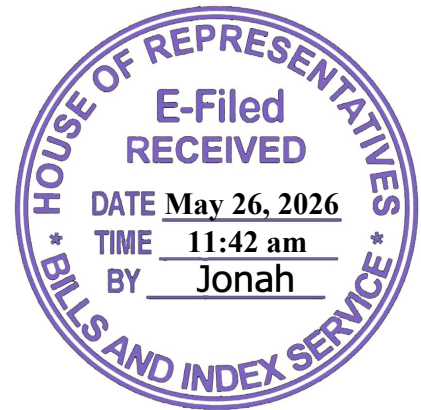


Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

TWENTIETH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 9437



INTRODUCED BY **HONORABLE JANICE V. DEGAMO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

It is the policy of the State to protect and promote the welfare of all terrestrial, aquatic and marine animals in the Philippines by supervising and regulating the establishment and operations of all facilities utilized for breeding, maintaining, keeping, treating or training of all animals either as objects of trade or as household pets.¹

Thirteen years have passed since the amendment to the Republic Act No. 8485 has been enacted, and still, nefarious animal abuse, cruelty, maltreatment, neglect, and abandonment continue to sprawl on the streets in broad daylight and even in the privacy of some dwellings. This can be gleaned from the records of the Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) and the Compassion and Responsibility for Animals (CARA) Welfare Philippines where over 7,000 cases of animal cruelty between 2010 and 2017 and 3,000 in the year 2020 were reported.²

On April 8, 2026, A video of a group of high school students allegedly abusing stray cats in Concepcion, Tarlac has gone viral and has raised alarm among netizens, local officials, and animal welfare groups. In the video, two boys can be seen putting the cats inside a sack and then appearing to shake them. A girl can also be seen repeatedly kicking the sack, while one of the boys was hitting the cat with a slipper.³

On May 3, 2026, authorities are investigating the death of thirteen dogs in San Miguel, Iloilo whose caretakers believe were poisoned. The family who took care of the dogs found a blue substance mixed into the animals' food when they found the dogs dead on April 29, 2026. The investigator said it is possible that the culprit may just be a resident in the area because

¹ An Act Amending Certain Sections of Republic Act No. 8485, Otherwise Known as "The Animal Welfare Act of 1998" - <https://elibrary.judiciary.gov.ph/thebookshelf/showdocs/2/58330>

² Caring for Animals is a Humanist Value - <https://hapihumanist.org/2023/12/29/caring-for-animals-is-a-humanist-value/#>

³ <https://www.abs-cbn.com/news/regions/2026/4/8/tarlac-cat-abuse-video-by-minors-stirs-concern-1720>

the police have received complaints that many who pass by the area are afraid of the dogs wandering around.⁴

This is animal cruelty. And this has to stop.

With all this news, it is alarming to see that the problem lies deeper than the loud barks and the stigma. This is already a gradual decline of our ethical standards and values as a nation.

With the passage of this bill, stricter penalties will be enforced against the perpetrators of animal cruelty. Information drives for the humane and ethical treatments of animals will be widely disseminated to our schools, workplaces, and down to our barangays and municipalities.

The success of a nation is manifested not just by its wealth and power. But more importantly, when its citizenry beams with kindness for those who cannot defend themselves.

In championing the lives of the defenseless and the voiceless, the immediate passage of this bill is urgently sought.


JANICE V. DEGAMO
Representative, 3rd District of Negros Oriental

⁴ <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/topstories/regions/986211/authorities-probe-death-of-13-dogs-in-san-miguel-iloilo/story/>

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Introduced by **HONORABLE JANICE V. DEGAMO**

**AN ACT STRENGTHENING THE PROTECTION AND WELFARE OF
ANIMALS, REPEALING FOR THIS PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8485, AS
AMENDED BY REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10631, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS “THE
ANIMAL WELFARE ACT OF 1998”**

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

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Expanded Animal Welfare and Protection Act of 2025” or the “Animal Life Advocacy and Guardianship Act (ALAGA)”

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* – It shall be the policy of the State to provide special protection to animals from all forms of cruelty, neglect, abuse, exploitation, and conditions detrimental to their welfare, taking into full consideration their species, ecological role, physiological needs, and sentence.

In pursuit of this policy, the State shall promote the humane and ethical treatment of animals based on the internationally recognized Five Domains of Animal Welfare, namely:

- (a) Adequate nutrition;
- (b) Appropriate physical environment;
- (c) Optimal health and veterinary care;
- (d) Opportunities to express natural behaviors; and
- (e) The promotion of a positive mental state free from fear, distress, and suffering.

For this purpose, the State shall:

(a) Fully implement the protections guaranteed under the Universal Declaration on Animal Welfare, the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) animal welfare standards, and other relevant international instruments and treaties promoting animal welfare, environment sustainability, and biodiversity conservation;

(b) Consider international commitments such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), and other global best practices on the ethical treatment, conservation, and sustainable management of animals, in the implementation of its treaty obligations and of this Act.

(c) Recognize animals as sentient beings capable of feeling pain, distress, comfort, and pleasure, and as such entitled to humane treatment and protection from degradation, maltreatment, exploitation, and neglect;

(d) Consider as paramount the welfare of animals in all settings where their survival, safety, or well-being is at risk, and adopt policies that prevent unnecessary suffering and promote their physical and psychological well-being in accordance with the Five Domains;

(e) Take all feasible measures to prevent and penalize acts of cruelty, neglect, or inhumane treatment of animals, and ensure the effective implementation, monitoring, and enforcement of this Act and related laws;

(f) Address the root causes of animal cruelty and welfare violations, including, but not limited to, poverty, lack of education, irresponsible ownership, habitat destruction, illegal trade, and exploitative industries that threaten the Five Domains of Animal Welfare;

(g) Recognize its primary role in providing effective protection, rescue, and rehabilitation to animals in situations of abuse, disaster, environmental degradation, captivity, abandonment, or other threats to their welfare;

(h) Fulfill its responsibility to pursue accountability and end impunity for violations of animal welfare laws, especially in cases involving systemic or repeated harm to animals;

(i) Ensure the participation of key stakeholders, including civil society organizations, animal welfare groups, veterinarians, Local Government Units (LGUs), indigenous communities, and the general public, in the design, implementation, and evaluation of policies, programs, and decisions concerning the care, protection, and humane treatment of animals.

SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.* – For purposes of this Act:

(a) *Animal Control Facility* refers to a government-operated or accredited establishment responsible for the capture, impoundment, quarantine, and disposition of stray, abandoned, or nuisance animals, in accordance with humane standards prescribed by the National Commission on Animal Welfare (NCAW);

(b) *Animal Facility* refers to any premises, establishment, or institution where animals are housed, bred, treated, trained, or used for commercial, research, or educational purposes, including veterinary clinics, pet shops, zoos, laboratories, and similar establishments;

(c) *Animal Shelter* refers to a registered or accredited establishment, operated by a government entity or private organization, that provides temporary refuge, care, and rehabilitation for stray, abandoned, neglected, or surrendered animals, with the goal of rehoming or responsible adoption;

(d) *Animal Welfare Partner (AWP)* refers to a registered non-government organization, academic institution, or private entity accredited by the National One Health and Animal Welfare Council or local government units (LGUs) to assist in rescue, rehabilitation, education, enforcement, and community outreach in support of the objectives of this Act; and

(e) *Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return (TNVR) Program* refers to humane population control method for free-roaming dogs and cats involving their capture, sterilization, vaccination against rabies and other diseases, and return to their original location, as part of a public health and animal welfare management strategy.

SEC. 4. *Establishment of the National Commission on Animal Welfare.* – The National Commission on Animal Welfare (NCAW) is hereby created as a quasi-judicial agency attached to the Department of Agriculture. It shall serve as the central authority with original and exclusive jurisdiction over all matters pertaining to animal welfare – including enforcement, licensing, issuance of welfare declarations, regulation of facilities, and adjudication of infractions.

The Commission shall possess fiscal and administrative autonomy, have its own budget line item under the Department of Agriculture and shall not be subsumed under any existing bureau or office.

The functions of the Committee on Animal Welfare (CAW) with respect to policy making, as provided for in Republic Act No. 8485, as amended, are hereby transferred to the Commission.

SEC. 5. *Composition of the National Commission on Animal Welfare.* – The Secretary of Agriculture shall serve as Chairperson of the Commission in an ex-officio

capacity. The President shall appoint the other six (6) members of the Commission, which shall include:

(a) Two (2) scientists specializing in the welfare, humane treatment, and protection of wildlife, farmed animals, companion animals, or working animals;

(b) One (1) lawyer engaged in the enforcement of animal welfare and protection of laws; and

(c) Three (3) animal welfare advocates, or representatives of Non-Government Organizations involved in the welfare, humane treatment, and protection of animals.

SEC. 6. *Secretariat.* – The Commission shall be supported by a Secretariat headed by an Executive Director with the rank of Undersecretary, assisted by two Deputy Directors: one for Operations & Services, and one for Administration & Finance. The Secretariat shall provide technical and administrative support to the Commission. Within three (3) months from the effectivity of this Act, the Office of the Secretary of Agriculture shall finalize the organizational plan for the Commission.

SEC. 7. *Reconstruction of the Existing Committee on Animal Welfare into the National Animal Care Advisory Council.* – To ensure institutional continuity, technical consistency, and the preservation of under the Animal Welfare Act of 1998, as amended, shall be reconstituted to serve in an advisory capacity as the National Animal Care Advisory Council (NACAC), which shall function as a consultative body to the Commission in the formulation of standards, regulations, and national policy directions. The advisory role of the NACAC shall be consultative in nature, and shall not diminish the powers vested in the Commission under this Act. For this purpose, the Commission shall: convene regular consultations with the NACAC; ensure stakeholder representation from animal welfare organizations, veterinary professional groups, academe, local government leagues, and industry sectors; and adopt internal rules governing the composition and functions of the NACAC.

SEC. 8. *Fiscal Autonomy and Funding.* – The Commission shall be provided with an annual budget sufficient for its operations, enforcement activities, staffing, training, public education, and program implementation. Its initial funding shall be taken from the appropriations of the Department of Agriculture, and subsequently included as a separate line item in the General Appropriations Act (GAA).

The Commission shall also manage the Animal Welfare Fund, composed of:

(a) Fines and damages collected under this Act;

(b) Fees from registration, inspection, and permits;

(c) Grants, donations, and endowments from local and international sources; and

(d) Legislative appropriations.

All such funds shall be used exclusively for implementing and strengthening animal welfare initiatives under this Act.

In order to provide the necessary funds to cover the expenses of the Commission in the performance of its mandate under this Act, aside from the budget allocation, ten percent (10%) of the registration fees of all animal facilities shall hereby be collected as a special fund to be used by the Commission to construct holding facilities for large animal confiscations.

SEC. 9. *Power and Functions.* – The Commission shall exercise the following powers and functions:

I. General Powers

(a) Enter into contracts, joint venture agreements or understanding, public-private partnerships, and memoranda of agreement or understanding, either domestic or foreign, under such terms and conditions as the Commission may deem proper and reasonable subject to existing laws;

(b) Receive, take, and hold by bequest, device, gift, purchase or lease, either absolutely or in trust for any of its purposes from foreign and domestic sources, any asset, grant or property, real or personal, subject to such limitations provided under existing laws and regulations;

(c) Discharge all responsibilities of government that may arise from treaties, agreements and other commitments on animal welfare to be extended through bilateral or multilateral loans and/or assistance programs;

(d) Determine, fix, and collect reasonable amounts to be charged as fees and charges necessary for the effective implementation of all laws, rules and regulations enforced by the Commission and impose reasonable fines and penalties for violation thereof: Provided, however, that all income generated from fees, fines, charges, and other collections shall be deposited with the National Treasury as income of the general fund;

(e) Perform such other related functions as may be mandated by law.

II. Rule-Making Power

(a) Enforce all laws relating to animal welfare that are not expressly or impliedly repealed or modified by this Act, including all existing rules and regulations, which shall continue to be in full force and effect, until otherwise modified or amended by the Commission;

(b) Prescribe rules and regulations not otherwise inconsistent with this Act, including standards, policies, and guidelines related to animal treatment, transport, research, and facility operations;

(c) Prohibit the use of devices, food, drugs, equipment or other means found to be harmful to animal health or welfare;

(d) Review the rules, policies and practices of government agencies, divisions, and instrumentalities to ensure compliance with this Act, applicable rules and regulations, and other laws related to animal welfare, as well as recommend amendments and revisions to said rules, policies, and practices;

III. Licensing & Registration

(a) Register and regulate all animal facilities and handlers in accordance with existing animal welfare laws and the latest scientific studies, as well as regulate the design and construction of animal facilities;

(b) Issue, suspend or revoke permits and licenses, and to impose or collect fees for the issuance of such licenses and permits, to persons required to obtain the same;

(c) Regulate and supervise the use of animals in sporting events, television and movie productions, and all other activities involving the display or exhibition of animals, to ensure the promotion of their health and welfare;

(d) Impose fines, penalties and forfeitures for violations of the rules and regulations promulgated or issued by the Commission; and

(e) Adjudicate welfare violations committed by animal facilities and handlers, impose sanctions, and order closures or confiscations.

IV. Animal Welfare Enforcement & Education

(a) Prosecute cases of animal abuse, maltreatment, and cruelty, as defined in this Act;

(b) Provide guidance to individuals, organizations and LGUs who wish to file criminal cases involving animal abuse, maltreatment, and cruelty;

(c) Create or fund the creation of holding facilities for live animals confiscated in animal cruelty cases until the offenders are convicted or acquitted;

(d) Provide technical assistance and training to LGUs, non-government organizations, and law enforcement agencies;

(e) Conduct public education campaigns on animal welfare and humane care;

(f) Administer incentives, recognitions, and support programs for animal-friendly practices, including certifications for humane animal husbandry; and

(g) Collect data, monitor cases, and report to stakeholders.

V. Quasi-Judicial Functions

(a) *Motu Proprio* or upon petition of any interested party, after notice and hearing, modify, suspend or revoke any permit or license for failure to comply with and/or for violation of any provision of law or any order, rules or regulations issued thereunder: Provided, That the Commission may for good cause and without notice and hearing, order the temporary suspension of such permit or license whenever such step, in the judgment of the Commission, shall be necessary and for the best interest of animal welfare: Provided, further, that except in cases where summary actions are taken, in the settlement of dispute and other problems connected with the registry of facilities or any administrative aspect, the Commission shall act as a body, and all hearings and investigations before it shall be governed by the rules of procedures it shall promulgate;

(b) For the purposes of carrying out the provisions of this Act, the Commission shall have the power and authority to summon parties, issue subpoena or require the production of such books, papers, contracts, records, or statement of accounts as may be material to a just determination of any matter under investigation; and

(c) Designate any of its members or officers to conduct hearings and investigations on any matter pending before it.

SEC. 10. *Regulation of Animal Ownership & Animal Facilities.* – The Commission shall establish regulations on responsible animal ownership, including the maximum number of animals that an individual, household, or organization may keep, based on their capacity to provide adequate care, shelter, and veterinary attention.

Any person, group, or organization maintaining a number of animals beyond the prescribed limit, or operating an animal shelter, sanctuary, or rescue facility, must secure the appropriate permits and accreditation from the Commission.

Entities or individuals soliciting or accepting donations for the care of animals shall be required to present proof of valid shelter or rescue operation permits, subject to inspection and compliance with national animal welfare standards. Non-compliance shall be grounds for the imposition of penalties, suspension of operations, or revocation of permits.

SEC. 11. *Regulation of City Pounds and Public Access to Data.* – City pounds shall be classified as animal control facilities, distinct from animal shelters. The following items shall be included in the regular budget of every pound or animal control facility maintained by an LGU:

- (a) Adequate food to feed each impounded animal at least once daily;
- (b) Reasonable and necessary expenses for the care, maintenance, and welfare of impounded animals;
- (c) Immediate treatment for animals with open wounds or injuries;
- (d) Humane euthanasia for animals that are severely injured, terminally ill, or diagnosed by a licensed veterinarian with a highly communicable disease: Provided, that, animals recommended for euthanasia shall be reported to the public at least eight (8) hours prior to the procedure through social media or any other means readily-accessible by the public, accompanied by a video showing the animal's condition as assessed by a veterinarian.

All impounded animals shall be spayed or neutered prior to adoption or release to their owners. If the animal is deemed unfit for surgery, the owner or adopter shall sign a written undertaking to have the animal spayed or neutered within three (3) months from the date of release and shall submit proof of compliance from a licensed veterinarian. If the animal remains unfit for surgery after said period, the owner must secure a certification from a licensed veterinarian indicating when the procedure may be safely performed. Failure of the owner to comply shall subject the owner to reasonable fines for every month of delay. Administrators and staff of pounds who release impounded animals without spay-neuter compliance shall also be deemed in violation of this Act.

Failure to maintain and produce records of animal impoundment, adoption, or euthanasia shall likewise constitute a violation of the Animal Welfare Act and shall subject the responsible staff or administrator to administrative sanctions.

For the purposes of this Act, failure to spay or neuter previously impounded animals prior to release, or failure to maintain or submit spay-neuter records certified by a licensed veterinarian, shall be considered an animal welfare violation.

Likewise, failure to rescue or release caged animals during a calamity, when such can be done without harm to oneself, shall constitute neglect on the part of the pound or animal control facility.

City pounds and other animal control facilities shall be required to maintain publicly accessible records relates to impounded and admitted animals, animals for adoption, adopted animals, animals due for euthanasia, deaths, and disease outbreaks, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, and other legislation related to government transparency.

Pounds and other animal control facilities shall be open to the public on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, and until at least 7:00 PM on weekdays.

SEC. 12. *Regulation of Animal Experimentation.* – Elementary schools shall be strictly prohibited from conducting any form of animal experimentation or dissection, whether for instructional, demonstrative, or research purposes. All secondary and tertiary educational institutions that conduct research involving animals shall comply with internationally accepted humane standards and practices for the care and use of laboratory animals. All such experiments shall be reviewed, approved, and monitored by and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), to be established by every educational institution conducting animal research, to ensure, among others, adherence to the 3Rs Principle: Replacement, Reduction, and Refinement.

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and the Department of Education (DepEd), in coordination with the National Commission on Animal Welfare (NCAW), shall jointly issue guidelines and monitoring mechanisms for compliance with this provision.

Any educational institution found to be conducting animal experimentation in violation of this Section shall be subject to administrative sanctions, including the suspension or revocation of its research permit or institutional accreditation, without prejudice to the filing of appropriate penalties under this Act.

SEC. 13. *Localization of Animal Welfare Efforts.* – Local Government Units shall play a primary role in the implementation and enforcement of animal welfare laws, regulations, and standards within their jurisdiction, consistent with provisions of this Act, and within their powers under the Local Government Code, and the principles of local autonomy, including but not limited to:

- (a) Implementation of Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return (TNVR) programs;
- (b) Deployment and supervision Animal Welfare Officers (AWOs) trained and accredited by the National Commission on Animal Welfare (NCAW);
- (c) Integration of animal welfare into barangay-level disaster preparedness and public health programs;
- (d) Establishment of a Municipal or City Animal Welfare Office (MAWO or CAWO) under the office of the local chief executive; and
- (e) Operate or maintain animal impounding facilities or shelters consistent with humane standards.

National policies and standards shall serve as the minimum threshold, as embodied in this Act and other relevant legislation. LGUs may adopt ordinances or policies providing greater protection or more specific implementation measures in accordance with their local needs and capacities. Provinces, cities, and municipalities

may enter into cooperation agreements to jointly fund, operate, or maintain shared animal welfare services such as shelters, mobile veterinary units, or rescue teams.

SEC. 14. *Partnership with Civil Society and the Private Sector.* – The State shall actively promote collaboration among government agencies, veterinary associations, academic institutions, civil society organizations, and private entities for the joint implementation of research, programs, and projects related to animal welfare. The Commission shall maintain and regularly update a registry of accredited Animal Welfare Partners (AWPs) which may be:

(a) Deputized to assist in animal rescue, rehabilitation, and law enforcement activities;

(b) Authorized to operate animal shelters or sanctuaries, subject to compliance with national standards and periodic inspection;

(c) Authorized to engage in public education, training, and community outreach on animal welfare; and

(d) Accredited to participate in the monitoring, documentation, and reporting of animal welfare violations.

All partnerships between government agencies or LGUs and civil society or private entities shall be governed by a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) or other formal instrument defining the roles, operational scope, accountability measures, and resource-sharing arrangements of the parties involved.

Accredited AWP's shall be invited to participate in policy consultations, local animal welfare council meetings, and program evaluation activities to strengthen transparency, collaboration, and policy coherence in animal welfare governance.

The National Commission on Animal Welfare (NCAW) shall prescribe the standards and accreditation procedures for Animal Welfare Partners (AWPs), and shall monitor compliance in coordination with relevant agencies and LGUs.

SEC. 15. *Prohibited Acts.* – It shall be unlawful for any person to torture any animal, to neglect to provide adequate care, subject any dog or horse to dogfights or horse fights, kill or cause or procure to be tortured or deprived of adequate care, sustenance or shelter, or maltreat or use the same in research or experiments not expressly authorized by the National Commission on Animal Welfare (NCAW). The killing of any animal other than cattle, pigs, goats, sheep, poultry, rabbits, carabaos and horses is likewise hereby declared unlawful except in the following instances:

(a) When it is done as part of the religious rituals of an established religion or sect or a ritual required by tribal or ethnic custom of indigenous cultural communities;

however, leaders shall keep records in cooperation with the Committee on Animal Welfare;

(b) When the pet animal is afflicted with an incurable communicable disease as determined and certified by a duly licensed veterinarian;

(c) When the killing is deemed necessary to put an end to the misery suffered by the animal as determined and certified by a duly licensed veterinarian;

(d) When it is done to prevent an imminent danger to the life or limb of a human being;

(e) When done for the purpose of animal population control;

(f) When the animal is killed after it has been used in authorized research of experiments; and

(g) Any other ground analogous to the foregoing as determined and certified licensed veterinarian. In all the above-mentioned cases, including those of cattle, pigs, goats, sheep, poultry, rabbits, carabaos and horses, the killing of the animals shall be done through humane procedures at all times. For this purpose, humane procedures shall mean the use of the most scientific methods available as may be determined and approve by the committee. Only those procedures approved by the Committee shall be used in the killing of animals.

SEC. 16. *Prohibition of Abandonment.* – It shall be unlawful for any person who has custody to an animal to abandon the animal. If any person being the owner or having charge or control of any animal shall without reasonable cause or excuse abandon it, whether permanently or not, without providing for the care of that animal, such act shall constitute maltreatment under Section 18. If the animal is left in circumstances likely to cause the animal any unnecessary suffering, or if this abandonment results in the death of the animal, the person liable shall suffer the maximum penalty. Abandonment means the relinquishment of all right, title, claim, or possession of the animal with the intention of not reclaiming its ownership or possession.

SEC. 17. *Prohibition of Animal Fighting.* – All forms of animal fighting, including but not limited to dog fighting, horse fighting, bullfighting, cockfighting, and similar practices, are hereby prohibited. Such acts are deemed inherently cruel and exploitative and are often associated with illegal gambling, violence, and other social evils. Violators shall be prosecuted under this Act and other applicable laws.

SEC. 18. *Prohibition of Animal Poisoning.* – It shall be unlawful to administer or use poison or any toxic substance for the purpose of killing animals in public spaces. Such acts are considered environmentally hazardous and pose serious risks to non-target wildlife and public health. No poison or chemical agent intended to kill animals shall be

used, distributed, or applied in any commercial or open public area without a special permit issued by the Commission, in coordination with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the Department of Health (DOH).

SEC. 19. *Habitat Protection.* – It shall be the duty of every person to protect the natural habitat of the wildlife. The destruction of said habitat shall be considered as a form of cruelty to animals and its preservation is a way of protecting the animals.

SEC. 20. *Penalties.* – Any person who subjects any animal to cruelty, maltreatment or neglect shall, upon conviction by final judgment, be punished by imprisonment and/or fine, as indicated in the following graduated scale:

(a) *Causing Death of an Animal.* Minimum imprisonment of ten (10) years and six (6) months and one (1) day, and a fine of five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00), to a maximum of up to fifteen (15) years, and fine not exceeding one million pesos (P1,000,000.00), if the animal subjected to cruelty, maltreatment, or neglect dies;

(b) *Causing Grave Injury to an Animal.* Minimum imprisonment of six (6) years and six (6) months and one (1) day, and a fine of five hundred thousand pesos (P500,000.00), to a maximum of ten (10) years and six (6) months, and a fine not exceeding one million pesos (P1,000,000.00), if the animal subjected to cruelty, maltreatment or neglect survives but is severely injured with loss of its natural faculty to survive on its own and needing human intervention to sustain its life; and

(c) *Causing Injury not Classified as Grave.* Imprisonment of three (3) years to five (5) years and a fine not exceeding two hundred thousand pesos (P200,000.00), for subjecting any animal to cruelty, maltreatment or neglect but without causing its death or incapacitating it to survive on its own.

(d) *Inaction in relation to Reports of Animal Cruelty, Maltreatment, or Neglect.* Minimum imprisonment of one (1) year and six (6) months and one (1) day, and a fine of one hundred thousand pesos (P100,000.00), to a maximum of up to two (2) years, and fine not exceeding two hundred thousand pesos (P200,000.00);

In any of the foregoing situations, the offender shall also pay for the veterinary treatment of the injured or killed animal, including shelter treatment costs incurred by the owner, animal welfare group, or the impounding agency. The offender shall suffer subsidiary imprisonment in case of insolvency and the inability to pay the fine.

If the violation is committed by a juridical person, the officer responsible thereof shall suffer the maximum fine and imprisonment. If the violation is committed by an alien, he or she shall be immediately be deported after the service of sentence without any further proceeding.

The foregoing penalties shall also apply for any other violation of this Act, depending upon the effect or result of the act or omission as defined in the immediately preceding sections.

Any person found guilty of engaging in the dog meat trade, producing or distributing content depicting animal cruelty such as crush videos, or committing cruelty for commercial gain, shall be penalized with a fine of not less than three million pesos (P3,000,000.00), and imprisonment of not less than ten (10) years, in addition to the penalties provided under this Section.

The maximum penalty applicable shall automatically be imposed if committed by: (a) a syndicate; (b) an offender who makes business, or derives commercial gain, out of cruelty to an animal; (c) a public officer or employee; or (d) where at least two (2) animals are involved.

The penalty of disqualification, suspension, or removal from office, at the discretion of the court, shall also be imposed in case the offender is a public officer or employee.

SEC. 21. *Presumption and Reporting of Pet Abuse, Maltreatment, and Neglect.* – Pet neglect shall be presumed committed by the legal owner or occupant of the property where an animal is found in a state of neglect. Barangay officials, landlords, neighbors, and relatives who have knowledge of such neglect shall have the duty to report the incident to the Animal Welfare Agency and to provide immediate emergency care to the animal, including food, water, and temporary shelter. The breaking of locks or entry into premises for the purpose of rescuing a neglected animal shall not constitute Trespassing and/or Theft under the Revised Penal Code. Such acts shall instead be governed by the principle of *negotiorum gestio* under the Civil Code of the Philippines, recognizing the lawful intervention of a person acting to protect the welfare of an animal in distress.

SEC. 22. *Animal Welfare Enforcement Officers.* – The National Commission on Animal Welfare (NCAW) shall have the authority to deputize animal welfare enforcement officers from government agencies, local government units (LGUs), non-government organizations, civil society groups, community organizations, and qualified volunteers who have undergone the necessary training and accreditation as prescribed by the Commission.

The Philippine National Police (PNP), the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), and other law enforcement agencies shall designate and assign animal welfare enforcement officers in coordination with the Commission to ensure the effective enforcement of this Act.

Deputized animal welfare enforcement officers shall have the authority, subject to existing laws, rules, and regulations on arrest and detention, to:

(a) inspect premises and investigate reports of animal cruelty, neglect, or maltreatment;

(b) Seize and rescue animals subjected to cruelty, abuse, or illegal trade; and

(c) Apprehend violators of this Act and assist in the filing of appropriate cases.

The Commission shall:

(a) Prescribe the qualifications, training requirements, and accreditation process for animal welfare enforcement officers;

(b) Establish a system for supervision, monitoring, and accountability of deputized officers; and

(c) Maintain a registry of accredited animal welfare enforcement officers nationwide.

SEC. 23. *Construction.* – This Act shall be liberally construed in favor of the protection and welfare of animals.

SEC. 24. *Information Dissemination.* – The Philippine Information Agency, in coordination with the National Commission on Animal Welfare, DepEd, DILG, LGUs, and other relevant government agencies shall ensure proper and adequate information dissemination of the contents of, and the rights and duties contained in, this Act to pertinent entities in all provinces, cities, municipalities and barangays.

SEC. 25. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.* – Within twelve (12) months from the effectivity of this Act, the National Commission on Animal Welfare (NCAW), in coordination with relevant government agencies and accredited animal welfare organizations, shall promulgate the rules and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of this Act.

SEC. 26. *Separability Clause.* – If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining provisions not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SEC. 27. *Repealing Clause.* – All laws, decrees, executive orders, department or memorandum orders and other administrative issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby modified, superseded, or repealed accordingly.

SEC 28. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,