

Care of Animals Legislation Passes Committee

Persons who are commercially involved in the selling and breeding dogs and cats and hold a federal license will be inspected by the state if a complaint is filed. This bill came from recommendations of a ten member Legislative interim committee that met last fall. Livestock is exempt from these requirements.

Under current law, persons that hold a state license are already required to be inspected by the state through the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS). Persons holding a federal license are only inspected by the federal government, and the concern is that there aren't enough federal inspectors.

The bill states that before IDALS could go out to inspect a federal license holder, the state must receive a complaint. If a person files a complaint, they must leave their name, address, and telephone number. This information will be kept confidential unless a court proceeding is involved, or if the complaint is filed by an organization.

The bill also increases fees for all types of commercial animal facilities in the state, from pounds and shelters to kennels and breeders. These increased fees are to be used to pay for the salaries of the state inspectors.

The bill also makes veterinarians mandatory reporters if they believe an animal to be threatened. Threatened is defined as an animal that is abused, tortured, or neglected. This reporting goes for all animal owners, not just commercial establishments.

The bill is now ready for debate by the House.