means any cat, dog, or other domesticated
19 animal normally maintained in or near the owner or caregiver's
20 residence.

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