

CHAPTER NO. 762

SENATE BILL NO. 2157

By Cohen, Person

Substituted for: House Bill No. 2583

By Briley, Kisber

AN ACT To amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 44, Chapter 17, relative to damages for injured or killed pets.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 44, Chapter 17, Part 4, is amended by adding the following as a new, appropriately designated section:

Section 44-17-4___. (a) If a person's pet is killed or sustains injuries which result in death caused by the unlawful and intentional, or negligent, act of another or the animal of another, the trier of fact may find the individual causing the death or the owner of the animal causing the death liable for up to four thousand dollars (\$4,000) in non-economic damages; provided that if such death is caused by the negligent act of another, the death or fatal injury must occur on the property of the deceased pet's owner or caretaker, or while under the control and supervision of the deceased pet's owner or caretaker.

(b) As used in this section, "pet" means any domesticated dog or cat normally maintained in or near the household of its owner;

(c) Limits for non-economic damages set out in subsection (a) shall not apply to causes of action for intentional infliction of emotional distress or any other civil action other than the direct and sole loss of a pet.

(d) Non-economic damages awarded pursuant to this section shall be limited to compensation for the loss of the reasonably expected society, companionship, love and affection of the pet.

(e) This section shall not apply to any not-for-profit entity or governmental agency, or their employees, negligently causing the death of a pet while acting on the behalf of public health or animal welfare; to any killing of a dog that has been or was killing or worrying livestock as in § 44-17-203; nor shall this section be construed to authorize any award of non-economic damages in an action for professional negligence against a licensed veterinarian.

(f) The provisions of this section shall apply only in incorporated areas of any county having a population in excess of seventy-five thousand (75,000) according to the 1990 federal census or any subsequent census.

SECTION 2. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "T-Bo Act".

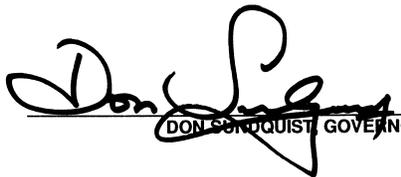
SECTION 3. If any provision of this act or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of the act which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to that end the provisions of this act are declared to be severable.

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it, and shall apply to any fatal injury sustained on or after the effective date of this act.

PASSED: May 10, 2000


JOHN S. WILDER
SPEAKER OF THE SENATE


JIMMY NAIFEH, SPEAKER
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES


DON SUNDQUIST, GOVERNOR