

South Carolina General Assembly
121st Session, 2015-2016

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Bill 3835

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A BILL

TO AMEND SECTION 47-1-10, AS AMENDED, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO DEFINITIONS IN REGARD TO CRUELTY TO ANIMALS, SO AS TO DEFINE THE TERM "COMPANION ANIMAL"; AND BY ADDING SECTION 47-1-45 SO AS TO PROHIBIT THE TATTOOING OR PIERCING OF A COMPANION ANIMAL EXCEPT FOR SPECIFIED REASONS AND TO PROVIDE PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Section 47-1-10 of the 1976 Code, as last amended by Act 259 of 2008, is further amended by adding a new item to read:

"(4) 'Companion animal' means any animal that is kept inside a residential dwelling and any dog or cat regardless of where it is kept. 'Companion animal' does not include livestock, fowl, or any wild animal."

SECTION 2. Chapter 1, Title 47 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

"Section 47-1-45. (A) A person shall not pierce or tattoo a companion animal unless the piercing or tattooing provides for the identification of the companion animal or the piercing or tattooing provides a medical benefit to the companion animal. Piercing or tattooing authorized pursuant to this subsection must be completed by a licensed veterinarian or under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian.

(B) A person violating the provisions of subsection (A) is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than one thousand dollars or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both.

(C) Each violation of subsection (A) is deemed a separate offense.

(D) The provisions of this section do not apply to a person who is the owner or possessor of a companion animal that has any piercing or tattooing before the effective date of this section."

SECTION 3. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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