

SESSION OF 2026

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON HOUSE BILL NO. 2535

As Recommended by House Committee on
Judiciary

Brief*

HB 2535 would amend the criminal statute for cruelty to animals to exclude the actions of a person who catches a feral cat to provide vaccination, spaying, or neutering and returns the cat back to the location where the cat was caught after providing such care.

Excluded conduct under the bill would apply to:

- Knowingly abandoning a feral cat in any place without making provisions for its proper care; and
- Having physical custody of a feral cat and knowingly failing to provide such food, potable water, protection from the elements, opportunity for exercise, and other care as is needed for the health or well-being of the feral cat.

The bill would not exclude conduct such as killing, injuring, maiming, torturing, burning, mutilating, or other defined acts of cruelty against feral cats.

The bill defines a “feral cat” as a cat that has no apparent owner or identification and appears to be unsocialized to humans and unmanageable or otherwise demonstrates wild or undomesticated characteristics.

The bill would also make technical amendments.

*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at <https://klrd.gov/>

Background

The bill was introduced by the House Committee on Judiciary at the request of a representative of Kansas Pet Advocates.

House Committee on Judiciary

In the House committee hearing, **proponent** testimony was provided by representatives of Kansas Pet Advocates and Southeast Kansas Humane Society and a private citizen. The proponents generally stated the bill would help manage feral cat populations by allowing for trap-neuter-vaccinate-return programs to continue operating.

Written-only proponent testimony was provided by representatives of the City of Ulysses Police Department; Double 25 Animal Sanctuary; Humane Society of Greater Kansas City; Humane World for Animals; Kansas Animal Control Association; Kansas Chapter of Sierra Club; Leavenworth County Humane Society, Inc.; and Wichita Animal Action League.

No other testimony was provided.

Fiscal Information

According to the fiscal note prepared by the Division of the Budget on the bill, the Office of Judicial Administration indicates enactment of the bill would have a minimal fiscal effect that could be absorbed within existing resources.

The Kansas Department of Corrections and the Kansas Sentencing Commission indicate that enactment of the bill would not have a fiscal effect on the agencies. Any fiscal effect associated with the bill is not reflected in *The FY 2027 Governor's Budget Report*.

Animal cruelty; feral cat; neuter; spay; vaccinate