



OPPOSE HB917- An Act Relative to Dogs Brought into The Commonwealth by Animal Rescue Organizations - Rep. William C. Galvin (D)

Referred to the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture

What This Bill Does:

This bill adds a new Section 39B to GL Chapter 129 (Livestock disease control) to regulate animal rescue organizations “not otherwise required to be licensed”, which means not licensed as a pet shop under Chapter 129. Consistent with current regulations, it requires that a dog brought into the state be quarantined for not less than 48 hours, but gives the option of quarantine location to either: (1) a “quarantine facility licensed by the director”; or (2) the “residence of the permanent or temporary placement of the dog”. Requires, consistent with current law, examination of the dog after quarantine by a veterinarian who would issue a health certificate to cleared animals.

Importantly, it exempts from the quarantine requirement the voluntary permanent surrender of a dog to an animal rescue organization if the owner resides in Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island or Vermont and the owner provides transportation of the dog into the state.

Why You Should Oppose This Bill:

MassFed and the American Kennel Club have two primary concerns with this bill:

- (1) It would undercut the new DAR regulations adopted in March, 2020 which require animals imported be kept in quarantine or in an isolation room at a licensed quarantine facility. This bill would allow the animal/dog to be quarantined with a foster family instead. Very few of these private homes would be able to comply with the strict standards for care and cleanliness specified in these rules (copied here: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/330-cmr-30-animal-rescue-and-shelter-organization-regulations/download>)

We are sympathetic with the fact there are currently few licensed quarantine facilities in Massachusetts, and the cost is high per animal to keep them in these facilities for 48 hours. However, we believe the solution is to invest in more quarantine facilities--not to relax the requirements for quarantine.

- (2) It would exempt dogs surrendered from other New England states (which is consistent with the DAR regulations) from going through the quarantine process. Our primary concern is including Vermont. This state has no oversight of animal rescue or shelter organizations--importers have been bringing hundreds of dogs to VT for this reason, and making this DAR rule a law would likely increase the number of unhealthy dogs coming into MA without required quarantine and veterinarian examination.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Massachusetts Federation of Dog Clubs and Responsible Dog Owners

Mr. John W. Seeley, acjohn@aol.com, 978-456-8644

Mrs. Virginia Rowland; blackslate@aol.com; 978-424-1044

05/31/21

HOUSE No. 917

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

William C. Galvin

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to dogs brought into the Commonwealth by animal rescue organizations.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>William C. Galvin</i>	<i>6th Norfolk</i>	<i>1/29/2021</i>
<i>Jason M. Lewis</i>	<i>Fifth Middlesex</i>	<i>2/22/2021</i>
<i>Kate Lipper-Garabedian</i>	<i>32nd Middlesex</i>	<i>3/8/2021</i>

HOUSE No. 917

By Mr. Galvin of Canton, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 917) of William C. Galvin, Jason M. Lewis and Kate Lipper-Garabedian relative to dogs brought into the Commonwealth by animal rescue organizations. Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court
(2021-2022)**

An Act relative to dogs brought into the Commonwealth by animal rescue organizations.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 Chapter 129 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 39A the
2 following section:-

3 Section 39B. (a) As used in this section the following terms shall, unless the context
4 clearly requires otherwise, have the following meanings:

5 “Animal rescue organization”, an entity that is not otherwise required to be licensed
6 pursuant to sections 39, 39A or 45, or section 152A of chapter 94, and whose primary activity is
7 the placement of abandoned, displaced, unwanted, neglected or abused domestic animals,
8 including dogs; provided, that an animal rescue organization shall not obtain dogs from a breeder
9 or broker for payment or compensation; and provided, further that an animal rescue organization
10 shall be exempt from taxation under section 501(c)(3) of the federal Internal Revenue Code or
11 equivalent nonprofit designation under said Code.

12 “Dog”, a mammal of the species *Canis familiaris*

13 “Quarantine”, the confinement of a dog, for the purposes of: (1) observing if the dog
14 displays signs of contagious or infectious illness and (2) minimizing the risk of the dog spreading
15 such contagious or infectious illness to humans and other animals.

16 (b) A dog brought into the commonwealth by an animal rescue organization from another
17 state for the purpose of permanent physical placement shall quarantine for not less than 48 hours
18 upon entry to the commonwealth. The quarantine may occur in the: (1) residence of the
19 permanent or temporary placement of the dog or (2) in a quarantine facility licensed by the
20 director. After quarantine, a veterinarian shall examine the dog and issue a certificate of health if
21 the dog does not display signs of contagious or infectious illness.

22 This subsection shall not apply to the voluntary, permanent surrender of a dog to an
23 animal rescue organization in the commonwealth by an individual owner if the owner resides in
24 Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island or Vermont and the owner
25 provides transportation of the dog into the commonwealth.

26 (c) Any dog brought into the commonwealth shall be vaccinated for rabies, distemper,
27 parvovirus and leptospirosis. The director may require additional vaccination before a dog is
28 brought into the commonwealth.

29 (d) The director shall promulgate regulations to implement this section.