



689614

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate

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House

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The Committee on Appropriations (Powell) recommended the following:

**Senate Amendment (with title amendment)**

Delete lines 24 - 127

and insert:

Police Dogs Program Act."

Section 2. Section 943.69, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

943.69 Care for Retired Police Dogs Program.—

(1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.—The Legislature finds that:

(a) Police dogs are an integral part of many law



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11 enforcement and correctional efforts statewide, including the  
12 apprehension of suspects through tracking and searching,  
13 evidence location, drug and bomb detection, and search and  
14 rescue operations.

15 (b) Law enforcement and correctional agencies agree that  
16 the use of police dogs is an extremely cost-effective means of  
17 crime control and that police dogs possess skills and abilities  
18 that frequently exceed those of existing technology.

19 (c) The service of police dogs is often dangerous and can  
20 expose them to injury at a rate higher than that of nonservice  
21 dogs.

22 (d) Police dogs provide significant contributions to the  
23 residents of this state.

24 (2) DEFINITIONS.—As used in this section, the term:

25 (a) "Correctional agency" means a lawfully established  
26 state or local public agency having primary responsibility for  
27 the supervision, protection, care, custody, control, or  
28 investigation of inmates at a correctional institution.

29 (b) "Law enforcement agency" means a lawfully established  
30 state or local public agency having primary responsibility for  
31 the prevention and detection of crime or the enforcement of  
32 penal, traffic, highway, regulatory, game, immigration, postal,  
33 customs, or controlled substance laws.

34 (c) "Retired police dog" means a dog that was previously in  
35 the service of or employed by a law enforcement agency or a  
36 correctional agency in this state for the principal purpose of  
37 aiding in the detection of criminal activity, enforcement of  
38 laws, or apprehension of offenders and that received  
39 certification in obedience and apprehension work from a



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40 certifying organization, such as the National Police Canine  
41 Association, Inc., or other certifying organization.

42 (d) "Veterinarian" has the same meaning as in s. 474.202.

43 (e) "Veterinary care" means the practice, by a  
44 veterinarian, of veterinary medicine as defined in s. 474.202.  
45 The term includes annual wellness examinations, vaccinations,  
46 internal and external parasite prevention treatments, testing  
47 and treatment of illnesses and diseases, medications, emergency  
48 care and surgeries, veterinary oncology or other specialty care,  
49 euthanasia, and cremation.

50 (3) ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM.—The Care for Retired Police  
51 Dogs Program is created within the department to provide a  
52 stable funding source for the veterinary care for retired police  
53 dogs.

54 (4) ADMINISTRATION.—The department shall contract with a  
55 nonprofit corporation organized under chapter 617 to administer  
56 and manage the Care for Retired Police Dogs Program.  
57 Notwithstanding chapter 287, the department shall select the  
58 nonprofit corporation through a competitive grant award process.  
59 The nonprofit corporation must meet all of the following  
60 criteria:

61 (a) Be dedicated to the protection or care of retired  
62 police dogs.

63 (b) Be exempt from taxation under s. 501(a) of the Internal  
64 Revenue Code as an organization described in s. 501(c)(3) of  
65 that code.

66 (c) Have maintained such tax-exempt status for at least 5  
67 years.

68 (d) Agree to be subject to review and audit at the



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69 discretion of the Auditor General in order to ensure accurate  
70 accounting and disbursement of state funds.

71 (e) Demonstrate the ability to effectively and efficiently  
72 disseminate information and to assist former handlers and  
73 adopters of retired police dogs in complying with this section.

74 (5) FUNDING.—

75 (a) The nonprofit corporation shall be the disbursing  
76 authority for funds the Legislature appropriates to the  
77 department for the Care for Retired Police Dogs Program. These  
78 funds must be disbursed to the former handler or the adopter of  
79 a retired police dog that served for 5 years or more as a police  
80 dog upon receipt of:

81 1. Valid documentation from the law enforcement agency or  
82 correctional agency from which the dog retired which verifies  
83 that the dog was in the service of or employed by that agency;  
84 and

85 a. That the dog served 5 years or more with that agency;

86 b. Documentation showing that the dog served a total of 5  
87 years or more with two or more law enforcement agencies or  
88 correctional agencies; or

89 c. That, notwithstanding the length of service requirements  
90 elsewhere in this paragraph, the dog served 3 years or more with  
91 one or more law enforcement agencies and was injured in the line  
92 of duty while serving with a law enforcement agency and retired  
93 from the agency the dog was serving with at the time of the  
94 injury due to such injury; and

95 2. A valid invoice from a veterinarian for veterinary care  
96 provided in this state to a retired police dog and documentation  
97 establishing payment of the invoice by the former handler or the



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98 adopter of the retired police dog.

99 (b) Annual disbursements to a former handler or an adopter  
100 to reimburse him or her for the cost of the retired police dog's  
101 veterinary care may not exceed \$1,500 per dog. A former handler  
102 or an adopter of a retired police dog may not accumulate unused  
103 funds from a current year for use in a future year.

104 (c) A former handler or an adopter of a retired police dog  
105 who seeks reimbursement for veterinary care may not receive  
106 reimbursement if funds appropriated for the Care for Retired  
107 Police Dogs Program are depleted in the year for which the  
108 reimbursement is sought.

109 (6) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—The department shall pay to  
110 the nonprofit corporation, and the nonprofit corporation may  
111 use, up to 10 percent of appropriated funds for its  
112 administrative expenses, including salaries and benefits.

113 (7) RULEMAKING.—The department shall adopt rules to  
114 implement this section.

115 Section 3. For the 2022-2023 fiscal year, and each fiscal  
116 year thereafter, the sum of \$300,000 in recurring funds is  
117 appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Department of  
118 Law Enforcement for the purpose of implementing and  
119 administering the Care for Retired Police Dogs Program.

120  
121 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

122 And the title is amended as follows:

123 Delete lines 2 - 12

124 and insert:

125 An act relating to care for retired police dogs;  
126 providing a short title; creating s. 943.69, F.S.;



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127 providing legislative findings; defining terms;  
128 creating the Care for Retired Police Dogs Program  
129 within the Department of Law Enforcement; requiring  
130 the department to contract with a nonprofit  
131 corporation to administer and manage the program;  
132 specifying requirements for the nonprofit corporation;  
133 specifying requirements for the disbursement of funds  
134 for the veterinary care of eligible retired police  
135 dogs; limiting annual