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AN ACT

RELATING TO ANIMALS; CREATING THE ANIMAL WELFARE PROGRAM TO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR PROJECTS THAT SUPPORT THE WELFARE OF DOMESTIC CATS AND DOGS; CREATING THE ANIMAL WELFARE PROGRAM FUND.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. ANIMAL WELFARE PROGRAM.--

A. The "animal welfare program" is created to provide funding for projects that support the welfare of domestic cats and dogs as provided in this section. Beginning July 1, 2025, the department may award a grant to a municipality or county or an Indian nation, tribe or pueblo, or contract for services with an eligible entity, for a project to repair, renovate or operate an animal shelter, provided that a grant to repair or renovate shall only be for publicly owned facilities, and to purchase equipment and supplies or provide services for:

(1) controlling loose or stray cats and dogs to mitigate threats to public safety, livestock or other domestic animals;

(2) improving the enforcement of animal cruelty laws, including investigation and response to reports of animal cruelty;

(3) reducing animal shelter intake and

1 euthanasia rates or expanding animal shelter building
2 facility capacity;

3 (4) providing spay and neuter services;

4 (5) providing shelter and care for cats and
5 dogs seized by law enforcement that are suspected of being
6 cruelly treated in violation of local, state or federal laws;
7 or

8 (6) developing, publishing or distributing
9 animal welfare education and outreach materials to the
10 public.

11 B. To receive a grant or contract for services, an
12 applicant shall apply to the department on forms and in a
13 manner prescribed by the department. An application shall
14 include:

15 (1) a description of the proposed project;

16 (2) a demonstration that the proposed
17 project will meet one or more of the purposes provided in
18 Subsection A of this section; and

19 (3) details and specifics as to the
20 reasonable expected costs and completion date of the proposed
21 project.

22 C. The department shall determine, through a
23 competitive review process pursuant to rules promulgated by
24 the department, which proposed projects are approved to
25 receive a grant or contract for services. The department may

1 adjust the amount of money requested for a proposed project
2 based on its determination of the reasonable costs of the
3 proposal. Once the projects are approved, the department
4 shall promptly offer each applicant a grant or contract for
5 services, as appropriate. If a grantee or contractor accepts
6 an offer, the project may commence and the grantee or
7 contractor shall report to the department on the progress of
8 the project on a periodic basis, as determined by the
9 department, including an accounting of expenditures made for
10 the project. Funds allocated to an approved project shall be
11 spent within two years of receiving a grant or contract for
12 services, and if any unexpended or unencumbered balance
13 remains at the end of the project period, the applicant shall
14 immediately return that balance to the department. The
15 department shall deposit returned amounts in the animal
16 welfare program fund.

17 D. The department shall promulgate rules to
18 administer the animal welfare program. The rules shall
19 include provisions to:

20 (1) establish procedures for review,
21 evaluation and approval of proposed project applications;

22 (2) accord priority attention to areas with
23 the greatest need for animal welfare projects; and

24 (3) evaluate the ability and competence of
25 an applicant to provide efficiently and adequately for the

1 completion of a proposed project.

2 E. On October 1 of each year, the department shall
3 submit a report to the legislative finance committee on the
4 animal welfare program that shall include:

5 (1) for each funded project:

6 (a) a description of the project;

7 (b) the name of the grantee or
8 contractor;

9 (c) how much funding the project
10 received;

11 (d) the progress or completion of the
12 project; and

13 (e) how the project supports animal
14 welfare;

15 (2) the number and proposed costs of
16 proposed projects that were approved for but did not receive
17 funding due to the insufficiency of available funds for the
18 animal welfare program; and

19 (3) the total amount of administrative costs
20 incurred by the department to administer the program.

21 F. As used in this section:

22 (1) "department" means the department of
23 finance and administration;

24 (2) "eligible entity" means a nonprofit
25 organization whose primary purpose is to provide services

1 that support the welfare of domestic cats and dogs; and

2 (3) "equipment and supplies" means vehicles,
3 equipment and tools, computer hardware and software, training
4 materials and supplies that are necessary and directly
5 related to providing support for animal welfare.

6 SECTION 2. ANIMAL WELFARE PROGRAM FUND.--The "animal
7 welfare program fund" is created as a nonreverting fund in the
8 state treasury. The fund consists of appropriations, gifts,
9 grants and donations. The department of finance and
10 administration shall administer the fund, and money in the
11 fund is appropriated to the department to administer the
12 animal welfare program. Expenditures from the fund shall be
13 by warrant of the secretary of finance and administration
14 pursuant to vouchers signed by the secretary of finance and
15 administration or the secretary's authorized representative. ==

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