

## 2025 GEORGIA LEGISLATIVE SESSION:

### SUMMARY OF ANIMAL-RELATED BILLS

The 2025 Legislative Session was a successful and encouraging year for companion animals, as 7 of 10 beneficial bills were passed by state lawmakers and are awaiting Governor Kemp's signature to become law! This session was the first year of the 2025-2026 Legislative Biennium; thus, bills that did not pass in 2025 remain viable for 2026.

The GA Pet Coalition is proud to announce that our two priority bills, HB 331 and SB 20, passed with overwhelming support from lawmakers! Sincere gratitude is extended to our stellar bill sponsors, Representative Beth Camp (HB 331) and Senator Kay Kirkpatrick (SB 20), along with their respective cosponsors. A special note of thanks is due to GPC's lobby team at GA Capitol Solutions for their skillful guidance, and to Professor Lisa Milot with the UGA School of Law for drafting HB 331 and related local ordinances. We are deeply appreciative of the help from subject matter experts, advocates, other organizations, and local and state officials!

There is hard work ahead and many challenges remain to reverse Georgia's dire shelter statistics and incidences of animal abuse and neglect. Primary among them is providing timely access to affordable spay/neuter to address inadvertent breeding. Intentional, reckless breeding for profit requires legal deterrents and adequate enforcement of laws. The GPC will continue to work on measures to mitigate both sources of pet overproduction.

Below is a recap of animal-related bills brought before the state legislature in 2025.

#### The GA Pet Coalition's Priority Bills – PASSED:

##### **HB 331 (Representative Beth Camp): Passed House 161-13; Passed Senate 52-3**

Prohibits the sale or barter of dogs, cats and domestic rabbits in certain unregulated locations such as parking lots, sidewalks, roadsides, parks, and seasonal flea markets. Exempts licensed shelters and rescues. Does not prevent transfers that take place at a seller's residence or place of business, or inside a vet's office. Allows prearranged transfers at a peace officer's station.

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/search?ch=1&d=1&ln=331&s=1033&p=1>

##### **SB 20 (Senator Kay Kirkpatrick): Passed Senate 54-2; Passed House 160-5; Passed "Agree to House Substitute" by Senate 50-2**

Provides educational loan repayment of \$75k for veterinarians who practice full time for a 3-year contract in shelter medicine and nonprofit pet sterilization. HB 156 (an unrelated bill) was amended to SB 20. In the current bill version, SB 20 begins on line 268, PART IV.

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/search?ch=2&d=1&ln=20&s=1033&p=1>

#### Other Animal-Related Bills – PASSED:

##### **HB 177 (Representative Sharon Cooper): Passed House 164-3; Passed Senate 52-1**

Provides protection for household pets in both family violence and dating violence protective orders.

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/69656>

**HB 172 (Representative David Huddleston): Passed House 164-4; Passed Senate 43-4**

Amends the existing educational loan repayment program for veterinarians with large animal or mixed animal practices in designated rural areas. Increases loan repayment to \$30k/year (\$90k cap), guarantees a three-year repayment schedule, and redefines “rural” to mean a population of 50,000 or less (thus increasing the number of qualifying counties).

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/69649>

**HB 614 (Representative Jan Jones): Passed House 168-1; Passed Senate 50-1**

Authorizes the governing authority of a county or municipal corporation to adopt an ordinance prohibiting the use or ignition of consumer fireworks within 100 yards of a commercial facility housing equines in a confined area.

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/70744>

**SB 105 (Senator Jason Anavitarte): Passed Senate 52-0; Passed House Substitute 168-0; Passed “Agree to House Substitute” by Senate 51-1**

Authorizes licensed veterinarians and veterinary technicians to practice veterinary teleadvice; authorizes licensed veterinarians and veterinary technicians to practice veterinary triage under certain circumstances; and authorizes licensed veterinarians to practice veterinary telemedicine under certain circumstances in rural areas. HB 91 was amended to SB 105.

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/69961>

**HB 91 (Representative Sharon Cooper): Passed House 169-0; amended to SB 105**

Provides for licensure for graduates of foreign colleges or schools of veterinary medicine who are board certified in a specialty. HB 91 was amended to SB 105.

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/69430>

**Resolution for Study Committee on Puppy Mills – PASSED:**

**SR 255 (Senator Carden Summers): Passed Consent Calendar for Study Committees by Senate 52-0**

Creates the Senate Study Committee on Combating Unscrupulous Companion Animal Breeding Practices.

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/70750>

**Other Animal-Related Bills That Remain Viable for the 2026 Legislative Session:**

**SB 102 (Senator Randy Robertson): Passed Senate 49-3; Favorably Reported by House Judicial Non-Civil Committee**

Amends O.C.G.A. 16-12-37 (dogfighting law) to add prohibitions on cockfighting, possession/sales of fighting-related equipment, and permitting a minor to attend cockfight. Cockfighting has been illegal by federal law but requires the FBI or federal law enforcement to investigate and prosecute cases. SB 102 will enable local and state law enforcement to handle these cases. Georgia remains the only state without a cockfighting statute.

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/69979>

**HB 88 (Representative Imani Barnes): Favorably Reported by House Higher Education Committee**

Provides educational loan repayment of \$30k for licensed veterinary technicians who practice fulltime for a 3-year contract in designated rural areas (population of 50,000 or less).

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/69427>

**HB 668 (Representative Brad Thomas): Favorably Reported by House Public & Community Health Committee**

Redefines service dogs to include assistance and guide dogs; provides a criminal penalty for a person who causes death or physical harm to a service dog; revises provisions relating to the use and training of service dogs; and provides for a penalty for persons who misrepresent the need for a service dog.

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/70962>

**HB 75 (Representative Ridley Jordan): Recommitted to House Game, Fish & Parks Committee**

The current version of this bill is problematic and opposed by the GA Animal Control Association and the GA Pet Coalition.

<https://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/69407>

**Proclamation Issued by Governor Kemp:**

**Spay/Neuter Awareness Month in Georgia, February 2025**

Governor Kemp issued a Proclamation recognizing February 2025 as Spay / Neuter Awareness Month in Georgia. February 25th was WORLD SPAY DAY which promotes the sterilization of pets to reduce the number of unwanted and homeless animals globally.



BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA

## A PROCLAMATION

### SPAY/NEUTER AWARENESS MONTH

- WHEREAS:** Domestic animals have provided companionship to people throughout history, and today, companion animals offer affection and an improved sense of well-being to millions of Georgians; and
- WHEREAS:** Spaying and neutering pets promotes the health of companion animals, has been shown to significantly reduce pet overpopulation, and helps to eliminate or decrease several pet health problems that can be difficult or expensive to treat; and
- WHEREAS:** Each year, shelters euthanize hundreds of thousands of healthy, adoptable dogs and cats due to a lack of resources and willing forever families; and
- WHEREAS:** All of Georgia's domestic animals deserve loving homes and proper care throughout their lifetimes; and
- WHEREAS:** The State of Georgia encourages all Georgians to learn about their options for spaying and neutering their pets this month and urges them to support local animal shelters, rescue groups, and organizations leading the way in promoting and protecting animal wellbeing, while also joining in recognizing February 25, 2025 as World Spay Day; now
- THEREFORE:** I, BRIAN P. KEMP, Governor of the State of Georgia, do hereby proclaim the month of February 2025, as SPAY/NEUTER AWARENESS MONTH in Georgia.

In witness thereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Executive Department to be affixed this 29<sup>th</sup> day of January in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand and Twenty-Five.



*B. Kemp*  
GOVERNOR

ATTEST

*Lauren M. Curry*  
CHIEF OF STAFF