

H.767

An act relating to the livestock care standards advisory council

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. 6 V.S.A. chapter 64 is added to read:

CHAPTER 64. LIVESTOCK CARE STANDARDS

ADVISORY COUNCIL

§ 791. DEFINITIONS

As used in this chapter:

(1) “Agency” means the agency of agriculture, food and markets.

(2) “Council” means the livestock care standards advisory council.

(3) “Livestock” means cattle, calves, sheep, swine, horses, mules, goats, fallow deer, American bison, poultry, and any other animal that can or may be used in and for the preparation of meat, fiber, or poultry products.

(4) “Secretary means the secretary of agriculture, food and markets.

§ 792. ESTABLISHMENT OF LIVESTOCK CARE STANDARDS

ADVISORY COUNCIL

(a) There is established a livestock care standards advisory council for the purposes of evaluating the laws of the state and of providing policy recommendations regarding the care, handling, and well-being of livestock in the state. The livestock care standards advisory council shall be composed of the following members, all of whom shall be residents of Vermont:

(1) The secretary of agriculture, food and markets, who shall serve as the chair of the council.

(2) The state veterinarian.

(3) The following seven members appointed by the governor:

(A) A person with knowledge of food safety and food safety regulation in the state.

(B) Two persons from statewide organizations that represent farmers.

(C) A Vermont licensed livestock or poultry veterinarian.

(D) A representative of an agricultural department of a Vermont college or university.

(E) A representative of the Vermont slaughter industry.

(F) A representative of the Vermont livestock dealer, hauler, or auction industry.

(4) The following two members appointed by the committee on committees:

(A) A producer of species other than bovidae.

(B) An operator of a medium farm or large farm permitted by the agency.

(5) The following two members appointed by the speaker of the house:

(A) An operator of a small Vermont dairy farm.

(B) A representative of a local humane society or organization from Vermont registered with the agency and organized under state law.

(b) Members of the board shall be appointed for staggered terms of three years. Except for the chair, the state veterinarian, and the representative of the agricultural department of a Vermont college, no member of the council may serve for more than six consecutive years. Seven members of the council shall constitute a quorum.

(c) With the concurrence of the chair, the council may use the services and staff of the agency in the performance of its duties.

(d) Members who are not state employees or whose membership is not supported by their employer or association may receive per diem and reimbursement for travel to the extent funding is available.

§ 793. POWERS AND DUTIES OF LIVESTOCK CARE STANDARDS

ADVISORY COUNCIL

(a) The council shall:

(1) Review and evaluate the laws and rules of the state applicable to the care and handling of livestock. In conducting the evaluation required by this section, the council shall consider the following:

(A) the overall health and welfare of livestock species;

(B) agricultural best management practices;

(C) biosecurity and disease prevention;

(D) animal morbidity and mortality data;

(E) food safety practices; and

(F) the protection of local and affordable food supplies for consumers.

(2) Submit policy recommendations to the secretary on any of the subject matter set forth under subdivision (1) of this subsection. A copy of the policy recommendations submitted to the secretary shall be provided to the house and senate committees on agriculture. Recommendations may be in the form of proposed legislation.

(3) Meet at least annually and at such other times as the chair determines to be necessary.

(4) Submit minutes of the council annually, on or before January 15, to the house and senate committees on agriculture.

(b) The council may engage in education and outreach activities related to the laws and regulations for the care and handling of livestock. The council may accept funds from public or private sources in compliance with 32 V.S.A. § 5.

Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This act shall take effect upon passage.