

1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to the Companion Animal Public-Private
 3 Partnership Act; providing legislative findings;
 4 providing definitions; prohibiting animal shelters
 5 from euthanizing animals under certain conditions;
 6 requiring animal shelters to release animals to rescue
 7 organizations; providing exceptions; providing an
 8 effective date.

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 10 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 12 Section 1. Companion Animal Public-Private Partnership
 13 Act.—

14 (1) The Legislature finds that public-private partnerships
 15 between local government shelters, private shelters, and
 16 nonprofit organizations provide millions of dollars in cost
 17 savings to local governments in other states that have
 18 implemented such partnerships and that such partnerships reduce
 19 the costs associated with holding and euthanizing animals to
 20 taxpayers by transferring such costs from public agencies to
 21 private organizations and reduce the number of animals
 22 euthanized.

23 (2) As used in this section, the term:

24 (a) "Animal shelter" means a public or private facility
 25 that:

26 1. Has a physical structure that provides temporary or
 27 permanent shelter for stray, abandoned, abused, or owner-
 28 surrendered animals.

29 2. Is operated, owned, or maintained by a society for the
 30 prevention of cruelty to animals, humane society, pound, animal
 31 control officer, government entity, or contractor for a
 32 government entity.

33 (b) "Irremediable suffering" means a poor or grave
 34 prognosis for being able to live without severe, unremitting
 35 physical pain, even with comprehensive, prompt, and necessary
 36 veterinary care, as certified in writing by a licensed
 37 veterinarian.

38 (c) "Licensed veterinarian" means a person licensed to
 39 practice veterinary medicine in this state.

40 (d) "Rescue organization" means an animal rescue
 41 organization, animal adoption organization, or organization
 42 formed for the prevention of cruelty to animals that is
 43 described in s. 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code and
 44 exempt from taxation under s. 501(a) of the Internal Revenue
 45 Code.

46 (3) An animal shelter may not euthanize an animal if a
 47 rescue organization has indicated it will take custody of the
 48 animal. Instead of euthanizing the animal, the shelter shall
 49 release the animal to the rescue organization.

50 (4) This section does not apply to:

HB 1095

2019

51 (a) An animal suspected of carrying and exhibiting signs
52 of rabies, as determined by a licensed veterinarian.

53 (b) A dog classified as dangerous pursuant to s. 767.12,
54 Florida Statutes.

55 (c) An animal experiencing irremediable suffering.

56 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2019.