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LC00546/SUB A/2
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2012

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A N A C T

RELATING TO ANIMALS AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY - ANIMAL ADVOCATE

Introduced By: Representatives Petrarca, Winfield, Keable, and Azzinaro

Date Introduced: January 17, 2012

Referred To: House Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 4-1-31 of the General Laws in Chapter 4-1 entitled "Cruelty to
2 Animals" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **4-1-31. Assignment of state veterinarian.** -- (a) Examination of fighting animals. - A
4 licensed veterinarian from the department of environmental management, shall be made available
5 to agents of the Rhode Island society for the prevention of cruelty to animals at the request of the
6 state police for the purpose of examining any animal which those agents believe to have been
7 involved in animal fighting in violation of section 4-1-2, 4-1-8, 4-1-9 or 4-1-11.

8 (b) Right of entry where cruelty suspected. - The director of the department of
9 environmental management or any veterinarian employed by the department of environmental
10 management designated by the director for such purpose, having reason to suspect the existence
11 of cruelty to animals within the meaning of this chapter upon any grounds or premises, is hereby
12 authorized and empowered to enter upon those grounds or premises for enforcement of the
13 provisions of this chapter. For such inspections, the department shall, unless a search without a
14 warrant is otherwise allowed by law, seek a search warrant from an official of a court authorized
15 to issue warrants.

16 (c) The director of the department of environmental management may designate a
17 department veterinarian or veterinarians to act as animal advocates. A general agent or special
18 agent from the Rhode Island society for the prevention of cruelty to animals may also act in that
19 capacity.

1 (d) The animal advocate shall make recommendations to any court before which the
2 custody or well-being of an animal is at issue.

3 (e) Any animal care facility licensed by the United States department of agriculture or
4 holding a public health service (PHS) assurance of compliance shall be exempt from the
5 provisions of this section.

6 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

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1 This act would allow state DEM veterinarians and/or a general or special agent from the
2 Rhode Island SPCA to act as advocates for animals which are the subject of court actions.

3 This act would also exempt animal care facilities licensed by the United States
4 department of agriculture or holding a public health service assurance of compliance from the
5 provisions of this section.

6 This act would take effect upon passage.

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