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SENATE BILL 6196

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State of Washington

65th Legislature

2018 Regular Session

By Senators Cleveland, Fain, Rivers, Van De Wege, Palumbo, Kuderer, McCoy, Takko, Wilson, Keiser, and Saldaña

Read first time 01/10/18. Referred to Committee on Health & Long Term Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to allowing animal care and control agencies and  
2 nonprofit humane societies to provide additional veterinary services  
3 to low-income households; and amending RCW 18.92.250 and 18.92.260.

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

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 18.92.250 and 2002 c 157 s 1 are each amended to  
6 read as follows:

7 The legislature recognizes that low-income households may not  
8 receive needed veterinary services for household pets. The  
9 legislature finds that thousands of pets from low-income households,  
10 who otherwise had treatable or preventable health conditions, suffer  
11 or are unnecessarily put to death each year in Washington due to a  
12 lack of affordable veterinary services. It is the intent of the  
13 legislature to ((allow)) provide pets from low-income households  
14 relief from unnecessary suffering by allowing qualified animal care  
15 and control agencies and humane societies to provide ((limited))  
16 veterinary services to qualified low-income members of our  
17 communities. It is not the intent of the legislature to allow these  
18 agencies to provide veterinary services to the public at large, but  
19 rather to make veterinary services more accessible to qualified low-  
20 income households that are otherwise unable to afford the full price  
21 of needed veterinary services for their pets, in particular when the

1 legislature finds that there are qualified animal care and control  
2 agencies and nonprofit humane societies within our state that are  
3 willing and able to provide these services.

4 **Sec. 2.** RCW 18.92.260 and 2002 c 157 s 2 are each amended to  
5 read as follows:

6 (1)(a) Subject to the limitations in this section, animal care  
7 and control agencies as defined in RCW 16.52.011 and nonprofit humane  
8 societies, that have qualified under section 501(c)(3) of the  
9 internal revenue code may provide (~~limited~~) veterinary services to  
10 animals owned by qualified low-income households. (~~The veterinary~~  
11 ~~services provided shall be limited to electronic identification,~~  
12 ~~surgical sterilization, and vaccinations.~~) A veterinarian or  
13 veterinary technician acting within his or her scope of practice must  
14 perform the (~~limited~~) veterinary services. For purposes of this  
15 section, "low-income household" means the same as in RCW 43.185A.010.

16 (b) Animal control agencies and nonprofit humane societies,  
17 receiving any animals on an emergency basis, may provide emergency  
18 care, subject to a local ordinance that defines an emergency  
19 situation and establishes temporary time limits.

20 (c) Any local ordinance addressing the needs under this section  
21 that was approved by the voters and is in effect on July 1, 2003,  
22 remains in effect.

23 (2) Veterinarians and veterinary technicians employed at these  
24 facilities must be licensed under this chapter. No officer, director,  
25 supervisor, or any other individual associated with an animal care or  
26 control agency or nonprofit humane society owning and operating a  
27 veterinary medical facility may impose any terms or conditions of  
28 employment or direct or attempt to direct an employed veterinarian in  
29 any way that interferes with the free exercise of the veterinarian's  
30 professional judgment or infringes upon the utilization of his or her  
31 professional skills.

32 (3) Veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and animal control  
33 agencies and humane societies acting under this section shall, for  
34 purposes of providing the (~~limited~~) veterinary services, meet the  
35 requirements established under this chapter and are subject to the  
36 rules adopted by the veterinary board of governors in the same  
37 fashion as any licensed veterinarian or veterinary medical facility  
38 in the state.

1           (4) The Washington state veterinary board of governors shall  
2 adopt rules to:

3           (a) Establish registration and registration renewal requirements;

4           (b) Govern the purchase and use of drugs for the ((limited))  
5 veterinary services authorized under this section; ((and))

6           (c) Establish regular reporting requirements that demonstrate the  
7 animal care and control facilities and nonprofit humane societies are  
8 serving only low-income households as defined by RCW 43.185A.010; and

9           (d) Ensure that agencies and societies are in compliance with  
10 this section.

11          (5) The ((limited)) veterinary medical service authority granted  
12 by registration under this section may be denied, suspended, revoked,  
13 or conditioned by a determination of the board of governors for any  
14 act of noncompliance with this chapter. The uniform disciplinary act,  
15 chapter 18.130 RCW, governs unregistered operation, the issuance and  
16 denial of registrations, and the discipline of registrants under this  
17 section.

18          (6) No animal control agency or humane society may operate under  
19 this chapter without registering with the department. An application  
20 for registration shall be made upon forms provided by the department  
21 and shall include the information the department reasonably requires,  
22 as provided by RCW 43.70.280. The department shall establish  
23 registration and renewal fees as provided by RCW 43.70.250. A  
24 registration fee shall accompany each application for registration or  
25 renewal.

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