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HOUSE BILL NO. 2242

Offered January 10, 2007

Prefiled January 9, 2007

A *BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 3.1-796.68:1, relating to tethering of dogs; penalty.*

Patrons—Howell, A.T. and Alexander

Referred to Committee on Agriculture, Chesapeake 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 3.1-796.68:1 as follows:****§ 3.1-796.68:1. Tethering of dogs; penalty.**

A. *It is unlawful for any person to tether, fasten, chain, tie, or restrain a dog, or cause a dog to be tethered, fastened, chained, or tied, to a doghouse, tree, fence, or other stationary object. However, a person may do any of the following:*

1. *Attach a dog to a running line, pulley, or trolley system, except that a dog shall not be tethered to the running line, pulley, or trolley system by means of a choke collar or pinch collar;*

2. *Tether, fasten, chain, or tie a dog no longer than is necessary for the person to complete a temporary task that requires the dog to be restrained for a reasonable time;*

3. *Tether, fasten, chain, or tie a dog while engaged in, or actively training for, an activity that is conducted pursuant to a valid license issued by the Commonwealth if the activity for which the license is issued is associated with the use or presence of a dog. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to prohibit a person from restraining a dog while participating in activities or using accommodations that are reasonably associated with a licensed activity; or*

4. *Tether, fasten, chain, or tie a dog while actively engaged in conduct that is directly related to the business of (i) shepherding or herding cattle or livestock or (ii) cultivating agricultural products, if the restraint is reasonably necessary for the safety of the dog.*

For the purposes of this section, the term "reasonable period" means a period of time not to exceed three hours in a 24-hour period, or a time that is otherwise approved by the animal control agency.

B. *Any person who violates any provision of this section is guilty of a Class 3 misdemeanor.*

C. *In lieu of the criminal penalty prescribed in subsection B, an animal control officer, may issue a correction warning that requires the owner to correct the violation, unless the violation endangers the health or safety of the dog, the dog has been wounded as a result of the violation, or a correction warning has previously been issued to the individual.*

INTRODUCED

HB2242