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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1919**

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**State of Washington 66th Legislature 2019 Regular Session**

**By** House Public Safety (originally sponsored by Representatives Mosbrucker, Appleton, Smith, Ybarra, Dye, Ormsby, and Stanford)

AN ACT Relating to preventing and responding to animal abuse; amending RCW 16.52.117, 16.52.207, and 16.52.011; and prescribing penalties.

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

**Sec.**  RCW 16.52.117 and 2015 c 235 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) A person commits the crime of animal fighting if the person knowingly does any of the following or causes a minor to do any of the following:

(a) Owns, possesses, keeps, breeds, trains, buys, sells, or advertises or offers for sale any animal with the intent that the animal shall be engaged in an exhibition of fighting with another animal;

(b) Promotes, organizes, conducts, participates in, is a spectator of, advertises, prepares, or performs any service in the furtherance of, an exhibition of animal fighting, transports spectators to an animal fight, or provides or serves as a stakeholder for any money wagered on an animal fight;

(c) Keeps or uses any place for the purpose of animal fighting, or manages or accepts payment of admission to any place kept or used for the purpose of animal fighting;

(d) Suffers or permits any place over which the person has possession or control to be occupied, kept, or used for the purpose of an exhibition of animal fighting; ((~~or~~))

(e) Steals, takes, leads away, possesses, confines, sells, transfers, or receives an animal with the intent of using the animal for animal fighting, or for training or baiting for the purpose of animal fighting; or

(f) Owns, possesses, buys, sells, transfers, or manufactures animal fighting paraphernalia for the purpose of engaging in, promoting, or facilitating animal fighting, or for baiting a live animal for the purpose of animal fighting.

(2)(a) Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, a person who violates this section is guilty of a class C felony punishable under RCW 9A.20.021;

(b) A person who intentionally mutilates an animal in furtherance of an animal fighting offense as described in subsection (1) of this section is guilty of a class B felony punishable under RCW 9A.20.021.

(3) Nothing in this section prohibits the following:

(a) The use of dogs in the management of livestock, as defined by chapter 16.57 RCW, by the owner of the livestock or the owner's employees or agents or other persons in lawful custody of the livestock;

(b) The use of dogs in hunting as permitted by law; or

(c) The training of animals or the use of equipment in the training of animals for any purpose not prohibited by law.

(4) For the purposes of this section, "animal fighting paraphernalia" includes equipment, products, implements, or materials of any kind that are used, intended for use, or designed for use in the training, preparation, conditioning, or furtherance of animal fighting, and includes, but is not limited to: Breaking sticks; cat mills; treadmills; fighting pits; springpoles; unprescribed veterinary medicine; treatment supplies; and gaffs, slashers, heels, and any other sharp implement designed to be attached in place of the natural spur of a cock or game fowl.

**Sec.**  RCW 16.52.207 and 2011 c 172 s 5 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) A person is guilty of animal cruelty in the second degree if, under circumstances not amounting to first degree animal cruelty((~~,~~)):

(a) The person knowingly, recklessly, or with criminal negligence inflicts unnecessary suffering or pain upon an animal; or

(b) The person takes control, custody, or possession of an animal that was involved in animal fighting as described in RCW 16.52.117 and knowingly, recklessly, or with criminal negligence abandons the animal, and (i) as a result of being abandoned, the animal suffers bodily harm; or (ii) abandoning the animal creates an imminent and substantial risk that the animal will suffer substantial bodily harm.

(2) An owner of an animal is guilty of animal cruelty in the second degree if, under circumstances not amounting to first degree animal cruelty, the owner knowingly, recklessly, or with criminal negligence:

(a) Fails to provide the animal with necessary shelter, rest, sanitation, space, or medical attention and the animal suffers unnecessary or unjustifiable physical pain as a result of the failure;

(b) Under circumstances not amounting to animal cruelty in the second degree under (c) of this subsection, abandons the animal; or

(c) Abandons the animal and (i) as a result of being abandoned, the animal suffers bodily harm; or (ii) abandoning the animal creates an imminent and substantial risk that the animal will suffer substantial bodily harm.

(3) Animal cruelty in the second degree is a gross misdemeanor.

(4) In any prosecution of animal cruelty in the second degree under subsection (1)(a) or (2)(a) of this section, it shall be an affirmative defense, if established by the defendant by a preponderance of the evidence, that the defendant's failure was due to economic distress beyond the defendant's control.

**Sec.**  RCW 16.52.011 and 2017 c 65 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Principles of liability as defined in chapter 9A.08 RCW apply to this chapter.

(2) The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(a) "Abandons" means the knowing or reckless desertion of an animal by its owner, or by a person who has taken control, custody, or possession of an animal that was involved in animal fighting as described in RCW 16.52.117, or the causing of the animal to be deserted by its owner, in any place, without making provisions for the animal's adequate care.

(b) "Animal" means any nonhuman mammal, bird, reptile, or amphibian.

(c) "Animal care and control agency" means any city or county animal control agency or authority authorized to enforce city or county municipal ordinances regulating the care, control, licensing, or treatment of animals within the city or county, and any corporation organized under RCW 16.52.020 that contracts with a city or county to enforce the city or county ordinances governing animal care and control.

(d) "Animal control officer" means any individual employed, contracted, or appointed pursuant to RCW 16.52.025 by an animal care and control agency or humane society to aid in the enforcement of ordinances or laws regulating the care and control of animals. For purposes of this chapter, the term "animal control officer" shall be interpreted to include "humane officer" as defined in (h) of this subsection and RCW 16.52.025.

(e) "Dog" means an animal of the species *Canis lupus familiaris*.

(f) "Euthanasia" means the humane destruction of an animal accomplished by a method that involves instantaneous unconsciousness and immediate death, or by a method that causes painless loss of consciousness, and death during the loss of consciousness.

(g) "Food" means food or feed appropriate to the species for which it is intended.

(h) "Humane officer" means any individual employed, contracted, or appointed by an animal care and control agency or humane society as authorized under RCW 16.52.025.

(i) "Law enforcement agency" means a general authority Washington law enforcement agency as defined in RCW 10.93.020.

(j) "Livestock" includes, but is not limited to, horses, mules, cattle, sheep, swine, goats, and bison.

(k) "Malice" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 9A.04.110, but applied to acts against animals.

(l) "Necessary food" means the provision at suitable intervals of wholesome foodstuff suitable for the animal's age, species, and condition, and that is sufficient to provide a reasonable level of nutrition for the animal and is easily accessible to the animal or as directed by a veterinarian for medical reasons.

(m) "Necessary shelter" means a structure sufficient to protect a dog from wind, rain, snow, cold, heat, or sun that has bedding to permit a dog to remain dry and reasonably clean and maintain a normal body temperature.

(n) "Necessary water" means water that is in sufficient quantity and of appropriate quality for the species for which it is intended and that is accessible to the animal or as directed by a veterinarian for medical reasons.

(o) "Owner" means a person who has a right, claim, title, legal share, or right of possession to an animal or a person having lawful control, custody, or possession of an animal.

(p) "Person" means individuals, corporations, partnerships, associations, or other legal entities, and agents of those entities.

(q) "Similar animal" means: (i) For a mammal, another animal that is in the same taxonomic order; or (ii) for an animal that is not a mammal, another animal that is in the same taxonomic class.

(r) "Substantial bodily harm" means substantial bodily harm as defined in RCW 9A.04.110.

(s) "Tether" means: (i) To restrain an animal by tying or securing the animal to any object or structure; and (ii) a device including, but not limited to, a chain, rope, cable, cord, tie-out, pulley, or trolley system for restraining an animal.

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