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3 HOUSE AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR HB244  
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8 SYNOPSIS: Under existing law, it is illegal to own,  
9 maintain, sell, or trade any canidae or felidae for  
10 which there is no USDA licensed rabies vaccine,  
11 under certain conditions.

12 This bill would further provide for the  
13 possession of certain canidae or felidae for which  
14 there is no USDA licensed rabies vaccine.

15 This bill would make it illegal to  
16 intentionally or knowingly possess, sell, transfer,  
17 or breed any living large felidae, wolf, or bear,  
18 with certain exceptions.

19 This bill would allow persons who lawfully  
20 possessed a large felidae, wolf, or bear prior to  
21 the effective date of this bill to keep the animal  
22 under certain conditions.

23 This bill would provide minimum caging  
24 requirements for any large felidae, wolf, or bear,  
25 under certain conditions.

26 This bill would provide penalties for  
27 violations.

1                   Amendment 621 of the Constitution of Alabama  
2                   of 1901, now appearing as Section 111.05 of the  
3                   Official Recompilation of the Constitution of  
4                   Alabama of 1901, as amended, prohibits a general  
5                   law whose purpose or effect would be to require a  
6                   new or increased expenditure of local funds from  
7                   becoming effective with regard to a local  
8                   governmental entity without enactment by a 2/3 vote  
9                   unless: it comes within one of a number of  
10                  specified exceptions; it is approved by the  
11                  affected entity; or the Legislature appropriates  
12                  funds, or provides a local source of revenue, to  
13                  the entity for the purpose.

14                  The purpose or effect of this bill would be  
15                  to require a new or increased expenditure of local  
16                  funds within the meaning of the amendment. However,  
17                  the bill does not require approval of a local  
18                  governmental entity or enactment by a 2/3 vote to  
19                  become effective because it comes within one of the  
20                  specified exceptions contained in the amendment.

21  
22                                   A BILL  
23                                   TO BE ENTITLED  
24                                   AN ACT

25  
26                   Relating to animals; to amend Section 3-8-1, Code of  
27                   Alabama 1975, relating to required rabies vaccines for canidae

1 or felidae; to further provide for the possession of certain  
2 canidae or felidae; to add Section 3-8-2 to the Code of  
3 Alabama 1975, to make it illegal, with certain exceptions, to  
4 intentionally or knowingly possess, sell, transfer, or breed  
5 any living large felidae, as defined, wolf, with exceptions,  
6 or bear, with exceptions; to allow persons who already  
7 lawfully possess a large felidae, wolf, or bear to keep the  
8 animal under certain conditions; to provide minimum caging  
9 requirements under certain conditions; to provide penalties;  
10 and in connection therewith to have as its purpose or effect  
11 the requirement of a new or increased expenditure of local  
12 funds within the meaning of Amendment 621 of the Constitution  
13 of Alabama of 1901, now appearing as Section 111.05 of the  
14 Official Recompilation of the Constitution of Alabama of 1901,  
15 as amended.

16 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

17 Section 1. Section 3-8-1, Code of Alabama 1975, is  
18 amended to read as follows:

19 "§3-8-1.

20 "Notwithstanding any ~~provision of~~ law to the  
21 contrary, it shall be illegal to own, maintain, sell, or trade  
22 any canidae or felidae for which there is no USDA licensed  
23 rabies vaccine. Anyone currently owning or maintaining such an  
24 animal may keep the animal for the length of the animal's life  
25 ~~providing the animal is spayed or neutered and is registered~~  
26 ~~with the Department of Agriculture and Industries.~~ This  
27 section does not apply to any zoological parks, circuses,

1 colleges, and universities, animal refuges approved by the  
2 Department of Agriculture and Industries, county or municipal  
3 humane shelters, the Department of Conservation and Natural  
4 Resources, or veterinary clinics."

5 Section 2. Section 3-8-2 is added to the Code of  
6 Alabama 1975, to read as follows:

7 §3-8-2.

8 (a) For the purposes of this section, the following  
9 terms shall have the following meanings:

10 (1) BEAR. All species of bears, including hybrids  
11 thereof, except American black bears (*Ursus americanus*), that  
12 were not bred in captivity.

13 (2) LARGE FELIDAE. A tiger, lion, leopard, snow  
14 leopard, clouded leopard, jaguar, cheetah, or cougar. The term  
15 includes a hybrid large felidae.

16 (3) WOLF. The term does not include a hybrid wolf.

17 (b) Notwithstanding Section 3-8-1, or any other law  
18 to the contrary, unless exempted by subsection (c) or (d), it  
19 is unlawful to intentionally or knowingly possess, sell,  
20 transfer, or breed any living large felidae, wolf, or bear.

21 (c) Subsection (b) does not apply to any of the  
22 following:

23 (1) A Class C exhibitor licensed by the United  
24 States Department of Agriculture (USDA), including, but not  
25 limited to, zoological parks and circuses, provided that the  
26 licensed exhibitor meets all of the following criteria:

1           a. Not have been, nor knowingly employ any person  
2 who has been, convicted of or fined for an offense involving  
3 the abuse or neglect of any animal pursuant to any state,  
4 local, or federal law and who has direct access to animals  
5 owned by the licensee.

6           b. Displays the most recent annual USDA inspection  
7 report in a prominent place on site, publishes the most recent  
8 annual report on its website, and makes the most recent annual  
9 report available upon request.

10          c. Maintains liability insurance for each occurrence  
11 of property damage, bodily injury, or death caused by any  
12 large felidae, wolf, or bear owned or possessed by the person.

13          d. Maintains a current animal inventory, has a  
14 written plan for the quick and safe recapture or destruction  
15 of animals in the event of an escape, including, but not  
16 limited to, written protocols for training staff on methods of  
17 safe recapture of the escaped animal, has a disaster plan, and  
18 makes all of this information available to law enforcement  
19 upon request.

20                 (2) A research facility, as defined in the Animal  
21 Welfare Act, 7 U.S.C. Section 2132(e).

22                 (3) A nonprofit wildlife sanctuary that meets all of  
23 the following criteria:

24                 a. Operates a place of refuge where abused,  
25 neglected, unwanted, impounded, abandoned, orphaned, or  
26 displaced animals are provided care for the lifetime of the  
27 animal.

1           b. Does not conduct any commercial activity with  
2 respect to large felidaes, wolves, or bears including, but not  
3 limited to, the sale, trade, auction, lease, or loan of large  
4 felidaes, wolves, or bears or parts of large felidaes, wolves,  
5 or bears, or uses large felidaes, wolves, or bears in any  
6 manner in a for-profit business or operation.

7           c. Does not allow direct contact between the public  
8 and large felidaes, wolves, or bears.

9           d. Does not use large felidaes, wolves, or bears for  
10 entertainment purposes or in a traveling exhibit.

11           e. Does not breed, accidentally or otherwise, large  
12 felidaes, wolves, or bears.

13           (4) A duly incorporated nonprofit animal protection  
14 organization, such as a humane society or shelter, temporarily  
15 housing a large felidae, wolf, or bear at the written request  
16 of law enforcement, including any county sheriff, police  
17 officer, animal control agent appointed pursuant to Section  
18 3-1-13 or 13A-11-242, or any warden deputized pursuant to  
19 Section 9-11-5, acting under the authority of this section.

20           (5) A licensed veterinary hospital, for the purpose  
21 of providing treatment to a large felidae, wolf, or bear.

22           (6) A law enforcement officer, as described in  
23 subdivision (4) of subsection (c), for purposes of  
24 enforcement.

25           (7) A motion picture or television production  
26 company employing or contracting with a dealer or exhibitor  
27 licensed under the Animal Welfare Act, 7 U.S.C. Section 2133,

1 or with a carrier or intermediate handler registered under the  
2 Animal Welfare Act, 7 U.S.C. Section 2136, for the  
3 transportation, exhibition, or use of dangerous animals in its  
4 motion picture or television production.

5 (d) Subsection (b) does not apply to a person who  
6 unlawfully possesses a large felidae, wolf, or bear prior to  
7 the effective date of the act adding this section, if the  
8 person meets all of the following criteria:

9 (1) Maintains veterinary records, acquisition  
10 papers, or other documents or records that the person or  
11 entity possessed the animal prior to the effective date of the  
12 act adding this section.

13 (2) Has not acquired additional large felidae,  
14 wolves, or bears after the effective date of the act adding  
15 this section, whether by purchase, donation, or breeding.

16 (3) Has not been convicted of an offense involving  
17 the abuse or neglect of any animal pursuant to local, state,  
18 or federal law.

19 (4) Has not had a license or permit regarding the  
20 care, possession, exhibition, breeding, or sale of animals  
21 revoked or suspended by any local, state, or federal agency.

22 (5) Has developed and is prepared to implement an  
23 escape and disaster plan, maintains a current animal inventory  
24 list, and makes the plans and list available to law  
25 enforcement, upon request.

26 (6) Has shown to his or her local law enforcement  
27 agency proof of liability insurance for each occurrence of

1 property damage, bodily injury, or death caused by any  
2 dangerous wild animal possessed by the person. For the  
3 purposes of this subdivision, the term local law enforcement  
4 agency means the municipal police department, if a  
5 municipality has a police department, or the county sheriff's  
6 office in all other cases.

7 (7) At least 72 hours prior to the sale or  
8 relocation of an existing large felidae, wolf, or bear, the  
9 person has notified local law enforcement, identifying the  
10 recipient of the animal. At all times, possession, sale,  
11 transfer, and transport of a large felidae, wolf, or bear  
12 shall conform with all applicable local, state, and federal  
13 laws.

14 (8) Obtains a surety bond of at least one million  
15 dollars (\$1,000,000) providing coverage for property damage,  
16 bodily injury, or death caused by any large felidae, wolf, or  
17 bear owned or possessed by the person.

18 (9) The person owning an existing large felidae,  
19 wolf, or bear complies with the following minimum caging  
20 standards within one year of the effective date of the act  
21 adding this section:

22 a. For all large felidae, wolves, and bears, all of  
23 the following shall be required:

24 1. The caging facility shall have a buffer zone of  
25 not less than 35 feet between the caging and the person's  
26 property line.



1           2. The caging shall be bounded by a perimeter fence  
2 of not less than eight feet in height, constructed of not less  
3 than 11 and one-half gauge chain link or equivalent strength  
4 material, and a minimum of three feet from cages holding  
5 animals, or other fencing, buildings, or other protection of  
6 the enclosure where the animal is kept, sufficiently to deter  
7 entry by the public, and also to prevent the escape from the  
8 property of any animal that may escape the primary caging. All  
9 gates to the perimeter fence shall be locked.

10           3. All cages and enclosures shall be locked. Animals  
11 may not be kept in uncovered enclosures that are less than  
12 1,000 square feet, except as specified by this section.

13           4. All cages shall be constructed with a den, nest  
14 box, or other connected housing unit that can be closed off  
15 and locked with the animal inside for the safe servicing and  
16 cleaning of the open area. In lieu of a nest box, a divided  
17 cage with a divided door between the two compartments may be  
18 used. No entry into cages containing large felidae, wolves, or  
19 bears shall be allowed without first locking the animal into  
20 the den, nest box, or other housing.

21           5. All cages shall be constructed of chain link or  
22 equivalent materials and shall be well braced and securely  
23 anchored at or below ground level to prevent the escape of the  
24 animal by digging or erosion. Cages shall be constructed using  
25 steel clamps, steel ties, or steel braces of equivalent  
26 strength as the material required for cage construction.

1                   b. For large felidae, all of the following shall be  
2 required:

3                   1. For one to two large felidae, the cage shall be  
4 not less than 480 square feet and not less than eight feet  
5 high.

6                   2. Uncovered outdoor cages for lions and tigers  
7 shall be more than 1,000 square feet, shall have vertical jump  
8 walls of at least 10 feet high, with a two feet, 45 degree,  
9 inward angle overhang, or jump walls of at least 12 feet high  
10 without an overhang. Vertical walls shall be constructed with  
11 a minimum of nine gauge chain link or equivalent strength  
12 material. The inward angle fencing shall be constructed with a  
13 minimum 11 and one-half gauge chain link or equivalent  
14 strength material.

15                   3. Leopards, cougars, and jaguars may not be kept in  
16 uncovered enclosures. Cages containing leopards and jaguars  
17 shall be constructed with a minimum of nine gauge chain link  
18 or equivalent strength material. Cages containing cougars  
19 shall be constructed with a minimum of 11 and one-half gauge  
20 chain link or equivalent strength material.

21                   4. Tigers shall have a four feet by six feet pool,  
22 two feet deep, or a 100 gallon tub or larger for each tiger in  
23 the enclosure.

24                   c. For bears, all of the following shall be  
25 required:

26                   1. Uncovered outdoor cages for bears shall be more  
27 than 1,000 square feet, shall have vertical jump walls of at

1 least 10 feet high with a four feet, 45 degree inward angle  
2 overhang. Vertical walls shall be constructed with a minimum  
3 of nine gauge chain link or equivalent strength material.  
4 Inward angle overhang shall be constructed of 11 and one-half  
5 gauge chain link or equivalent strength material.

6 2. All cages for bears shall be furnished with den  
7 boxes, elevated platforms that will accommodate all bears  
8 simultaneously, devices to provide stimulation or manipulation  
9 compatible with the species, including, but not limited to,  
10 boxes, balls, barrels, drums, and foraging items, and several  
11 logs for clawing or climbing.

12 3. Bears shall have a four feet by six feet pool,  
13 two feet deep, or a 100 gallon tub or larger for each bear in  
14 the enclosure.

15 d. For wolves, all of the following shall be  
16 required:

17 1. For one to two wolves, the cage shall be not less  
18 than 288 square feet and not less than eight feet high with  
19 concrete flooring or buried wire mesh to prevent escaping by  
20 digging.

21 2. Uncovered outdoor cages for wolves shall be over  
22 1,000 square feet, shall have vertical jump walls of at least  
23 eight feet high with a 45 degree inward angle overhang that is  
24 two feet wide, or jump walls of at least 10 feet high without  
25 an overhang. Vertical walls shall be constructed with a  
26 minimum of 11 and one-half gauge chain link or equivalent  
27 strength material.

1           3. All cages for wolves shall contain den boxes and  
2 elevated platforms that will accommodate all of the wolves in  
3 the enclosure simultaneously, several logs, protected shelf  
4 areas at no more than one foot above ground level, gnawing  
5 items, including, but not limited to, tree branches, boxes,  
6 balls, bones, barrels, drums, and rawhide, and pools.

7           (e) This section is in addition to, and not in lieu  
8 of, any other laws protecting animal welfare. This section is  
9 not intended, and may not be construed, to limit any other  
10 state law or rule protecting the welfare of animals. Nothing  
11 in this section shall be construed to prohibit a local  
12 governing body from adopting or enforcing any rule or law that  
13 places further restrictions or additional requirements on the  
14 possession, sale, transfer, or breeding of large felidae,  
15 wolves, or bears.

16           (f) Any law enforcement officer, as described in  
17 subdivision (4) of subsection (c), with or without a warrant,  
18 may arrest any person who violates this section in his or her  
19 presence or view and may execute any warrant or other process  
20 issued by any officer or court of competent jurisdiction, and  
21 with a search warrant or as incident to a lawful arrest, may  
22 search for and seize any large felidae, wolf, or bear  
23 possessed in violation of this section or any rules issued  
24 pursuant to this section.

25           (g) A violation of subsection (b) is a Class A  
26 misdemeanor.

1                   Section 3. Although this bill would have as its  
2 purpose or effect the requirement of a new or increased  
3 expenditure of local funds, the bill is excluded from further  
4 requirements and application under Amendment 621, now  
5 appearing as Section 111.05 of the Official Recompilation of  
6 the Constitution of Alabama of 1901, as amended, because the  
7 bill defines a new crime or amends the definition of an  
8 existing crime.

9                   Section 4. This act shall become effective on the  
10 first day of the third month following its passage and  
11 approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.