

ANIMAL CRUELTY AMENDMENTS

2011 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Curtis Oda

Senate Sponsor: David P. Hinkins

LONG TITLE

General Description:

This bill amends provisions of the Utah Criminal Code relating to animal cruelty and animal torture.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- ▶ defines terms;
- ▶ removes "pests" from the definition of an animal;
- ▶ provides that "torture" does not include shooting an animal with the intent to humanely kill the animal;
- ▶ provides that it is a defense to prosecution for animal cruelty if the conduct of the actor towards the animal was reasonable and necessary to protect the actor or another person from injury or death;
- ▶ provides that the provisions of this bill do not affect or prohibit the humane shooting or killing of an animal if the person doing the shooting or killing has a reasonable belief that the animal is a feral animal; and
- ▶ makes technical changes.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None



28 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

29 AMENDS:

30 **76-9-301**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2008, Chapter 292

31

32 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

33 Section 1. Section **76-9-301** is amended to read:

34 **76-9-301. Cruelty to animals.**

35 (1) As used in this section:

36 (a) (i) "Abandon" means to intentionally deposit, leave, or drop off any live animal:

37 (A) without providing for the care of that animal, in accordance with accepted animal
38 husbandry practices or customary farming practices; or

39 (B) in a situation where conditions present an immediate, direct, and serious threat to
40 the life, safety, or health of the animal.

41 (ii) "Abandon" does not include returning wildlife to its natural habitat.

42 (b) (i) "Animal" means, except as provided in Subsection (1)(b)(ii), a live, nonhuman
43 vertebrate creature.

44 (ii) "Animal" does not include:

45 (A) a live, nonhuman vertebrate creature, if:

46 (I) the conduct toward the creature, and the care provided to the creature, is in
47 accordance with accepted animal husbandry practices; and

48 (II) the creature is:

49 (Aa) owned or kept by a zoological park that is accredited by, or a member of, the
50 American Zoo and Aquarium Association;

51 (Bb) kept, owned, or used for the purpose of training hunting dogs or raptors; or

52 (Cc) temporarily in the state as part of a circus or traveling exhibitor licensed by the
53 United States Department of Agriculture under 7 U.S.C. 2133;

54 (B) a live, nonhuman vertebrate creature that is owned, kept, or used for rodeo
55 purposes, if the conduct toward the creature, and the care provided to the creature, is in
56 accordance with accepted rodeo practices;

57 (C) livestock, if the conduct toward the creature, and the care provided to the creature,
58 is in accordance with accepted animal husbandry practices or customary farming practices; [or]

59 (D) wildlife, as defined in Section 23-13-2, including protected and unprotected
60 wildlife, if the conduct toward the wildlife is in accordance with lawful hunting, fishing, or
61 trapping practices or other lawful practices[-]; or

62 (E) a pest, as defined in the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, 7
63 U.S.C. 136, as amended.

64 (c) "Companion animal" means an animal that is a domestic dog or a domestic cat.

65 (d) "Custody" means ownership, possession, or control over an animal.

66 (e) "Feral" is as defined in Section 23-13-2.

67 [~~(e)~~] (f) "Legal privilege" means an act that:

68 (i) is authorized by state law, including Division of Wildlife Resources rules; and

69 (ii) is not in violation of a local ordinance.

70 [~~(f)~~] (g) "Livestock" means:

71 (i) domesticated:

72 (A) cattle;

73 (B) sheep;

74 (C) goats;

75 (D) turkeys;

76 (E) swine;

77 (F) equines;

78 (G) camelidae;

79 (H) ratites; or

80 (I) bison;

81 (ii) domesticated elk, as defined in Section 4-39-102; or

82 (iii) any domesticated nonhuman vertebrate creature, domestic furbearer, or domestic
83 poultry, raised, kept, or used for agricultural purposes.

84 [~~(g)~~] (h) "Necessary food, water, care, or shelter" means the following, taking into
85 account the species, age, and physical condition of the animal:

86 (i) appropriate and essential food and water;

87 (ii) adequate protection, including appropriate shelter, against extreme weather
88 conditions; and

89 (iii) other essential care.

90 ~~[(h)]~~ (i) (i) "Torture" means intentionally or knowingly causing or inflicting extreme
91 physical pain to an animal in an especially heinous, atrocious, cruel, or exceptionally deprived
92 manner.

93 (ii) "Torture" does not include shooting an animal with the intent to humanely kill the
94 animal.

95 (2) Except as provided in Subsection (4) or (6), a person is guilty of cruelty to an
96 animal if the person, without legal privilege to do so, intentionally, knowingly, recklessly, or
97 with criminal negligence:

98 (a) fails to provide necessary food, water, care, or shelter for an animal in the person's
99 custody;

100 (b) abandons an animal in the person's custody;

101 (c) injures an animal;

102 (d) causes any animal, not including a dog, to fight with another animal of like kind for
103 amusement or gain; or

104 (e) causes any animal, including a dog, to fight with a different kind of animal or
105 creature for amusement or gain.

106 (3) Except as provided in Section 76-9-301.7, a violation of Subsection (2) is:

107 (a) a class B misdemeanor if committed intentionally or knowingly; and

108 (b) a class C misdemeanor if committed recklessly or with criminal negligence.

109 (4) A person is guilty of aggravated cruelty to an animal if the person:

110 (a) tortures an animal;

111 (b) administers, or causes to be administered, poison or a poisonous substance to an
112 animal; or

113 (c) kills an animal or causes an animal to be killed without having a legal privilege to
114 do so.

115 (5) Except as provided in Subsection (6) or Section 76-9-301.7, a violation of
116 Subsection (4) is:

117 (a) a class A misdemeanor if committed intentionally or knowingly;

118 (b) a class B misdemeanor if committed recklessly; and

119 (c) a class C misdemeanor if committed with criminal negligence.

120 (6) A person is guilty of a third degree felony if the person intentionally or knowingly

121 tortures a companion animal.

122 (7) It is a defense to prosecution under this section that the conduct of the actor towards
123 the animal was:

124 (a) by a licensed veterinarian using accepted veterinary practice;

125 (b) directly related to bona fide experimentation for scientific research, provided that if
126 the animal is to be destroyed, the manner employed will not be unnecessarily cruel unless
127 directly necessary to the veterinary purpose or scientific research involved;

128 (c) permitted under Section 18-1-3;

129 (d) by a person who humanely destroys any animal found suffering past recovery for
130 any useful purpose; ~~or~~

131 (e) by a person who humanely destroys any apparently abandoned animal found on the
132 person's property~~[-]; or~~

133 (f) reasonable and necessary to protect the actor or another person from injury or death.

134 (8) For purposes of Subsection (7)(d), before destroying the suffering animal, the
135 person who is not the owner of the animal shall obtain:

136 (a) the judgment of a veterinarian of the animal's nonrecoverable condition;

137 (b) the judgment of two other persons called by the person to view the unrecoverable
138 condition of the animal in the person's presence;

139 (c) the consent from the owner of the animal to the destruction of the animal; or

140 (d) a reasonable conclusion that the animal's suffering is beyond recovery, through the
141 person's own observation, if the person is in a location or circumstance where the person is
142 unable to contact another person.

143 (9) This section does not affect or prohibit:

144 (a) the training, instruction, and grooming of animals, if the methods used are in
145 accordance with accepted animal husbandry practices or customary farming practices;

146 (b) the use of an electronic locating or training collar by the owner of an animal for the
147 purpose of lawful animal training, lawful hunting practices, or protecting against loss of that
148 animal; ~~or~~

149 (c) the lawful hunting of, fishing for, or trapping of, wildlife~~[-]; or~~

150 (d) the humane shooting or killing of an animal if the person doing the shooting or
151 killing has a reasonable belief that the animal is a feral animal.

152 (10) County and municipal governments may not prohibit the use of an electronic
153 locating or training collar.

154 (11) Upon conviction under this section, the court may in its discretion, in addition to
155 other penalties:

156 (a) order the defendant to be evaluated to determine the need for psychiatric or
157 psychological counseling, to receive counseling as the court determines to be appropriate, and
158 to pay the costs of the evaluation and counseling;

159 (b) require the defendant to forfeit any rights the defendant has to the animal subjected
160 to a violation of this section and to repay the reasonable costs incurred by any person or agency
161 in caring for each animal subjected to violation of this section;

162 (c) order the defendant to no longer possess or retain custody of any animal, as
163 specified by the court, during the period of the defendant’s probation or parole or other period
164 as designated by the court; and

165 (d) order the animal to be placed for the purpose of adoption or care in the custody of a
166 county and municipal animal control agency, an animal welfare agency registered with the
167 state, sold at public auction, or humanely destroyed.

168 (12) This section does not prohibit the use of animals in lawful training.

169 (13) A veterinarian who, acting in good faith, reports a violation of this section to law
170 enforcement may not be held civilly liable for making the report.

Legislative Review Note
as of 12-29-10 8:34 AM

Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel

FISCAL NOTE

H.B. 210, 2011 General Session

SHORT TITLE: **Animal Cruelty Amendments**

SPONSOR: **Oda, C.**

STATE OF UTAH

STATE GOVERNMENT (UCA 36-12-13(2)(b))

Enactment of this bill likely will not materially impact the state budget.

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS (UCA 36-12-13(2)(c))

Enactment of this bill likely will not result in direct, measurable costs and/or benefits for local governments.

DIRECT EXPENDITURES BY UTAH RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES (UCA 36-12-13(2)(d))

Enactment of this bill likely will not result in direct, measurable expenditures by Utah residents or businesses.