

House Bill 788

By: Representative Knox of the 24th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 1 of Chapter 11 of Title 4 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
2 relating to general provisions relative to animal protection, so as to provide for methods for
3 euthanasia of animals; to provide requirements for persons authorized to euthanize animals;
4 to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

6 **SECTION 1.**

7 Article 1 of Chapter 11 of Title 4 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
8 general provisions relative to animal protection, is amended by repealing Code Section
9 4-11-5.1, relating to euthanasia for dogs and cats by animal shelters or facilities operated for
10 the collection of stray, neglected, abandoned, or unwanted animals, and enacting a new Code
11 Section 4-11-5.1 to read as follows:

12 "4-11-5.1.

13 (a) The use of sodium pentobarbital or a derivative of it shall be the exclusive method for
14 euthanasia of dogs and cats by animal shelters or other facilities which are operated for the
15 collection and care of stray, neglected, abandoned, or unwanted animals. A lethal solution
16 shall be used as follows:

17 (1)(A) The preferred method of injection of all animals shall be intravenous injection
18 by hypodermic needle using venipuncture of a superficial vein. The lateral saphenous
19 vein should be used whenever possible on dogs, and the cephalic or femoral vein should
20 be used whenever possible on cats. Such method shall be used on all dogs and cats
21 except animals too small to allow the effective performance of a venipuncture or
22 animals in which superficial venous pressure is insufficient for effective venipuncture;

23 (B) If the method described in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph cannot be used,
24 injection may be intraperitoneal injection by hypodermic needle, injecting not less than
25 three times the recommended intravenous dosage into the abdominal cavity through the
26 mid-abdominal region. This method may be used upon dogs and cats only in animals

27 too small to allow the effective performance of a venipuncture or animals in which
28 superficial venous pressure is insufficient for effective venipuncture; and
29 (C) If the method described in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph cannot be used,
30 injection may be intracardial injection by hypodermic needle; provided, however, that
31 intracardial injection by thoracic cavity penetration shall only be used on anesthetized
32 unconscious or comatose animals that are too small to allow the effective performance
33 of a venipuncture or in which superficial venous pressure is insufficient for effective
34 venipuncture; or
35 (2) By oral ingestion of powdered sodium pentobarbital in capsules mixed with food,
36 with the animal remaining separated from other animals until dead.
37 (b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this Code section:
38 (1) Any substance which is clinically proven to be as humane as sodium pentobarbital
39 and which has been officially recognized as such by the American Veterinary Medical
40 Association as of the effective date of this subsection or by later rule or regulation of the
41 Commissioner may be used in lieu of sodium pentobarbital to perform euthanasia by
42 injection on dogs and cats, but succinylcholine chloride, curare, curariform mixtures, or
43 any substance which acts as a neuromuscular blocking agent shall not be used on a dog
44 or cat in lieu of sodium pentobarbital for euthanasia purposes; and
45 (2) Whenever an emergency situation exists in the field where an animal is suffering
46 irremediably, is severely diseased, or presents an immediate danger to humans or other
47 domestic animals, a law enforcement officer, veterinarian, or animal control officer may
48 humanely destroy such animal immediately.
49 (c) A chamber using commercially bottled carbon monoxide gas or a chamber which
50 causes a change in body oxygen by means of altering atmospheric pressure or which is
51 connected to an internal combustion engine and uses the engine exhaust for euthanasia
52 purposes shall not be permitted under any condition.
53 (d) A dog or cat may be tranquilized with an approved and humane substance before
54 euthanasia is performed.
55 (e) Euthanasia shall be performed by a licensed veterinarian or physician or a lay person
56 who is properly trained in the proper and humane use of a method of euthanasia; provided,
57 however, that any such lay person performing such euthanasia on or after 180 days after
58 the effective date of this Code section shall have successfully completed a euthanasia
59 technician certification course approved by the American Veterinary Medical Association
60 as of the effective date of this subsection or approved by later rule or regulation of the
61 Commissioner. Such lay person shall perform euthanasia under supervision of a licensed
62 veterinarian or physician; provided, however, that this shall not be construed so as to
63 require that a veterinarian or physician be present at the time euthanasia is performed.

64 (f) No dog or cat may be left unattended between the time euthanasia procedures are first
65 begun and the time death occurs, nor may its body be disposed of until death is confirmed
66 by a qualified person.

67 (g) The supervising veterinarian or physician shall be subject to all record-keeping
68 requirements and inspection requirements of the State Board of Pharmacy pertaining to
69 sodium pentobarbital and other drugs authorized under subsection (b) of this Code section
70 and may limit the quantity of possession of sodium pentobarbital and other drugs
71 authorized to ensure compliance with the provisions of this Code section."

72 **SECTION 2.**

73 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.