SPONSOR: Sen. Blevins & Sen. Peterson; Rep. M. Smith & Rep. Jaques & Rep. Willis

DELAWARE STATE SENATE
146th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 44

ESTABLISHING AN ANIMAL WELFARE TASK FORCE TO CONSIDER AND EVALUATE THE STATE OF ANIMAL WELFARE IN DELAWARE.

WHEREAS, the humane treatment of companion animals – including homeless animals – is important to Delawareans; and

WHEREAS, numerous animal welfare services and responsibilities exist in Delaware, handled by various government agencies at the state and county levels, as well as by not for profit organizations; and

WHEREAS, there is a lack of coordination and collaboration among agencies in providing the services that are intended to help animals and enrich our communities; and

WHEREAS, this fragmented approach results in less desirable outcomes and makes it difficult for citizens to access services, address concerns, and offer support; and

WHEREAS, non-profit animal welfare organizations and advocates could more effectively plan for and respond to animal welfare needs if the State had a more comprehensive, statewide approach to animal welfare efforts; and

WHEREAS, given Delaware's size, a coordinated approach to animal welfare efforts would likely be of significant benefit to animals and our State;

NOW THEREFORE:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the 146th General Assembly of the State of Delaware, the House of Representatives concurring therein, that there is hereby established an Animal Welfare Task Force to consider and evaluate the state of animal welfare in Delaware, including the resources devoted to animal welfare services and whether consolidation, collaboration, or reorganization can lead to more effective use of limited resources.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the issues to be considered by the Task Force shall include Delaware's animal cruelty laws, including the authority and oversight of animal control officers; shelter standards law implementation and enforcement; dog control laws and oversight, including dog licensing practices; the state spay/neuter program; and whether and how to better coordinate, communicate, and fund the various responsibilities, including what state agencies should be responsible for any state level authority and oversight.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall be comprised of the following members:

1. Two (2) members of the House of Representatives, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House;
2. Two (2) members of the Delaware State Senate, to be appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate;
3. One representative from each of the five (5) operating animal shelters in Delaware;
4. One representative from the Governor's office;
5. Five (5) members of the public to be appointed by the Governor;
6. One (1) representative from the Department of Agriculture;
7. One (1) representative from the Delaware Veterinary Medical Association;
8. One representative each from New Castle County government, Kent County government, Sussex County Government, and the City of Wilmington government; and
9. A representative of the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine Shelter Animal Medicine Program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall elect a chairperson from the above-listed members at its first official meeting.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall consult with shelter and animal welfare experts to assist in the work of the Task Force.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall examine the practices of other states, counties, and municipalities that have implemented programs that are considered best practices.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall:

1. Convene as soon as possible;
2. Conduct at least one public hearing to obtain input from stakeholders, community members, and others.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force shall provide a written report of its recommendations to the Governor, the Speaker of the House, and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate no later than March 30, 2013.

SYNOPSIS

This resolution establishes an Animal Welfare Task Force to consider and evaluate the state of animal welfare in Delaware, including the resources devoted to animal welfare services and whether consolidation, collaboration, or reorganization can lead to more effective use of limited resources.

Author: Senator Blevins