

**First Regular Session
Seventy-fifth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO**

ENGROSSED

*This Version Includes All Amendments Adopted
on Second Reading in the House of Introduction*

LLS NO. 25-0411.02 Jed Franklin x5484

HOUSE BILL 25-1137

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Lindsay and Velasco,

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Winter F.,

House Committees

Agriculture, Water & Natural Resources

Senate Committees

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 **CONCERNING A PROGRAM FOR THE CARE OF COMMUNITY CATS.**

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov>.)

The bill establishes a grant program to distribute money to encourage a pet animal facility, a pet animal rescue, and a spay and neuter organization located in Colorado (animal welfare facility) to trap, neuter, and return to its habitat a free-roaming domestic cat that may have a caretaker and is not socialized to humans (community cat). The adopt a shelter pet account in the pet overpopulation fund (account) provides the funding for the grant program. The Colorado pet overpopulation authority (authority) will award the grants pursuant to the direction of the

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing law.
Dashes through the words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law.

HOUSE
Amended 2nd Reading
February 11, 2025

authority's board of directors (board).

A prospective grantee may only apply for a grant biannually and may not receive money in consecutive years. The authority must not favor a particular animal welfare facility's business model over another when awarding grants. A pet animal facility must be licensed and in good standing with the department of agriculture and located in Colorado to be eligible for a grant. At least 20% of the money annually awarded for all grants from the account must be for trap-neuter-return program grants. A trap-neuter-return grantee may spend grant money only on:

- Trapping, sterilizing, vaccinating, and ear-tipping community cats in Colorado;
- Veterinary care for the treatment and sterilization of community cats in Colorado;
- Education and outreach to promote public awareness of trap-neuter-return programs in Colorado and to encourage community participation;
- Training for community cat caretakers and animal control personnel in humane trapping and trap-neuter-return protocols in Colorado; and
- For an animal welfare facility that is a spay and neuter organization, veterinary materials and support for mobile clinics in Colorado.

The bill changes the composition of the board and the qualifications required to be on the board. The board member who represents the general public must not also be on the board of any animal welfare organization, and no board member may be from the same trade or industry group as another board member. The bill adds to the board a representative of No Kill Colorado or any successor organization and a representative of a spay and neuter organization.

The board must annually publish on the pet overpopulation fund website the name of each grantee receiving money from the pet overpopulation fund, the amount of each grant provided to a grantee, when a grantee received a grant, and the names of each board member.

The bill specifies that 70% of all grants awarded money from the pet overpopulation fund must be used for animal welfare facilities that are headquartered and located in a Colorado county with a population of 200,000 or less.

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1. Legislative declaration.** (1) The general assembly
3 finds and declares that:

4 (a) The pet overpopulation fund has provided funding for grants

1 and programs that have decreased the overpopulation of Colorado's pets;

2 (b) The pet overpopulation fund is overseen by the Colorado pet
3 overpopulation authority, which is an entity not subject to administration
4 by the state government, except for the appointment of its members by the
5 commissioner of agriculture;

6 (c) The adopt a shelter pet account in the pet overpopulation fund
7 receives money donated through the sale of the adopt a shelter pet license
8 plate to be used for spaying and neutering animals in animal shelters and
9 rescues and to support overpopulation education programs;

10 (d) The allocation of money in the adopt a shelter pet account is
11 lacking in transparency and the public should have knowledge of the
12 allocation of the money;

13 (e) Colorado should not favor one shelter model or ideology over
14 another in shelter and rescue operations because all shelter and rescue
15 operations work to place pets in adoptive homes, save animal lives, work
16 in tandem with municipalities and counties, assist in the reduction of pet
17 overpopulation, and are licensed pursuant to the pet animal care facility
18 act;

19 (f) More than eighty percent of Americans support nonlethal
20 solutions like spay and neuter programs and trap-neuter-return programs
21 for managing pet and community cat populations;

22 (g) Community cats have historically faced high euthanasia rates
23 in animal shelters due to a lack of a human address and socialization;

24 (h) Trap-neuter-return is a proven humane method to manage
25 community cat populations, reduce the number of impounded community
26 cats, and decrease nuisance complaints;

27 (i) The use of trap-neuter-return programs leads to healthier, more

1 manageable community cat populations while saving taxpayer money and
2 resources;

3 (j) Colorado rural communities receive proportionately less
4 funding from the adopt a shelter pet account than urban communities and
5 have a great need for resources; and

6 (k) The implementation of trap-neuter-return programs in
7 Colorado's rural communities is crucial because services are often lacking
8 and community cat populations are expanding.

9 (2) Therefore, the general assembly further finds and declares that
10 there is a need to address the state's community cat population and that it
11 is appropriate to use money in the adopt a shelter pet account of the
12 Colorado pet overpopulation fund to support the sterilization and
13 vaccination of community cats.

14 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 35-80-116.5, **amend**
15 (2)(a) introductory portion, (2)(a)(VII), (2)(a)(VIII), and (5)(e); and **add**
16 (2)(a)(IX), (2)(a)(X), (3)(d), (4.5), (5)(c.5), (8), and (9) as follows:

17 **35-80-116.5. Pet overpopulation authority - creation - duties**
18 **and powers - pet overpopulation fund - adopt a shelter pet account**
19 **- definitions.** (2) (a) The powers of the Colorado pet overpopulation
20 authority ~~shall be~~ ARE vested in a board of directors consisting of the
21 following:

22 (VII) One member of the general public ~~with~~ WHO HAS an interest
23 in animal welfare and WHO IS NOT A MEMBER OF A BOARD OF ANY ANIMAL
24 WELFARE ORGANIZATION;

25 (VIII) One representative of western Colorado;

26 (IX) ONE REPRESENTATIVE OF NO KILL COLORADO OR ANY
27 SUCCESSOR ORGANIZATION; AND

1 (X) ONE REPRESENTATIVE OF A SPAY AND NEUTER ORGANIZATION,
2 AS DEFINED IN SUBSECTION (9)(a)(V) OF THIS SECTION.

3 (3) (d) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN 35-80-116.5 (2)(a)(VII), A BOARD
4 MEMBER MAY BE A MEMBER OF A BOARD OR SUBCOMMITTEE OF A BOARD
5 OF AN ANIMAL WELFARE ORGANIZATION, BUT NO MORE THAN ONE MEMBER
6 OF THE BOARD MAY BE ON THE BOARD OR SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE BOARD
7 OF THE SAME ANIMAL WELFARE ORGANIZATION.

8 (4.5) THE BOARD SHALL ANNUALLY PUBLISH ON THE PET
9 OVERPOPULATION FUND WEBSITE THE NAME OF EACH GRANTEE RECEIVING
10 MONEY FROM THE PET OVERPOPULATION FUND, THE AMOUNT OF EACH
11 GRANT PROVIDED TO A GRANTEE, WHEN A GRANTEE RECEIVED A GRANT,
12 AND THE NAMES OF EACH BOARD MEMBER.

13 (5) (c.5) AT LEAST SEVENTY PERCENT OF THE MONEY ANNUALLY
14 AWARDED FOR ALL GRANTS THAT ARE FUNDED BY THE PET
15 OVERPOPULATION FUND MUST BE ANNUALLY ALLOCATED FOR RURAL
16 COMMUNITY FACILITIES. THE BOARD SHALL CONSIDER AWARDED AT
17 LEAST FIFTY PERCENT OF THE FUNDS DESIGNATED FOR RURAL COMMUNITY
18 FACILITIES TO COUNTIES WITH A POPULATION OF FIFTY THOUSAND OR LESS.

19 (e) (I) The authority shall use the ~~moneys~~ MONEY in the adopt a
20 shelter pet account to support the ~~spay~~ SPAYING and neutering and other
21 medical costs of animals in animal shelters and rescues, ~~or~~ to support
22 overpopulation education programs, AND TO SUPPORT THE
23 TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN GRANT PROGRAM ESTABLISHED IN SUBSECTION
24 (9)(b) OF THIS SECTION FOR THE PURPOSES DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION
25 (9)(d) OF THIS SECTION; except that up to ten percent of the ~~moneys~~
26 MONEY in the adopt a shelter pet account may be used for the
27 administration of the account.

1 (II) THE COLORADO PET OVERPOPULATION AUTHORITY MUST NOT
2 FAVOR A PARTICULAR SHELTER MODEL WHEN ALLOCATING MONEY FROM
3 THE ADOPT A SHELTER PET ACCOUNT.

4 (8) A PET ANIMAL FACILITY APPLYING FOR A GRANT DESCRIBED IN
5 SUBSECTION (9)(b) OF THIS SECTION FROM THE ADOPT A SHELTER PET
6 ACCOUNT MUST BE LICENSED AND IN GOOD STANDING PURSUANT TO
7 SECTION 35-80-104.

8
9 (9) (a) AS USED IN THIS SECTION, UNLESS THE CONTEXT
10 OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

11 (I) "ANIMAL WELFARE FACILITY" MEANS A PET ANIMAL FACILITY,
12 AS DEFINED IN SECTION 35-80-102 (11), A PET ANIMAL RESCUE, AS
13 DEFINED IN SECTION 35-80-102 (11.2), OR A SPAY AND NEUTER
14 ORGANIZATION, AS DEFINED IN SUBSECTION (9)(a)(V) OF THIS SECTION.

15 (II) "COMMUNITY CAT" MEANS A FREE-ROAMING DOMESTIC CAT
16 THAT MAY HAVE A CARETAKER AND IS NOT SOCIALIZED TO HUMANS.

17 (III) "EAR-TIPPING" MEANS THE REMOVAL OF APPROXIMATELY ONE
18 QUARTER OF A COMMUNITY CAT'S LEFT EAR WHILE UNDER ANESTHESIA,
19 WHICH SERVES AS A VISUAL INDICATOR OF STERILIZATION.

20 (IV) "RURAL COMMUNITY FACILITY" MEANS AN ANIMAL WELFARE
21 FACILITY THAT IS HEADQUARTERED AND LOCATED IN A COLORADO
22 COUNTY WITH A POPULATION OF TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND OR LESS.

23 (V) "SPAY AND NEUTER ORGANIZATION" MEANS A NONPROFIT
24 ORGANIZATION PRIMARILY OFFERING SPAY AND NEUTER SERVICES
25 PERFORMED BY A LICENSED VETERINARIAN, AS DEFINED IN SECTION
26 35-80-102 (8.7).

27 (VI) "TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN GRANT PROGRAM" MEANS THE GRANT

1 PROGRAM ESTABLISHED IN SUBSECTION (9)(b) OF THIS SECTION.

2 (VII) "TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN PROGRAM" MEANS A NONLETHAL
3 PROCESS OF HUMANELY TRAPPING, STERILIZING, VACCINATING FOR
4 RABIES, EAR-TIPPING, AND RETURNING COMMUNITY CATS TO THEIR
5 HABITATS.

6 (b) THE AUTHORITY SHALL ESTABLISH A TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN
7 GRANT PROGRAM FUNDED BY THE ADOPT A SHELTER PET ACCOUNT. THE
8 AUTHORITY SHALL AWARD MONEY FROM THE ADOPT A SHELTER PET
9 ACCOUNT TO ANIMAL WELFARE FACILITIES LOCATED IN COLORADO TO
10 IMPLEMENT TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN PROGRAMS FOR THE PURPOSES
11 DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (9)(d) OF THIS SECTION.

12 (c) AT LEAST TEN PERCENT OF THE MONEY ANNUALLY AWARDED
13 FOR ALL GRANTS THAT ARE FUNDED BY THE ADOPT A SHELTER PET
14 ACCOUNT PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION MUST BE ANNUALLY ALLOCATED
15 FOR THE TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN GRANT PROGRAM.

16 (d) AN ANIMAL WELFARE FACILITY AWARDED MONEY FROM THE
17 TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN GRANT PROGRAM IS AUTHORIZED TO SPEND THE
18 MONEY ONLY ON:

19 (I) TRAPPING, STERILIZING, VACCINATING, AND EAR-TIPPING
20 COMMUNITY CATS IN COLORADO;

21 (II) VETERINARY CARE FOR THE TREATMENT AND STERILIZATION
22 OF COMMUNITY CATS IN COLORADO;

23 (III) EDUCATION AND OUTREACH TO PROMOTE PUBLIC AWARENESS
24 OF TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN PROGRAMS IN COLORADO AND TO ENCOURAGE
25 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION;

26 (IV) TRAINING FOR COMMUNITY CAT CARETAKERS AND ANIMAL
27 CONTROL PERSONNEL IN HUMANE TRAPPING AND TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN

1 PROTOCOLS IN COLORADO; AND

2 (V) FOR AN ANIMAL WELFARE FACILITY THAT IS A SPAY AND
3 NEUTER ORGANIZATION, VETERINARY MATERIALS AND SUPPORT FOR
4 MOBILE CLINICS IN COLORADO.

5 **SECTION 3. Act subject to petition - effective date.** This act
6 takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the
7 ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly; except
8 that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V
9 of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this
10 act within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take
11 effect unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in
12 November 2026 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the
13 official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.