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## SENATE BILL NO. 444

Offered January 8, 2014

Prefiled January 7, 2014

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 3.2-6581 and 3.2-6582 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 3.2-5902.1, relating to hybrid canines.

Patron—Norment

Referred to Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That §§ 3.2-6581 and 3.2-6582 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 3.2-5902.1 as follows:**

**§ 3.2-5902.1. Reporting of hybrid canines.**

*An accredited veterinarian in practice in the Commonwealth shall report to the local animal control office the initial visit of a hybrid canine as defined in § 3.2-6581.*

**§ 3.2-6581. Definitions.**

As used in this article:

"Adequate confinement" means that, while on the property of its owner and not under the direct supervision and control of the owner or custodian, a hybrid canine shall be confined in a humane manner in a securely enclosed and locked structure of sufficient height and design to: (i) prevent the animal's escape; or if the hybrid canine is determined to be a dangerous dog pursuant to § 3.2-6540, the structure shall prevent direct contact with any person or animal not authorized by the owner to be in direct contact with the hybrid canine; and (ii) provide a minimum of 100 square feet of floor space for each adult animal. Tethering of a hybrid canine not under the direct supervision and control of the owner or custodian shall not be considered adequate confinement.

"Hybrid canine" means any animal that at any time has been or is permitted, registered, licensed, advertised or otherwise described or represented reported by its owner as a hybrid canine, wolf, or coyote by its owner to a licensed veterinarian, law-enforcement officer, animal control officer, humane investigator, official of the Department of Health, or State Veterinarian's representative.

"Responsible ownership" means the ownership and humane care of a hybrid canine in such a manner as to comply with all laws and ordinances regarding hybrid canines and prevent endangerment by the animal to public health and safety.

**§ 3.2-6582. Hybrid canine ordinance; penalty.**

A. Any locality may, by ordinance, establish a permit system to ensure the adequate confinement and responsible ownership of hybrid canines. Such ordinance may include requirements pertaining to: (i) the term and expiration date of the permit; (ii) the number of hybrid canines that may be owned by a permittee; (iii) identification tags or tattooing of the animal; (iv) where the animal may be kept; (v) handling of the animal while not on the property of the owner; and (vi) information required to be provided when applying for a permit, such as the sex, color, height, vaccination records, length, or identifying marks of the hybrid canine. The ordinance shall not require that hybrid canines be disposed of by the owner unless the owner fails to obtain or renew any required permit or violates a provision of the ordinance or any other law pertaining to the responsible ownership of the hybrid canine. The locality may impose a permit fee to cover the cost of the permitting system.

B. Violation of an ordinance enacted pursuant to this section subsection A is a Class 3 misdemeanor for the first violation and a Class 1 misdemeanor for any subsequent violation. The ordinance may require a violator to surrender the hybrid canine for euthanasia in accordance with § 3.2-6562.

C. The provisions of this section subsections A and B shall not affect any ordinance adopted prior July 1, 1997.

D. Any locality may, by ordinance, prohibit the keeping of hybrid canines.

INTRODUCED

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