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Transcriber's Office  
FLOOR DEBATE

March 2, 2006

LB 584, 856

are disease-ridden and forced-bred continuously. What this does is three things. First, AM2563 would allow the Department of Agriculture's state inspectors, under Commercial Dog and Cat Inspection Act (sic), to enforce state cruelty statutes. Under current law, an inspector is not empowered to enforce animal control laws, rules and regulations, or ordinances, and are instead required, if they find a violation, to get a local law enforcement officer to come out and serve the act. This bill would also allow an inspector to immediately take action in a situation where he or she is inspecting a facility and discovers violations. Second, the annual fee charged for licensing facilities that house animals would be set by the director, and these fees would be on a sliding scale with a maximum...and that's based on the number of animals in the facility and it would have a maximum \$200 fee. This section also increases the annual fee, excuse me, to \$250 from \$200. And then third, the bill would raise the age requirement for puppies and kittens that are sold by persons other than animal control facilities, or in animal shelters. It increases their age from six weeks to eight weeks. The American Kennel Club recommends that a puppy not be removed from its litter until it's 8 to 12 weeks of age, as puppy needs ample time to mature and socialize with its littermates. LB 584 was supported by the Nebraska Humane Society, the Capital Humane Society, Hearts United for Animals, as well as a breed-specific rescue group. The bill originally...was originally opposed by the Nebraska Dog Breeders Association and veterinarians; however, the committee amendment removed language in the bill found objectionable to these groups. Primarily, number one, it omits the statutorily prescribed standard for veterinary visitations and veterinary plans as a condition of licensure, and it retains the exemption of veterinary clinics under current law from being defined as boarding kennels subject to licensure. And number two, removing this provision eliminates the concerns felt by members of the veterinary community, as well as those in the Dog Breeders Association. Mr. President, colleagues, I would urge you to adopt AM2563. Thank you so much.

PRESIDENT SHEEHY: Thank you, Senator Mines. Senator Kremer.

SENATOR KREMER: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor. I'd like