

HB39 Signed into Law

On Thursday, August 27th Governor Rendell signed into law HB39 (now known as Act 38). This Act amends title 18 (crimes and offenses) providing for cruelty to animals. It shall be a summary offense to commit any of the following acts unless they are performed by a licensed veterinarian while the dog is anesthetized: "debark" a dog, dock the tail of a dog over 5 days old, perform, cause or procure a surgical birth, cut off the dewclaw of a dog over 5 days old , to crop the ear(s)of a dog.

Individuals in possession of a dog with one of these surgical procedures must maintain a record of the procedure as long as the wound or incision site is unhealed. The record is to include the following information: date of the procedure, name of the veterinarian who performed the procedure and the location where the procedure was performed.

Originally HB39 included a section giving Dog Wardens the ability to enforce this new section of Title 18 in a county which there is no humane society policy officer to call to enforce the law. (A dog warden cannot charge an individual with animal cruelty.) But this part of the legislation was deleted by the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee.

History

The original form of HB39 passed unanimously in the House of Representatives and was sent to the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee. After the amendments were added by the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee it passed unanimously throughout all committees and the senate body. When sent back to the House of Representative for a final vote only 10 Representatives voted "no" to passing this legislation.

They are:

Representative Martin Causer
Representative Tom Creighton
Representative Scott Hutchinson
Representative Carl Walker Metzgar
Representative Donna Oberlander
Representative Jeffrey Pyle
Representative S. Smith
Representative Curtis Sonney
Representative R. Stevenson

UAPM requested a position statement from each of these representatives and received no reply from all except Representative Hutchinson. Below is his statement:
"Puppy Mills were finally outlawed in PA as of last year as they should be"