



**153rd GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FISCAL NOTE**

BILL:	SENATE BILL NO. 38
SPONSOR:	Senator Lawson
DESCRIPTION:	AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 16 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO RETIRED LAW-ENFORCEMENT ANIMALS.

Assumptions:

1. This Act becomes effective upon signature by the Governor.
2. This Act requires, that if applicable to the respective department, the Department of Safety and Homeland Security (DSHS), the Fire Prevention Commission (FPC), the Department of Correction (DOC), and the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) issue veterinary care reimbursements and promulgate regulations to create a reimbursement process for retired law-enforcement horses. An owner may be reimbursed up to \$3,000 annually for veterinary care expenses and farrier services paid by the owner for the care of a retired law-enforcement horse. This Act does not apply to law-enforcement horses that retired before the implementation of this Act.
3. The FPC, DOC, and DNREC do not currently have law-enforcement horses in service.
4. The DSHS has eight (8) law-enforcement horses in service with the Delaware State Police (DSP) Mounted Patrol Unit with varying years of active-duty service. The average active-duty service life span of a horse ranges from 16 to 20 years, which can vary depending on the health and age of the horse. The average life span of a horse is 25 to 30 years.
 - a. The DSP projects that one of its horses (age 16) may have to retire soon due to a leg injury while on duty and further projects that one (1) horse may retire every five (5) years. It is also a possibility that a horse may retire early due to an unusual event that may require an early retirement (i.e., injuries sustained while on duty, health or behavioral issues).
5. For purposes of this fiscal projection, it is assumed that post-implementation of this Act, based upon the current potential for retirement and the current age of the herd, there may be between one to two horses eligible for retirement in the first few fiscal years. As the current herd of DSP's Mounted Patrol Unit ages, eligibility is projected to increase beyond this fiscal projection's scope.

Cost:

	<u>Operating/Recurring</u>
Fiscal Year 2026:	\$0 minimum – \$6,000 maximum
Fiscal Year 2027:	\$0 minimum – \$6,000 maximum
Fiscal Year 2028:	\$0 minimum – \$6,000 maximum

Prepared by Jason R. Smith
Office of the Controller General