

Date: 01/21/2026

Senate Health and Human Services Committee

Bill: S.B. 115 1st substitute - Child and Animal Abuse Cross-reporting Amendments

Sponsor: Senator Plumb

Floor Sponsor:

UASD Position: Track

This Bill: This Bill addresses cross-reporting between instances of child abuse and animal abuse.

Discussion: The sponsor presented the 1st substitute, which was adopted by the Committee. The substitute language provides clarifications requested by the Division of Children and Family Services (“DCFS”) and the Department of Health and Human Services (“DHHS”). One clarification included in the substitute language allows a local authority to engage with animal control through a memorandum of understanding (“MOU”). The Bill requires courts to report information regarding certain animal abuse convictions to DCFS. The intent is for DCSF to have information on all animal abuse convictions in its database to help inform case workers when working on reported child abuse cases. The 1st substitute SB 115 allows, but does not require, a local animal control authority and a local DCFS office to establish a collaboration agreement, clarifies that a DCFS caseworker may report instances of potential animal abuse or neglect, and prohibits an employer from preventing or retaliating against a veterinarian for reporting suspected animal cruelty. Senator Stratton asked about available data related to animal abuse convictions and reports of animal abuse. The Humane Society of Utah and the Utah Animal Control Officers Association spoke in support of the Bill.

Yea: 5

Nay: 0

N/V: 2

Outcome: 1st substitute SB 115 passed out of the Committee with a favorable recommendation.

Bill: S.B. 102 - Animal Control First Responder Amendments

Sponsor: Senator Plumb

Floor Sponsor:

UASD Position: Track

This Bill amends provisions related to animal control officers.

Discussion: The sponsor stated that this Bill classifies animal control officers as first responders in certain instances. The intent is to help ensure they have access to certain grant opportunities, training, mental health support, and proper equipment. The aim of this Bill is to improve clarity regarding roles and to enhance interagency communication and coordination. Senator Stratton asked about specific training that may be required for animal control officers if this Bill were to pass. The Bill does not impose any additional training requirements but does allow for the possibility of increased training at the local level if desired. Salt Lake County Animal Services,

the Humane Society of Utah, and the Utah Animal Control Officers Association spoke in support of the Bill.

Yea: 5

Nay: 0

N/V: 2

Outcome: SB 102 passed out of the Committee with a favorable recommendation.