



H.B. 415

127th General Assembly
(As Introduced)

**Reps. Blessing and Domenick, Wagoner, Hughes, Barrett, Szollosi, Ujvagi,
Dyer, Foley, Peterson, Lundy, Distel, Yuko, Webster**

BILL SUMMARY

- Increases the penalties for animal fighting, including cockfighting and dogfighting.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Animal fighting and cockfighting

Continuing law, unchanged by the bill, provides that no person may knowingly engage in or be employed at cockfighting, bearbaiting, or pitting an animal against another; no person may receive money for the admission of another to a place kept for such purpose; and no person may use, train, or possess any animal for seizing, detaining, or maltreating a domestic animal. Continuing law, also unchanged by the bill, provides that any person who knowingly purchases a ticket of admission to such place, or is present thereat, or witnesses such spectacle, is an aider and abettor. (R.C. 959.15, not in the bill.)

Under current law, a violation of these prohibitions is a misdemeanor of the fourth degree. The bill increases the penalty to a felony of the fourth degree. Additionally, the bill provides that if any equipment, devices, or other items involved in such an offense are confiscated, forfeited, and sold or if any cash is confiscated and forfeited, the proceeds from the sale and the cash that is confiscated and forfeited, if any, must be used to pay the costs incurred by the impounding animal shelter in caring for or euthanizing a rooster involved in the offense. The court must order any proceeds and any cash that remain after those costs are paid to be used for educational purposes designed to eliminate cockfighting. (R.C. 959.99(H).)

Dogfighting

Continuing law, unchanged by the bill, prohibits a person from knowingly doing any of the following (R.C. 959.16(A), not in the bill):

- (1) Promoting, engaging in, or being employed at dogfighting;
- (2) Receiving money for the admission of another person to a place kept for dogfighting;
- (3) Selling, purchasing, possessing, or training a dog for dogfighting;
- (4) Using, training, or possessing a dog for seizing, detaining, or maltreating a domestic animal;
- (5) Purchasing a ticket of admission to or being present at a dogfight;
- (6) Witnessing a dogfight if it is presented as a public spectacle.

Under current law, a violation of any of these prohibitions is a felony of the fourth degree for a first offense and a felony of the third degree on each subsequent offense. The bill specifies that the penalty for this offense is always a felony of the third degree. Additionally, the bill provides that if any equipment, devices, or other items involved in such an offense are confiscated, forfeited, and sold or if any cash is confiscated and forfeited, the proceeds from the sale and the cash that is confiscated and forfeited, if any, shall be used to pay the costs incurred by the impounding animal shelter in caring for or euthanizing a dog involved in the offense. The court must order any proceeds and any cash that remain after those costs are paid to be used for educational purposes designed to eliminate dogfighting. (R.C. 959.99(I).)

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE
Introduced	12-18-07

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