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SENATE BILL NO. 792

Offered January 23, 2026

A *BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered § 3.2-6511.3, relating to pet shops; sale of puppy mill dogs prohibited; civil penalty.*

Patron—Stanley

Referred to Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered § 3.2-6511.3 as follows:

§ 3.2-6511.3. *Pet shops; sale of puppy mill dogs prohibited; civil penalty.*

A. For the purposes of this section:

"Puppy mill" means a dog breeding operation that (i) maintains dogs in conditions that fail to provide adequate care, adequate exercise, adequate shelter, or adequate space; (ii) houses dogs in overcrowded, unsanitary, or inhumane conditions; (iii) operates with a primary purpose of maximizing profit through volume production of dogs while failing to provide adequate care; or (iv) has been cited by the U.S. Department of Agriculture for direct or critical violations of the federal Animal Welfare Act (7 U.S.C. § 2131 et seq.) within the preceding two years, or has received two consecutive citations for refusal to allow facility access for inspection.

"Puppy mill dog" means a dog that was bred by, born at, raised by, or obtained from a puppy mill.

B. It is unlawful for any pet shop to knowingly sell, offer for sale, or transfer any puppy mill dog.

C. Any pet shop that violates the provisions of this section is subject to a civil penalty of \$2,000 per dog offered for sale, sold, or transferred in violation of this section. All civil penalties assessed under this section shall be recovered in a civil action brought by the Attorney General in the name of the Commonwealth. Such civil penalties shall be paid into a special fund in the state treasury to the credit of the Department to be used in carrying out the purposes of this chapter.

INTRODUCED

SB792