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An Act To Ensure That the Money Received from the Surcharge on Registration of Pet Food Is Used for the Sterilization of Animals

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, Public Law 2005, chapter 281 imposed a surcharge of \$20 on registered pet food; and

Whereas, the money collected from the surcharge is to be deposited in the Animal Welfare Fund; and

Whereas, the money from the fund should be distributed on a quarterly basis to the Companion Animal Sterilization Fund; and

Whereas, deposits from the Animal Welfare Fund to the Companion Animal Sterilization Fund are not made on a regular basis; and

Whereas, it is important that funds be available in the Companion Animal Sterilization Fund so that animals may be spayed and neutered in a timely manner; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 7 MRSA §714, sub-§4, as amended by PL 2007, c. 459, §2, is further amended to read:

4. Surcharge on registration of pet food. For each product name of pet food registered in accordance with subsection 1, the applicant shall pay a \$20 surcharge in addition to the registration fee, except that a home-based manufacturer of pet food shall pay a total annual surcharge of \$20. The commissioner shall deposit the surcharge into the ~~Animal Welfare Fund established under section 3906-B, subsection 2~~ Companion Animal Sterilization Fund established under section 3910-B.

Money deposited into the Companion Animal Sterilization Fund may be disbursed on more than a quarterly basis.

Sec. 2. 7 MRSA §3906-B, sub-§2, as amended by PL 2005, c. 281, §3, is further amended to read:

2. Animal Welfare Fund. The commissioner shall deposit all license fees received pursuant to chapters 721, 723, 725 and 735 in a separate account established by the Treasurer of State and known as the Animal Welfare Fund. The commissioner shall deposit 1/2 of feed registration fees collected under section 714, subsection 1 and ~~all revenue from the surcharge collected under section 714, subsection 4~~ in the Animal Welfare Fund. This account does not lapse, but continues from year to year. The commissioner

shall pay from the Animal Welfare Fund the expense of furnishing license blanks, stickers and tags, travel expenses and salaries for necessary personnel, payments to animal shelters and expenses incurred in the administration of this Part.

~~The commissioner shall annually transfer \$100,000 from the Animal Welfare Fund for deposit in the Companion Animal Sterilization Fund established under section 3910-B.~~

Sec. 3. 7 MRSA §3910-B, sub-§1, as amended by PL 2007, c. 539, Pt. CCCC, §1, is further amended to read:

1. Establishment. There is established the Companion Animal Sterilization Fund, an interest-bearing account, referred to in this section as "the fund." The fund receives money deposited by the Treasurer of State pursuant to Title 36, section 5284-A, revenues generated in accordance with this section, all revenue from the surcharges collected under section 714, subsection 4 and section 3933, subsection 4, ~~money transferred from the Animal Welfare Fund in accordance with section 3906-B, subsection 2~~ and any money contributed voluntarily to the fund. All money deposited in the fund and the earnings on that money remain in the fund to be used for the spaying or neutering of companion animals owned by persons meeting income limit standards and for the necessary direct administrative and personnel costs associated with the management of the fund and may not be deposited in the General Fund or any other fund except as specifically provided by law. The fund may not be charged for indirect costs under a departmental indirect cost allocation plan.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Commissioner of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources to deposit the surcharge on registration of pet food directly into the Companion Animal Sterilization Fund instead of the Animal Welfare Fund. The bill also allows funds from the Companion Animal Sterilization Fund to be disbursed on more than a quarterly basis.