
Judiciary Committee

SSB 6560

Title: An act relating to animal cruelty.

Brief Description: Concerning animal cruelty.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Parks, Fish & Wildlife (originally sponsored by Senators Oke, Fraser, Swecker, Kline, Kohl-Welles, Jacobsen, Thibaudeau, Fairley and Winsley).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides that the malicious use of a hook in a manner whereby the hook purposefully pierces the flesh of a bird or mammal is animal cruelty in the first degree. |
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Hearing Date: 2/27/04

Staff: Trudes Tango Hutcheson (786-7384).

Background:

Animal cruelty in the first degree, a class C felony, involves intentionally inflicting substantial pain on, causing physical injury to, or killing an animal by a means that causes undue suffering. A class C felony is punishable by up to five years imprisonment and up to a \$10,000 fine.

In addition to the more general animal cruelty statute, there are various laws under the fish and wildlife code that govern trapping. A state trapping license allows a person to trap mammals, but it is a gross misdemeanor to use body-gripping traps. Limited use of certain traps, such as padded leghold traps or nonstrangling foot snares, are allowed if the person obtains a special permit from the Department of Fish and Wildlife. There is no statute explicitly prohibiting the use of hooks for trapping birds or mammals.

Summary of Bill:

The animal cruelty statute is amended to provide that the malicious use of a hook in a manner whereby the hook purposefully pierces the flesh of a bird or mammal is animal cruelty in the first degree.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.