

SUBJECT: Requiring housing authority policies to comply with certain restrictions

COMMITTEE: County Affairs — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 8 ayes — Coleman, Stucky, Anderson, Cason, Longoria, Spiller, Stephenson, J. Turner

0 nays

1 absent — Lopez

WITNESSES: For — Laura Donahue, Best Friends Animal Society; Donna Holguin; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Sabrina Brown, American Kennel Club; Guadalupe Cuellar, City of El Paso; Jamaal Smith, City of Houston, Office of the Mayor Sylvester Turner; Nate Walker, Texas Housers; R. Clint Smith, Texas Pets Alive; Lauren Loney, The Humane Society of the United States; Gary Loney)

Against — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Michael Roth, Housing Authority of the City of Austin and TX NAHRO)

BACKGROUND: Health and Safety Code ch. 822, subch. D governs dangerous dogs. Under Health and Safety Code sec. 822.047, a county or municipality may place additional requirements or restrictions on dangerous dogs if the requirements or restrictions are not specific to one breed or several breeds of dogs and are more stringent than restrictions otherwise provided in the subchapter.

Concerns have been raised regarding the inequitable application of pet policies in public housing authorities, which currently may be inconsistent with state law and frequently vague in their breed identification policy.

DIGEST: HB 3789 would require any housing authority policy that permitted tenant ownership of a pet to comply with all applicable county or municipal restrictions on dangerous dogs under Health and Safety Code, sec. 822.047.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2021.