

March 19, 2009

**H 733. REGULATE COMM. BREEDING/DOGS.** Filed 3/19/09. *TO REGULATE COMMERCIAL DOG BREEDING.*

Amends GS 19A-24 to authorize the Department of Agriculture to establish standards for the care of animals at commercial breeding operations, including provisions for adequate daily exercise, adequate veterinary care, appropriate housing and record keeping. Amends GS 19A-23 to add subsections (5b) and (5c), defining *commercial breeder* and *commercial breeding operation*, respectively, and excluding kennels or establishments operated for the purpose of boarding or training hunting, sporting, herding, or guide dogs from the definition of *commercial breeding operation*. Amends GS 19A-30 to permit the Director of the Animal Welfare Section of the Animal Health Division of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (Director) to refuse to issue or renew, or suspend or revoke a certification of registration for any commercial breeder if the Director determines that any of the grounds in GS 19A-30 applies, including a new subsection (3a) for failure to comply with the statutes and rules governing commercial breeding operations.

Enacts new GS 19A-29.1 requiring commercial dog breeders, defined as any person who maintains 15 or more adult female dogs for the primary purpose of the sale of their puppies in a 12-month period, to obtain a commercial breeder's license before operating in North Carolina; failure to obtain a license is a Class 2 misdemeanor. Enacts new GS 19A-29.2 authorizing inspection of commercial breeding operations by employees of the Department of Agriculture or by local animal control officers. Prohibits commercial breeders from (1) owning or having custody or control of more than 20 female dogs over the age of four months at any time and (2) breeding females less than 18 months or more than 8 years old and requires that veterinary care be provided to the dogs and their offspring. Requires an annual certification that a female dog is healthy enough for breeding. Enacts new GS 19A-29.3 establishing penalties (fines of at least \$50 per animal up to a total of \$1,000, Class 3 misdemeanor) for failure of a commercial breeder to adequately house, exercise, feed, water, provide adequate veterinary care or otherwise meet the standards of care for their animals.

Makes conforming changes. Applies to commercial breeding of dogs on or after December 1, 2009.

**Intro. by McElraft, Dickson, Sager, Allen.**

GS 19A