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

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

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

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

Sec. 2. RCW 18.92.260 and 2002 c 157 s 2 are each amended to
read as follows:
(1)(a) Subject to the limitations in this section, animal care
and control agencies as defined in RCW 16.52.011 and nonprofit humane
societies, that have qualified under section 501(c)(3) of the
internal revenue code may provide (limited) veterinary services to
animals owned by qualified low-income households. (The veterinary
services provided shall be limited to electronic identification,
surgical sterilization, and vaccinations.) A veterinarian or
veterinary technician acting within his or her scope of practice must
perform the (limited) veterinary services. For purposes of this
section, "low-income household" means the same as in RCW 43.185A.010.
(b) Animal control agencies and nonprofit humane societies,
receiving any animals on an emergency basis, may provide emergency
care, subject to a local ordinance that defines an emergency
situation and establishes temporary time limits.
(c) Any local ordinance addressing the needs under this section
that was approved by the voters and is in effect on July 1, 2003,
remains in effect.
(2) Veterinarians and veterinary technicians employed at these
facilities must be licensed under this chapter. No officer, director,
supervisor, or any other individual associated with an animal care or
control agency or nonprofit humane society owning and operating a
veterinary medical facility may impose any terms or conditions of
employment or direct or attempt to direct an employed veterinarian in
any way that interferes with the free exercise of the veterinarian's
professional judgment or infringes upon the utilization of his or her
professional skills.
(3) Veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and animal control
agencies and humane societies acting under this section shall, for
purposes of providing the (limited) veterinary services, meet the
requirements established under this chapter and are subject to the
rules adopted by the veterinary board of governors in the same
fashion as any licensed veterinarian or veterinary medical facility
in the state.
(4) The Washington state veterinary board of governors shall adopt rules to:

(a) Establish registration and registration renewal requirements;
(b) Govern the purchase and use of drugs for the ((limited)) veterinary services authorized under this section; ((and))
(c) Establish regular reporting requirements that demonstrate the animal care and control facilities and nonprofit humane societies are serving only low-income households as defined by RCW 43.185A.010; and
(d) Ensure that agencies and societies are in compliance with this section.

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

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

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