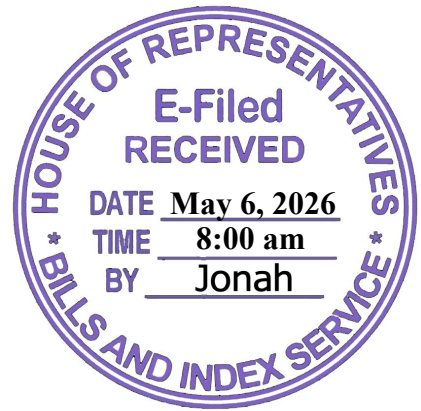


Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 9108



INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE MILAGROS AQUINO – MAGSAYSAY

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Republic Act (RA) No. 8485 or the Animal Welfare Act of 1998 was a laudable landmark legislation which laid the groundwork for animal rights protection in the Philippines. It was subsequently amended by Republic Act No. 10631, but in the more than two (2) decades since its original passage, there remains numerous legal and institutional gaps which prevent the law from being implemented efficiently and comprehensively.

Firstly, the penalties and fines provided for under the old law are inadequate, if not outdated, that they do not reflect the severity of the offenses. As such, the seemingly minimal penalties also fail to deter the commission of abusive acts to animals. Worse, since some violative acts are even committed by people of authority within the government, such as barangay officials and animal pound personnel, their acts and omissions should warrant maximum penalties.

In the spirit of moving towards a more progressive and modernized Animal Welfare law, supportive institutional arrangements should be put in place like an Animal Welfare Bureau under a proper national government agency like the Department of Agriculture to be coordinated with counterparts at the local government level.

For senior citizens, having pets have proven to have positive effects since it keeps them physically active and engaged in their day-to-day life. The special interaction they provide not only keeps away loneliness and feelings of isolation, the companionship they provide keep our older persons mentally and emotionally stimulated, thus preventing the early on-set of dementia.

As sentient beings, animals, be they domesticated pets, farm-raised for food, or working/service animals, do not deserve to be treated with cruelty or be needlessly subject to harmful practices, regardless of cultural or economic justifications. It is high time that we learn to treat them humanely, if not genuinely protect them as fellow living things.

In view thereof, immediate approval of this bill is requested.



MILAGROS AQUINO-MAGSAYSAY

Republic of the Philippines
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HOUSE BILL NO. 9108

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE MILAGROS AQUINO – MAGSAYSAY

AN ACT REVISING THE ANIMAL WELFARE ACT, STRENGTHENING ANIMAL WELFARE STANDARDS BY ESTABLISHING AN ANIMAL WELFARE BUREAU UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

CHAPTER I: GENERAL PROVISIONS

SECTION 1. Title. - This Act shall be known as the “Revised Animal Welfare Act of 2025.”

SEC. 2. Declaration of Policy. – The State aims to protect life, liberty, and property which includes the protection and promotion of animal welfare by establishing a system of supervision and regulation that observes good animal welfare to ensure humane treatment in all aspects of holding, handling, exhibiting, displaying, keeping, caring for, rearing, maintaining, training, treating, breeding, transporting, use, trading or interacting with animals.

Good animal welfare involves adherence to the five basic freedoms of animals, namely:

- a. Freedom from thirst, hunger, and malnutrition;
- b. Freedom from physical discomfort and pain;
- c. Freedom from injury and disease;
- d. Freedom to express normal behaviors; and e. Freedom from fear and distress.

SEC. 3. Coverage. - This Act shall apply to all programs, activities, and undertakings of individuals, corporations, associations, organizations, or entities, including, but not limited to, animal custodians, animal producers or breeders, small-hold farmers, private entities, or government agencies that:

- a. Hold, handle, exhibit, display, keep, care for, rear, maintain, train, treat, breed, transport, use, trade or interact with animals whether as pets, livestock, wildlife, or animals used for education, entertainment, or show; or
- b. Own, operate, or maintain any public or private facility that interacts with animals.

SEC. 4. Objectives – The State shall protect and promote animal welfare by establishing and enforcing rules, regulations, and standards. To achieve this, it shall:

- a. Regulate the establishment, operation, and maintenance of animal facilities, including breeding, training, transport, and care, while ensuring clean and sanitary conditions;
- b. Set and enforce welfare standards for the use, treatment, keeping, and trade of animals in establishments such as pet shops, kennels, shelters, slaughterhouses, veterinary clinics, farms and zoos;
- c. Promote responsible animal ownership and public awareness through education and information campaigns;
- d. Establish and strengthen inter-agency, multi-sectoral, and local government collaboration for animal welfare;
- e. Establish an agency to implement and enforce this Act, adjudicate violations, and ensure compliance with animal welfare laws; and
- f. Develop effective enforcement mechanisms, including penalties, investigations, and legal actions, to uphold animal welfare standards.

SEC. 5. Animal Welfare Principles – Animal welfare standards, policies, and regulations shall be guided by the following principles:

- a. Decisions on animal care, use, and welfare shall balance scientific knowledge, professional judgment, and on-the-ground information from animal advocates while considering ethical and societal values;
- b. Animals must have access to adequate water, food, health care, proper handling, and an environment suited to their species-typical biology and behavior, as well as their individual needs;
- c. Animals shall be treated in ways that minimize fear, pain, stress, and suffering, with humane and responsible conservation and population management;
- d. Protecting animal habitats is essential to animal welfare;
- e. The five basic freedoms of animals shall be upheld; and f. Animals shall be treated with respect and dignity throughout their lives and, when necessary, given a humane and pain-free death.

SEC. 6. Definitions. - As used in this Act, the following terms shall mean:

- a. **Animal** refers to sentient beings, whether domesticated or wild, vertebrate or invertebrate, terrestrial, aquatic or marine, under the control of humans or otherwise. This includes, but is not limited to, companion animals, livestock, captive animals, service animals, and wildlife, whether free-roaming or in captivity. The term excludes humans.

- b. **Animal Abandonment** refers to leaving behind an animal alone or permitting the animal to be abandoned in circumstances that might cause them harm.
- c. **Animal Facility** refers to any facility, structure, or premises used for the purpose of keeping, caring, breeding, rearing, holding, gaming, training, trading, treating, or exhibiting animals, including but not limited to farms, zoos, aviaries, apiaries, kennels, race tracks, cockpits, pet shops, shelters, national or local government pounds, animal rescue centers, quarantine stations of airports and seaports, animal holding facilities, stables, livestock markets, stockyards, corrals, stud farms, stock farms, slaughterhouses, aquaria, laboratories, veterinary clinics, and veterinary hospitals.
- d. **Animal Fighting Venture** refers to any event, show, exhibition, program, or other activity that involves a fight conducted or to be conducted between two or more animals for purposes of sport, wagering, amusement, or entertainment. This includes animal gaming.
- e. **Animal Welfare** pertains to the physical and psychological well-being of animals. It includes, but is not limited to, the avoidance of abuse, maltreatment, cruelty, and exploitation of animals by humans through the maintenance of appropriate standards of accommodation, feeding, and general care, the prevention and treatment of disease, and the assurance of freedom from fear, distress, harassment and unnecessary discomfort and pain and by allowing animals to express natural behavior.
- f. **Animal Welfare Enforcement Officer** refers to a law enforcement officer in the Philippine National Police (PNP), Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), and other law enforcement agencies designated to assist in the implementation of this Act; citizens' groups, community organizations, and other volunteer members of NGOs, and people's organizations deputized as such enforcement officers by the Secretary of Agriculture.
- g. **Bureau** refers to the Animal Welfare Bureau.
- h. **Captive Animal** refers to animals that are confined for educational or recreational purposes in places such as, but not limited to, zoos, sanctuaries, rescue centers, and sea or ocean facilities.
- i. **Community Cat** refers to neutered and vaccinated cat, identifiable by an ear notch, that is neither an owned pet nor an unsterilized stray.
- j. **Community Cat Caregiver** refers to individuals who voluntarily provide care (food, water, shelter, medical attention) for community cats without assuming ownership.
- k. **Council** refers to the Animal Welfare Advisory Council.
- l. **Department** refers to the Department of Agriculture.
- m. **Director** refers to the head of the Animal Welfare Bureau.
- n. **Euthanasia** refers to the Bureau approved process of inducing death using a method that causes a rapid and irreversible loss of consciousness with minimum pain and distress to animal.
- o. **Keeper** refers to any person who owns, possesses, or has control or custody over an animal.
- p. **Person** refers to a natural or juridical person which includes an individual, organization, corporation, company, business, enterprise, association, partnership, syndicate, trust, or any other entity.
- q. **Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation (SLAPP)** refers to a legal action filed to harass, vex, exert undue pressure, or stifle any legal recourse that any person, institution, or the government has taken or may take in the enforcement of this Act.

r. **Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return (TNVR) Program** refers to a structured and humane program that involves trapping, neutering, vaccinating against rabies, and returning cats to their original location.

s. **Transport Facility** refers to any public or private transportation, whether by air, water, or land, including tricycles, bicycles and the like, used to transfer animals from one place to another.

t. **Wildlife** refers to an animal that are not generally domesticated due to the nature of their species, including those in captivity under the control of a natural or juridical person. It also refers to free-living or wild animals.

Furthermore, the Bureau may define such other terms as may be used in the implementation of this Act.

CHAPTER II: THE ANIMAL WELFARE BUREAU

SEC. 7. Animal Welfare Bureau - The Animal Welfare Bureau is hereby created as a line bureau under the Department of Agriculture. It shall be primarily responsible for overseeing, supervising, regulating, enforcing, protecting, implementing and promoting the good welfare of all animals and shall serve as the controlling authority on all matters relating to animal welfare.

It shall also supervise and regulate the establishment and operation of all animal facilities and transport of all animals, as well as ensure the prevention of any form of cruelty, maltreatment, torture, exploitation, neglect and abandonment of the animals.

The Bureau may establish regional, provincial, city, or municipal offices as may be appropriate and necessary to carry out effectively and efficiently the provisions of this Act.

SEC. 8. Composition of the Bureau. - The Bureau shall be headed by a Director and assisted by three (3) Assistant Directors who shall supervise the administrative, adjudicative, and technical services of the Bureau.

The Director must be a licensed and practicing veterinarian with at least ten (10) years of experience. The Assistant Directors must possess demonstrated knowledge, training, empathy, compassion, and experience in the field of agriculture, biology, animal husbandry, veterinary science, veterinary medicine or other similar discipline with at least five (5) years of experience.

SEC. 9. Personnel and Staffing Pattern. - Notwithstanding the provisions of existing laws, the Director of the Bureau of Animal Industry shall serve as an interim Director of the Bureau and shall submit to the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture a recommendation on the personnel and staffing pattern of the Bureau within thirty (30) days from the effectivity of this Act. Upon approval by the Secretary, the same shall be submitted to the Department of Budget and Management and the Civil Service Commission.

SEC. 10. Functions of the Bureau. - As a line bureau, it shall have the following functions:

- a. **Policy and Regulation** – Formulate, issue, and enforce policies, guidelines, and standards for animal welfare, including rules on animal care, transport, shelter, breeding, research, impounding, and humane slaughter.
- b. **Inspection and Compliance** – Regulate and inspect animal facilities, transport systems, and establishments to ensure compliance, and impose necessary sanctions for violations, including closure, fines, confiscation, and forfeiture.
- c. **Enforcement and Adjudication** – Exercise administrative adjudication powers, including citation for contempt, confiscation, forfeiture, and penalties; issue rules and procedures for adjudication and dispute resolution.
- d. **Coordination and Delegation** – Collaborate with government agencies, LGUs, NGOs, and experts to implement animal welfare policies, delegate functions as necessary, and monitor LGU compliance.
- e. **Emergency Response and Rescue** – Establish a system for responding to natural disasters and emergencies affecting animals.
- f. **Public Awareness and Education** – Promote responsible animal ownership, conservation, and animal welfare awareness through education and information campaigns.
- g. **Data Management and Transparency** – Maintain a national database and web-based registry of animal facilities, violations, and sanctions for public access and policy-making.
- h. **Funding and Fees** – Manage the Animal Welfare Fund, levy fees for registrations, certifications, and inspections, and allocate resources for effective enforcement.
- i. **Recognition and Incentives** – Establish a rewards and incentives program for the Most Animal Welfare-Friendly local government units.
- j. **General Powers** – Issue necessary permits and certifications, conduct regular and random inspections, and call upon government agencies for support in implementing this Act.

The Bureau may exercise any other powers necessary to achieve the objectives of this Act.

CHAPTER III: THE ANIMAL WELFARE ADVISORY COUNCIL

SEC. 11. Animal Welfare Advisory Council - There is hereby created an advisory council to serve as a consultative and advisory group in the formulation of animal welfare policies, guidelines, rules and regulations, standards, as well as the development of welfare programs.

SEC. 12. Composition of the Advisory Council: a. **Ex Officio Members** - One representative from each of the following:

- i. Department of Agriculture - Office of the Secretary (DA-OSEC); ii. Animal Welfare Bureau (AWB); iii. Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI); iv. Biodiversity Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR-BMB); v. Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG); vi. Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR); vii. National Meat Inspection Service (NMIS); viii. Provincial/ City Veterinary League Association; ix. Department of Education (DepEd)/Commission on Higher Education (CHED); x. Academe or research institution; and xi. Philippine Information Agency (PIA).

- b. **Appointive Members:** i. Four (4) representatives from different nationally-recognized animal welfare organizations with proven track records on animal welfare and with established programs; ii. One (1) representative from a nationally-recognized Veterinary Professional Association; and iii. One (1) Representative each from the Poultry, livestock, and fisheries associations.

The Secretary may appoint additional members as it may deem necessary to ensure adequate representation of various stakeholders upon recommendation of the Council and the Bureau.

SEC. 13. Chairman of the Advisory Council - The Animal Welfare Advisory Council shall be chaired by the Director of the Bureau or his/her duly designated representative. The Bureau shall also act as the Secretariat and shall be responsible in calling the meetings and sending notices for such meetings. The Secretariat shall also be responsible in records keeping and ensuring correct transcription of minutes of meetings.

SEC. 14. Meetings and Quorum - The Council shall meet at least quarterly, or more often should the need arises. Majority of the total number of ex officio and appointed members shall constitute a quorum which shall be necessary for voting on any matters before the Council. The members of the council shall not receive any monetary compensation.

SEC. 15. Appointment by the Secretary - Except for the identified Government agencies, the other institutional members of the Council shall be appointed by the Secretary based on a resolution from the Council and as endorsed by the Bureau Director pursuant to the nomination of their respective organizations/sectors. The appointive member shall have a term of service for one (1) year, subject to renewal or unless earlier removed for just cause pursuant to the rules on the matter subject to the assessment of the Council.

The procedure for removal and replacement, as well as enforceable disciplinary actions of members of the Council shall be established in the internal rules and regulations of the Council. All policies and guidelines shall be approved by the Council including its internal rules and regulations.

CHAPTER IV: ANIMAL WELFARE ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS AND UNITS

SEC. 16. Regional, Provincial, City, and Municipal Animal Welfare Officers - A Regional Animal Welfare Officer shall be appointed by the Secretary for each Region upon the recommendation of the Director from the associated regional offices of the Department of Agriculture. This Regional Animal Welfare Officer shall be responsible for implementing animal welfare programs in the region and shall report any issues and or concerns directly to the Bureau. Each Regional Animal Welfare Officer must possess the following minimum qualifications:

- a. Veterinarian with a minimum of two (2) years of veterinary experience; and
- b. Has undergone relevant training on animal welfare and related trainings involving enforcement.

Provinces, cities, and municipalities shall also designate their respective Animal Welfare Officers and necessary technical support staff from the provincial/city/municipal veterinary offices to

effectively implement the provisions of this Act. In the absence of a veterinary office in municipalities, an animal welfare officer will be appointed within the municipal agriculture office.

SEC. 17. Barangay Animal Welfare Response Committee Task Force - Recognizing the important role of the barangay, a Barangay Animal Welfare Response Committee (BAWRC) Task Force shall be created and shall adopt programs consistent with the provisions of this Act and its implementing rules and regulations. The BAWRC shall create animal welfare programs within the barangays to promote responsible animal ownership, stray population control, and animal health and welfare. They shall likewise ensure farm animal welfare standards are complied with.

In line therewith, all barangays are mandated to also designate a Barangay Animal Welfare Officer who shall act as the focal person and coordinator with the city and municipal veterinary office, or their designated city or municipal animal welfare officers as the case maybe, on matters concerning barangay animal welfare activities.

SEC. 18. Deputization of Animal Welfare Enforcement Officers. — The Secretary of the Department of Agriculture shall deputize animal welfare enforcement officers from non-government organizations (NGOs), citizens' groups, community organizations, and other volunteers who have undergone the necessary training for this purpose.

The Philippine National Police (PNP), the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), and other law enforcement agencies, may also be designated as animal welfare enforcement officers who shall assist in the implementation of this Act.

The animal welfare enforcement officers shall have full authority to seize and rescue illegally traded and maltreated animals and to arrest violators of this Act subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations on arrest and detention. Regardless of the absence of designated animal welfare enforcement officers, it shall not preclude the aforementioned officers from the enforcement of the provisions of this Act as provided by their existing mandates under other laws.

The Bureau shall set guidelines in the qualification, training, reporting, and coordination of deputized and designated animal welfare enforcement officers to cover the following: a. Guidelines on the criteria and training requirements for the deputization and designation of animal welfare enforcement officers; and b. The mechanism for the supervision, monitoring, and reporting of these enforcement officers.

CHAPTER V: BASIC ANIMAL CARE AND HANDLING GUIDELINES

SEC. 19. Provision of Food and Water - All animal keepers must ensure that animals under their care receive nutritious and appropriate food at least once daily or as required for the species, in sufficient quantity and quality to maintain good health; and continuous access to clean, potable

water, free from contaminants such as debris, feces, and algae, unless species-specific needs dictate otherwise.

The Animal Welfare Bureau shall establish guidelines on the proper provision of food, water, shelter, and facilities based on the species, nature, and special individual needs of animals.

SEC. 20. Provision of Appropriate Shelter and Facilities - All animal keepers must ensure that animals under their care have access to a shelter that: a. **Provides Adequate Protection** – Shields the animal from sun, rain, wind, and extreme weather conditions to maintain good health; b. **Meets Space Requirements** – Is spacious enough for the animal to lie down, fully stretch its limbs, stand, turn around freely, and, stand on its hind legs if applicable, to express natural behavior and locomotion; and c. **Ensures Cleanliness and Sanitation** – Has a solid floor and is regularly cleaned and sanitized to prevent disease and discomfort.

The shelter must be designed to promote the animal's well-being, allowing it to move naturally and live in a safe, comfortable environment. And it must follow the formulated requirements/standards for animals.

SEC. 21. Provision of Veterinary Care for Sick, Compromised, or Injured Animals - All animal keepers must take reasonable steps to ensure the physical, health, and behavioral needs of animals under their care, following best practices and scientific standards. At a minimum, this includes:

- a. **Regular Health Checks** – A hands-on examination by a licensed veterinarian at least once a year;
- b. **Prompt Medical Treatment** – Immediate veterinary care for any illness, injury, or health condition; and
- c. **Humane Euthanasia** – If necessary, euthanasia must be performed humanely by a licensed veterinarian.

Animal keepers must ensure timely and appropriate veterinary intervention to prevent suffering and maintain the well-being of animals under their care.

SEC. 22. Provision of Appropriate Transport Facilities - All transport facilities for animals must be designed, equipped, and used in a manner that prevents injury, distress, or undue suffering.

These facilities must include:

- a. **Secure and Species-Appropriate Restraints** – Cages, carriers, or restraint systems suited to the species, size, and nature of the animal to prevent escape, injury, or discomfort;
- b. **Adequate Ventilation** – Sufficient airflow and temperature control to ensure the animal's comfort and safety during transport; and
- c. **Protection from Harm** – Measures to prevent exposure to extreme weather conditions, excessive noise, or other stressors that may cause suffering.

The Animal Welfare Bureau shall establish specific guidelines to ensure compliance with these standards for the humane transport of animals

SEC. 23. Opportunity for Animals to Express Natural Behaviors - All animal keepers must provide animals with regular opportunities to engage in species-specific natural behaviors, including:

a. **Play and Exercise** – Access to a space large enough for movement, exploration, and physical activity appropriate to the species; and

b. **Environmental Enrichment** – Provision of activities, objects, or interactions that stimulate mental and physical well-being, prevent boredom, and encourage natural instincts.

These opportunities must be appropriate to the animal's species, age, and health condition to promote overall well-being and welfare.

CHAPTER VI: PROHIBITED ACTS

SEC. 24. Prohibition on Cruelty, Maltreatment, Abuse, and Exploitation of Animals - It is unlawful for any person to torture, abuse, exploit, or neglect an animal, including failing to provide adequate care, food, water, shelter, or medical attention. No person shall cause or permit an animal to be subjected to cruelty, nor use animals in research or experiments not expressly authorized by the Animal Welfare Bureau.

Acts of cruelty include, but are not limited to:

a. **Physical Abuse** – Beating, harming, injuring, mutilating, maiming, poisoning, drowning, stabbing, cutting, crushing, or any act that inflicts pain, suffering, or distress, whether physical or psychological;

b. **Neglect and Unsafe Conditions** – Depriving an animal of proper care, exposing it to overcrowded, unsanitary, or unsafe living conditions, including inadequate shelters, facilities, or transport systems;

c. **Inhumane Killing Methods** – Killing an animal through electrocution, gas chambers, or exposure to petrol or diesel exhaust;

d. **Unauthorized Experimentation** – Using animals for research or testing without express authorization from the Bureau; and

e. **Overworking Animals** – Forcing animals to perform beyond their physical capacity, causing distress, exhaustion, or injury.

The Animal Welfare Bureau shall establish guidelines and enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with this provision.

SEC. 25. Prohibition on Neglect - It shall be unlawful for any animal keeper to:

a. **Fail to Provide Basic Care** – Neglecting to provide adequate food, water, shelter, medical care, and opportunities for natural behavior, as required under Chapter V; and

b. **Allow Animals to Roam Unattended** – Permitting an animal to stray or roam the streets, leading to its impoundment by local authorities.

Animal keepers are responsible for ensuring the safety, well-being, and proper containment of animals under their care. The Animal Welfare Bureau, in coordination with local government units, shall establish enforcement measures and penalties for violations of this provision.

SEC. 26. Prohibition on the Killing of Animals - It is unlawful for any person to kill an animal, except for cattle, pigs, goats, sheep, poultry, rabbits, carabaos, and horses, which are classified as food animals. The killing of pets and non-food animals is strictly prohibited, except in the following instances:

- a. **Religious and Cultural Rituals** – When done as part of religious rites of an established religion or tribal/ethnic customs of indigenous cultural communities, provided that religious or tribal leaders maintain records in accordance with relevant guidelines and strict animal welfare oversight by the Bureau;
- b. **Euthanasia for Disease Control** – When an animal is afflicted with an incurable communicable disease, as determined and certified by a licensed veterinarian;
- c. **Euthanasia for Animal Welfare** – When necessary to end an animal’s suffering due to severe illness or injury, as certified by a licensed veterinarian;
- d. **Protection of Human Life** – When killing an animal is the only option to prevent imminent danger to a human’s life or safety;
- e. **Population Control** – When conducted as a last resort to manage animal overpopulation, with certification from the Provincial/City/Municipal Veterinary Officer;
- f. **Post-Research Euthanasia** – When an animal is euthanized by a licensed veterinarian after being used in an authorized research or experiment under Section 48;
- g. **Humane Slaughter of Farm Animals** – When performed in accordance with the guidelines to be issued pursuant to Section 49; and
- h. **Other Justifiable Causes** – When determined and certified by a licensed veterinarian based on analogous grounds.

In all cases, the killing of animals must be conducted using euthanasia or other humane methods approved by the Animal Welfare Bureau. Humane procedures shall be based on the most scientifically advanced and humane techniques available, as determined by the Bureau.

SEC. 27. Prohibition on Animal Fighting - It is unlawful to organize, participate in, or facilitate any form of animal fighting, including but not limited to dogfighting, bullfighting, horse fighting, and other similar acts. This includes pitting animals against each other for human entertainment, gaming, gambling, or sport, as well as using “bait animals” for training or fighting purposes.

The following acts related to animal fighting are strictly prohibited:

- a. **Organizing or Promoting Animal Fights** – Causing, procuring, permitting, encouraging, promoting, sponsoring, or inciting any form of animal fighting;
- b. **Advertising and Ticket Sales** – Promoting, selling tickets, or otherwise assisting in an animal fighting event;
- c. **Participation and Attendance** – Attending, wagering on, or otherwise patronizing an animal fighting event;

d. **Breeding or Training for Fighting** – Breeding, training, or conditioning any animal to participate in a fight;

e. **Allowing Animal Fights on Property** – Permitting or allowing an animal fighting event to take place on any property, structure, or facility under one's ownership or control; and

f. **Animals as Prize** – Using of live animals as prizes in competitions, games, or contests, including events where participants chase, catch, or capture an animal to claim ownership.

Animal fights held as part of festivities, festivals, or fiestas are not exempt from this prohibition and are strictly banned.

Any person involved in organizing, participating in, or facilitating animal fights shall be held accountable as an accessory to the crime of animal cruelty.

SEC. 28. Prohibition on Dog Meat Trading – It shall be unlawful for any person to engage in the slaughter, trade, transport, sale, consumption or possession of dogs or dog meat for human consumption, regardless of purpose or scale.

SEC. 29. Prohibition on Abandonment - It is unlawful for any animal keeper, whether temporary or permanent, to abandon an animal under their care. Abandonment includes leaving an animal without proper provision for its welfare, resulting in neglect, distress, or harm.

SEC. 30. Prohibition on Ear Cropping, Tail Docking, Devocalization, and Declawing - Ear cropping, tail docking, devocalization, declawing, and any other form of mutilation are prohibited as acts of animal cruelty, except when the procedure is required for the health and well-being of the animal, as determined and certified by a licensed veterinarian. When allowed, the procedure must be conducted by a duly licensed veterinarian using humane and medically approved methods. These procedures shall not be conducted for aesthetic or non-medical purposes.

SEC. 31. Prohibition on Operating an Animal Facility Without a Permit or Certification - No person or entity shall operate an animal facility without securing the necessary permits or certifications from the Animal Welfare Bureau. All facilities must comply with established welfare standards, and failure to obtain proper authorization shall result in penalties and possible closure.

CHAPTER VII: ENFORCEMENT

SEC. 32. In General — The Bureau, either independently, or in cooperation with local government units, the Animal Welfare Enforcement Officers, law enforcement agencies, registered NGOs and other concerned parties, is authorized to carry out enforcement operations and measures to ensure compliance with the provisions of this Act and to eradicate, stop and prevent activities prohibited under this Act. Local Government Units are empowered to conduct enforcement and shall issue Cease & Desist Order to non-compliant facilities.

SEC. 33. Visitorial/Inspection Power. - Owners and/or operators of animal facilities shall be subjected to regular, as well as random, inspections by the Bureau independently or through its

deputized animal welfare enforcement officers to ensure compliance with the standards set forth by this Act and subsequent rules and regulations. Fines and suspension or revocation of certificates shall be imposed by the Bureau in case of non-compliance.

SEC. 34. Apprehension of Offending Persons. - Any person who has knowledge or information about the commission of any of the prohibited acts cited may refer the same to the law enforcement authority or to the Bureau and/or its deputized animal welfare enforcement officers, and other law enforcement agencies for appropriate action. The procedure in the filing of criminal charges shall be as prescribed by the Rules of Criminal Procedure contained in the Rules of Court.

SEC. 35. Seizure of Effects. - Any items seized pursuant to arrests made for violation of any provision of this Act shall be held by any person, facility, or organization, authorized by the Bureau, including the LGUs, the law enforcement agencies or any Bureau accredited NGO pending the disposition of administrative, civil, and criminal proceedings.

SEC. 36. Custody of Rescued Animals – Any animal seized or rescued from violators of this Act and subsequent guidelines, rules, and regulations may be held in custody pending the disposition of the corresponding administrative, civil, or criminal proceedings. Animals seized or rescued shall be referred to the local government pound or shelter, Bureau-accredited animal facilities, or individuals capable of caring for and supervising the seized animal. For wildlife, the same shall be referred to the DENR-BMB or their nearest regional offices, without prejudice to the animal's referral or transfer of the animals to other animal facilities provided it has better and more suited facilities.

Any animals seized and/or rescued from any inhumane condition or facility shall be immediately relieved from such condition or situation without prejudice to the immediate conduct of proper documentation such as photographing for purposes of preserving evidence.

Provided, that if the rescued animal has a rightful owner, it shall be returned to him, subject to verification of ownership and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

SEC. 37. Rescue of Animals in an Enclosed Facility. - Any animals found to have been kept, abandoned, deprived of basic care, protection, and food, or subjected to inhumane or cruel situations in an enclosed, locked, secured, or sealed facility, whether public or private, may be rescued, or relieved from the cruel situation or condition in coordination with the barangay or the law enforcement agencies or animal welfare enforcement officers. The said enclosed facility may be broken open subject to diligent efforts shown to contact the owner of the facility. Except in cases where there is an imminent danger to the life of the animal, diligent effort to contact the owner of the facility may be dispensed with provided the barangay or the police or any licensed veterinarian has certified on the occurrence of such danger.

SEC. 38. Protection Orders. - A protection order is a relief granted under this Act for the purpose of preventing further violations of the provisions herein as well as to protect an animal from further

distress, fear, cruelty, or discomfort by relieving them or removing them from such inhumane condition and granting other necessary reliefs. The protection order shall be enforced by law enforcement agencies, deputized animal welfare enforcement officers, or the Bureau.

The protection orders that may be issued under this Act are the Barangay Protection Order (BPO), Temporary Protection Order (TPO), and Permanent Protection Order (PPO).

A BPO is issued by the barangay office where the perpetrator of the prohibited act or the complaining individual or entity lives or holds office. This BPO shall be effective for fifteen (15) days. A TPO shall be issued by the court having jurisdiction over the case filed against the respondent which shall last for a period of thirty (30) days. A PPO shall be issued by the appropriate court having jurisdiction over the case filed against the respondent which shall remain in effect unless revoked by the court after the dismissal of the case against the respondent.

A protection order may be sought by any concerned individual, deputized animal welfare officer, law enforcement officer, the Council, or the LGU through the City or Provincial Veterinary Officers.

The protection under this Act may include any of the following reliefs:

- a. Prohibition of respondent from taking possession of the animal/s that are or were in the respondent's possession during the duration of the protection order;
- b. Prohibition of respondent from taking possession of any animal for the duration of the protection order;
- c. Prohibition of respondent from purchasing any live animal for any purpose for the duration of the protection order;
- d. Directing the respondent to stay at a distance indicated in the protection order or a minimum of 50 meters, away from the person who caused the apprehension of the respondent, and from that of his/her family or household members;
- e. Directing the respondent to stay away from areas, like residence, place of work, frequented by the person who caused the respondent's apprehension, and that of his/her family/household members;
- f. Granting temporary or permanent custody of the animal to any animal welfare enforcement officer or any interested animal welfare group who shall apply for the custody of said animal/s;
- g. Restitution for actual costs for the rescue, care, and rehabilitation of animal/s subject matter of the protection order; and
- h. Such other forms of relief as the court deems necessary to protect any animals as well as any informant or person who reported the incident and his or her designated family or household member/s.

The issuance of the BPO or the pendency of an application for BPO shall not preclude the application for or the granting of TPO or PPO. Any violation of the protection order shall be deemed as multiple violations under this Act and shall be penalized accordingly.

SEC. 39. Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation (SLAPP) in the Enforcement of this Act. - If a person believes that a legal action filed against him or her constitutes a SLAPP, he or she may make such assertion as an affirmative defense in the action. A special hearing on the SLAPP affirmative defense shall be held by the court at the earliest possible opportunity in the action. The hearing on the SLAPP affirmative defense shall be summary in nature, and the SLAPP affirmative defense shall be resolved within thirty (30) days after the summary hearing. If the court dismisses the action pursuant to the SLAPP affirmative defense, the court may award attorney's fees and costs of suit, as well as damages under a counterclaim if such has been filed. The dismissal shall be with prejudice.

If the court rejects the SLAPP affirmative defense, the evidence adduced during the summary hearing shall be treated as evidence of the parties on the merits of the case. The action shall proceed in accordance with the Rules of the Court.

SEC. 40. Disputable Presumption. - If, at the time of apprehension, a person lacks the appropriate permit, certification or clearance, or authority, issued by the Bureau or other pertinent government agencies including duly licensed Local Government Veterinarian, the following shall constitute prima facie evidence of the corresponding illegal acts punishable under this Act: a. The possession of a body, carcasses or any parts thereof, and meat of any animal prohibited to be killed, whether raw, cooked or processed, without justification or necessary permit or veterinary certificate from the Bureau, LGU Veterinarian, or the NMIS or local slaughterhouses showing the reason for the killing, the method used for the killing, as well as the purpose for which the carcasses are to be used, is a presumption that the animals were killed under circumstances prohibited under this Act. And when the same is found in possession of any paraphernalia used for killing, torture or maltreatment, such as clubs, knife, cages, and restraints along with live or dead animals including any of its products and derivatives, there shall be a presumption that the possessor caused the killing and/or destruction, infliction of injury, or maltreatment. b. The presence of fresh and/or dried blood, by-products, or derivatives of the animals, with or without the tools, equipment, and/or paraphernalia derivatives, shall be a disputable presumption of the killing and/or destruction of the habitat of the animal involved.

CHAPTER VIII: ADJUDICATION AND AUTHORITY TO IMPOSE ADMINISTRATIVE FINES & PENALTIES

SEC 41. Authority to adjudicate and administer administrative penalties. — The Bureau or its authorized representatives have the power to exercise administrative adjudication, confiscation, and forfeiture, including the power to cite in contempt, in all cases of violations of this Act. After due notice and hearing, the Bureau may impose administrative sanctions such as payment of fines; cancellation or suspension of permits, clearances, agreements and/or certificates; closure of facilities; confiscation and forfeiture of all animals including products, paraphernalia, tools, implements and conveyances used in connection with the commission of the violation and the disposal of the same in accordance with the adjudication procedures, rules and regulations it shall issue and other pertinent laws, rules and regulations.

CHAPTER IX: PERMITS, CERTIFICATES, AND AUTHORITY TO COLLECT FEES AND CHARGES

SEC. 42. Certificate of Registration and Permits. - No person shall establish, maintain, or operate any animal facility including public or private transport facility, without first securing from the Bureau a certificate of registration thereof. Any public or private facility, shall be considered as operating an animal facility when the following circumstances are present:

- a. when operating and representing itself publicly as such; and/or
- b. when it has been securing donations or effecting rescue under the definition of this Act;

As such, the aforementioned facility shall be covered by the guidelines and requirements of the Act.

The Bureau shall provide ample and reasonable time for any person to register an animal facility with due consideration of their scale and financial resources.

The Bureau may revoke or cancel the certificate of registration of an animal facility if such animal facility is found to be in violation of any provision of this Act or any associated guidelines, rules, regulations, or standards. The facility may file with the Bureau a request for reconsideration within 15 calendar days from receipt of the notice of revocation or cancellation of certificate. The Bureau shall resolve the same with finality within 15 calendar days from receipt of the request.

SEC. 43. Mayor's Permit Requirement. - No LGU shall issue Mayor's or business permit to any person without the presentation of certificate coming from the Bureau that it has complied with the animal welfare standards set forth herein or any rules and regulations as may hereafter be enforced.

In addition, for new applicants, a Veterinary Clearance shall be required as a requirement for Business permit. For renewal of permits, a License to Operate issued by Bureau of Animal Industry is mandatory for Commercial and Semi-Commercial Farms, while a local registration is sufficient for Small-hold farms.

CHAPTER X: OTHER ANIMAL WELFARE PROVISIONS

SEC. 44. Use of Animals for Show, Media, TV, Movies, or Entertainment - Producers, promoters or organizers of animal shows, media, or entertainment, shall obtain the necessary permit from the Bureau when using animals. The presence of a licensed veterinarian during the entire show, taping, shooting, or program shall be required. The Bureau shall lay down requirements for this purpose. All other provisions regarding proper care and treatment of animals, in general, shall be applicable to these animals used for show or entertainment, especially with respect to transport, holding area, allowance for rest, and provision of food and water.

It shall be unlawful for show producers, promoters, or organizers to import, procure or use animals from sources without animal welfare standards or have been shown to have maltreated or exposed

animals to inhumane conditions prior to their importation. The animal should be given sufficient food and accommodation as well as adequate rest for the entire duration of its stay in the Philippines.

SEC 45. Use of animals for work - Animals used as working animals including, but not limited to, K9 dogs, carriage horses, carabaos, other farm animals and the like, must comply with the health and welfare standards set forth herein and as may be issued by the Bureau taking into consideration their nature and behavior. Working animals should not be allowed to work under circumstances wherein its health and safety will be at risk. Overworking of animals is hereby prohibited. Water and appropriate shelter protecting the same from extreme weather condition must be provided.

K9 dogs or animals used by law enforcement agencies and/or the military, as well as by the private security agencies, shall be treated as employees of such agencies. As such, they shall have the benefit for proper welfare, appropriate shelter, care and sustenance until their retirement. Adoption of retired K9 dogs by their handlers must be prioritized. Spay and Neuter of retired K9 dogs shall be mandatory prior to adoption or disposition at the cost of such agencies. The Bureau, in coordination with the police, military and private security agencies, as well as the NGOs concerned, shall set guidelines in the acquisition, care, and disposition of K9 dogs.

SEC. 46. Use of animals as guide or service animals - Service animals, such as but not limited to guide or service dogs, K9 dogs, emotional support or any animal used for various assisted interventions to promote mental health and the like, are hereby regulated by the Bureau. Certification guidelines and standards for accreditation of dogs shall be established by the Bureau in consultation with relevant agencies and concerned groups.

SEC. 47. Breeding of Animals - The Bureau shall, in consultation with the industry stakeholders, establish standards and guidelines to promote responsible breeding practices, especially dog and cat breeding. Irresponsible breeding practices compromising the health and welfare of animals shall be considered an act of cruelty.

SEC. 48. Use of Animals in Research and Scientific Study. - Animals used in scientific procedures, research, and studies, shall be regulated by the Bureau, ensuring that animal welfare regulations and guidelines in the use, experimentation, testing, and manipulations of animals for said purpose are complied with at all times. The academe and research institutions are encouraged to use non-animal research, testing, or educational model or strategy when reasonably and practicably available. Animal use, experimentation, testing, and manipulations for scientific procedures, research, and studies shall be performed only as a last resort upon exhaustion of alternative approaches. No person undertaking or operating any research facility shall use any animal in research or experiments without first obtaining written authorization from the Bureau upon compliance with such guidelines and qualifications necessary to obtain such authority.

SEC. 49. Farm Animals. - The Bureau shall set out standards and guidelines in consultation with the stakeholders in the establishment and gradual compliance with animal welfare standards to better the living and health condition of animals in the farm industry. It shall also issue guidelines for the conduct of humane and pain-free slaughter of farm animals for food.

SEC. 50. Transport of Animals. - For purposes of live transport of animals, the following shall be complied with: a. No person shall transport an animal or cause an animal to be transported in a way likely to cause injury or undue suffering to an animal, including but not limited to overcrowding, lack of adequate ventilation, and appropriate transport cages, unnecessary or painful restraint, improper and unsafe stowing, transport during extreme weather condition and the like, as well as failure to adequately provide food and water for the transported animals. b. Any person transporting an animal in connection with an economic activity shall: i. Ensure that such animal is fit to travel and checked regularly during the voyage, at least once every six (6) hours; ii. Protect such animals from extreme temperatures, with journeys limited to duration as prescribed by the Bureau depending on the species, nature, and needs of the transported animal; iii. Ensure that vehicle loading and unloading facilities are constructed and maintained to avoid injury and suffering; iv. Provide sufficient floor space and height allowance so as to allow such animal to lie down, stand up, fully stretch its limbs, and turn around freely without any impediment; v. After each eight (8) hour travel period, rest such animal off the vehicle for at least 24 hours, providing such animal sufficient water and feed; and vi. The route with the shortest distance shall be preferred.

For purposes of this Section, transport "in connection with an economic activity" includes, but is not limited to, journeys undertaken by commercial haulers, farmers, commercial animal breeders, and horse racers. Such transport is not limited to transport where an immediate exchange of money, goods, or services takes place, but also includes, in particular, transport that directly or indirectly involves financial gain.

a. No person shall transport an animal fewer than eight (8) weeks old, a pregnant female who has passed through ninety percent (90%) of her expected gestational period, a female who has given birth in the past seven (7) days, or a sick or injured animal unless such transport is to or from a veterinary practice or clinic.

b. Any violation of this Section shall be penalized even if the transporter has a permit to transport; and

c. Any vehicle used in the transportation or importation/exportation of animals in violation of the provisions of this Act shall be deemed an instrument employed in the commission of the crime and shall be ordered confiscated and forfeited in favor of the government upon conviction of the accused.

d. The Bureau shall come up with programs, guidelines and timelines that will implement live transport of farm animals within the locality or identified regions to prevent long travels impacting on the welfare of animals.

SEC. 51. Import and Export of Live Animals. — For the import and/or export of live animals, compliance with the provisions of this Act and its guidelines must be ensured, including proper holding facilities. Import of animals from countries of extremely cold climates shall be prohibited unless specifically authorized on a case-by-case basis by the Bureau upon submission of an approved care and sustainability program or plan.

SEC. 52. Spay, Neuter and Vaccination of Stray Cats and Dogs - The Local Government Units, through their Provincial, City and First-Class Municipalities, shall implement a mandatory spay and neuter for stray or roaming dogs and cats to control animal strays and rabies as well as population. All stray dogs and cats that have been spayed or neutered shall be permanently identified by an ear notch. This ear notch shall be applied by a licensed veterinarian or a trained and certified individual following humane and appropriate procedures. Vaccination against rabies shall be performed concurrently with the spay or neuter procedure. The Bureau may come up with other dog and cat population control programs in keeping with what is relevant and necessary. Pest control companies shall not be allowed to capture and dispose cats and dogs.

SEC. 53. Exemption from capture for community cats under a TNVR program. - Community cats participating in a TNVR program and identifiable by an ear notch shall be exempt from capture by barangay officials, animal control officers, and other individuals acting on behalf of the barangay for the purpose of impoundment.

SEC. 54. Impounding Facilities – The LGU, barangay and other animal impounding facilities shall ensure that appropriate cages, shelter, feeding, sanitation standards, as well as adoption standards set forth by the Bureau, are in place and properly complied with.

SEC. 55. Impounding of Dogs and Cats- Dogs and cats that have been vaccinated, spayed and neutered, which are apparently healthy, should not be impounded unless their presence have been proven to pose a danger to the community due to rabies, existence of diseases and behavioral issues. A comprehensive TNVR program shall be established in consultation with the LGUs and the NGOs.

SEC. 56. Communication, Education, and other Public Awareness Campaigns. - The Bureau, together with other agencies, NGOs, and stakeholders, shall implement programs towards increasing awareness of animal welfare through education and various information awareness activities and programs.

SEC. 57. Inclusion of Animal Welfare Program in the Seal of Good Local Government- Animal welfare programs, including declaration of dog meat trade-free LGU and spay and neuter shall be included in the Seal of Good Local Government assessment system. The DILG, the Bureau and the NGOs shall come up with criteria relevant to this purpose.

CHAPTER XII: PENALTIES

SEC. 58. Penalties. - The following penalties shall be imposed for violation of any provision of this Act:

a. **Cruelty, Torture, or Maltreatment** - Any person who subjects an animal to cruelty, torture, maltreatment, or any other prohibited act under this Act shall be punished with imprisonment of one (1) year and six (6) months to four (4) years, and/or a fine ranging from ₱100,000 to ₱250,000, depending on the severity of the offense.

b. **Abandonment of Animals** - Any person who abandons an animal shall be punished with imprisonment of six (6) months to one (1) year, and/or a fine not exceeding ₱50,000. If the abandonment results in unnecessary suffering, injury, or death of the animal, the offender shall suffer the maximum penalty of one (1) year imprisonment and a fine of ₱100,000.

c. **Dog Meat Trade and Slaughter for Consumption** - Any person found guilty of participating in the dog meat trade shall be punished with imprisonment of one (1) year to four (4) years and a fine of ₱50,000 per dog.

d. **Operating an Unlicensed Animal Facility or Transport Service** - Any person who operates an animal facility or transport service without the necessary permits shall be punished with imprisonment of six (6) months to one (1) year, and/or a fine ranging from ₱50,000 to ₱100,000.

e. **Unauthorized Use of Animals for Entertainment or Scientific Research** - Any person who fails to obtain the required permits for the use of animals in shows, entertainment, media, research, or experiments shall be punished with imprisonment of six (6) months to one (1) year and six (6) months, and/or a fine ranging from ₱50,000 to ₱200,000, depending on the nature and severity of the violation.

f. **General Violations** - Any violation not covered by the specific provisions of this Act shall be punished with imprisonment of three (3) months to one (1) year, and/or a fine not exceeding ₱50,000.

g. **Aggravating Circumstances and Increased Penalties** - A higher penalty of two (2) years and one (1) day to five (5) years imprisonment, and/or a fine not exceeding ₱500,000, shall be imposed if the offense involves any of the following: i. Committed by a syndicate involving three (3) or more individuals; ii. Committed by an offender who profits from acts of cruelty (e.g., illegal breeding, fighting rings); or iii. Involves three (3) or more animals.

If the offender is a public officer or government employee, including officials or staff of government pounds or animal facilities, the maximum applicable penalty shall be imposed. This shall be in addition to administrative sanctions, including dismissal from service, forfeiture of benefits, and perpetual disqualification from holding public office.

a. **Additional Penalty for Insolvency** - If the offender is unable to pay the fine, subsidiary imprisonment shall be imposed based on the equivalent value of the fine.

b. **Repeat Offenders** - The maximum applicable penalty shall be imposed on an offender previously convicted under this Act. Habitual violators shall be permanently disqualified from obtaining permits for operating any animal facility or owning/possessing an animal.

c. **Violations Committed by Corporations, Entities, or Foreign Nationals** - If the violation is committed by a juridical entity, the responsible officer(s) shall suffer the corresponding penalty of

imprisonment and fines. If the violation is committed by a foreign national, they shall be immediately deported after serving their sentence, without further proceedings.

d. Liability in Relation to Other Laws -The penalties under this Act shall not prejudice any other criminal, civil, or administrative liabilities of the offender under existing laws.

e. Community Service in Lieu of Jail Time - For offenses with imprisonment not exceeding one (1) year, courts may, at their discretion, impose community service instead of incarceration. The community service must involve assistance to animals, such as volunteer work at animal shelters, rescue organizations, or government animal welfare programs. The courts shall specify the number of hours and duration of service based on the gravity of the offense.

CHAPTER XIII: MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

SEC. 59. Animal Welfare Fund. - – An Animal Welfare Fund is hereby established and shall be administered by the Bureau as a special account in the National Treasury. The Fund shall be used to finance the Bureau’s programs on animal welfare, including enforcement activities.

The Fund shall be sourced from fines and damages awarded as a result of violations of this Act, fees collected for permits, registrations, and authorizations, as well as donations, endowments, administrative fees, and grants.

Contributions to the Fund shall be exempt from donor’s taxes and all other taxes, charges, or fees imposed by the government.

SEC. 60. Mandatory Animal Welfare Education. - It shall be mandatory for all public and private primary and secondary education schools, to integrate in their curriculum and have activities on the following:

- a. The promotion and protection of the welfare of animals;
- b. Responsible animal ownership; and
- c. Concept of animal welfare.

Colleges and Universities shall also be encouraged to include animal welfare education and activities such as in their National Service Training Program (NSTP) or related curriculum.

SEC. 61. Emergency and Disaster Response — The Bureau shall create and implement, in collaboration with the government risk reduction agencies, the local government units and animal welfare NGOs, an interagency emergency resilience and response taskforce. In line therewith, an emergency resilience and response program shall be developed by the Bureau for rescuing and caring for animals in times of calamity including but not limited to floods, earthquakes and the like. Such program shall include establishment of animal evacuation centers, placing of the animals in identified temporary shelters or recognized rescue centers, whether public or private, until the same are claimed by their rightful owners or can be rehomed appropriately.

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Response Council (NRDRDC) and the Provincial, City and Disaster shall include these programs to ensure welfare and safety of animals during any calamity or disaster.

SEC. 62. Other Emergencies - The Bureau, through the LGUs, shall likewise establish an emergency response system to rescue and/or refer animals that are victim of abuse, cruelty and maltreatment to recognized animal shelters or facilities.

SEC. 63. The Role of the Barangay - LGUs shall support the Bureau in the implementation of this Act by issuing necessary animal welfare ordinances and implementing animal welfare programs in coordination with the Bureau, including the conduct of mandatory spay and neutering to control dog and cat population as well as veterinary access. Other government agencies handling animals within the definition of this Act are required to adopt and implement animal welfare standards, policies, rules, and regulations in their operation consistent with this Act.

SEC. 64. Role of Private Properties and Establishments. - All commercial establishments, industrial sites, residential subdivisions, government facilities and other private properties where stray animals are present shall be required to implement regular TNVR program in coordination with the LGU or accredited veterinary and animal welfare organization.

It shall be unlawful for any establishment or property owner to remove, relocate, abandon or cause harm to stray animals within their premises.

LGUs shall provide free or subsidized spay-neuter and vaccination services to assist establishments in compliance. The businesses that actively participate in TNVR programs shall be eligible for tax incentives or certifications recognizing their compliance with humane animal control management.

Establishments that refuse to implement TNVR or are found engaging in illegal removal, abandonment or harm to stray animals shall be subject to fines, suspension of business permits and other penalties as determined by the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) or the LGU. Repeat offenders shall face increased fines, permit revocation and legal action.

CHAPTER XIV: FINAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 65. Construction of the Law - This Act shall be liberally construed in favor of the promotion and protection of the welfare of the animals.

SEC. 66. Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) – Within one hundred twenty (120) days from the effectivity of this Act, the Animal Welfare Bureau shall, in consultation with relevant government agencies, local government units, veterinary professionals, animal welfare organizations, and other stakeholders, promulgate the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act.

Pending the effectivity of the new IRR, all existing rules, regulations, policies, and administrative issuances issued pursuant to Republic Act No. 8485, as amended by R.A. No. 10631, shall remain in full force and effect insofar as they are not inconsistent with this Act. All pending administrative or criminal cases under R.A. No. 8485 shall continue under this Act.

SEC. 67. Transition - During the transition within one (1) year from effectivity thereof, the existing Bureau of Animal Industry shall remain to be the supervisory and regulatory authority in the implementation of the provisions of this act and shall manage, supervise, and monitor the establishment of the Bureau until the same becomes operational, including the assignment and appointment of personnel and staff during the transition.

SEC. 68. Appropriation. - The initial funding to establish the Bureau shall be taken from the General Appropriations of the Department of Agriculture to the extent of the amount of Fifty Million Pesos (₱50,000,000) for the first year.

The subsequent funding shall be included in the General Appropriations Act which shall include all necessary amounts to achieve the purposes of this Act and to ensure the proper functioning of the Bureau, including the enforcement of this Act.

SEC. 69. Repealing Clause - All laws, decrees, rules, and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 70. Separability Clause - If any portion or provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other portions or provisions not affected, shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 71. Effectivity - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official Gazette* or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,