



Ohio Legislative Service Commission

Bill Analysis

Amanda George

H.B. 569

130th General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Reps. Sears and Wachtmann, Beck, Blessing, Derickson, DeVitis, Hall, Mallory

BILL SUMMARY

- Establishes that knowingly conducting any of specified activities in conjunction with knowingly engaging in cockfighting, bearbaiting, or pitting an animal against another or knowingly using, training, or possessing any animal for seizing, detaining, or maltreating a domestic animal is a felony.
- Makes knowingly aiding and abetting such animal fights a felony.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

The bill revises Ohio's prohibitions against cockfighting, bearbaiting, and pitting an animal against another and the associated penalties. Current law prohibits a person from doing any of the following:

- (1) Knowingly engaging in or being employed at cockfighting, bearbaiting, or pitting an animal against another;
- (2) Receiving money for the admission of another to a place kept for such a purpose; and
- (3) Using, training, or possessing any animal for seizing, detaining, or maltreating a domestic animal.

Any person who knowingly purchases a ticket of admission to such a place, is present at such a place, or witnesses such a spectacle is an aider and abettor.¹ Violation of any of those prohibitions is a fourth degree misdemeanor.²

¹ R.C. 959.15.

² R.C. 959.99(C).

The bill generally retains the first and third prohibitions and the associated penalty, but removes employment from the first prohibition and establishes a culpable mental state of knowing for the third prohibition. It then establishes a list of prohibited activities, including the existing second prohibition, that, if knowingly conducted while committing a violation of the first or third prohibition, are felonies. It also revises the specification of who is considered an aider and abettor and the penalty for aiding and abetting.

Specifically, the bill prohibits anyone, when knowingly engaging in cockfighting, bearbaiting, or pitting an animal against another or knowingly using, training, or possessing any animal for seizing, detaining, or mistreating a domestic animal, from knowingly doing either of the following:

(1) Being employed at cockfighting, bearbaiting, or pitting an animal against another; or

(2) Doing any of the following regarding an event involving cockfighting, bearbaiting, or pitting an animal against another:

--Wagering money or anything else of value on the results of the event;

--Paying money or giving anything else of value in exchange for admission to or being present at the event;

--Receiving money or anything else of value in exchange for the admission of another person to the event or for another person to be present at the event;

--Permitting or causing a minor to be present at the event if any person present at or involved with it is conducting any of the prohibited activities; or

--Using, possessing, or permitting or causing to be present any device or substance intended to enhance an animal's ability to fight or to inflict injury on another animal.³

Under the bill, anyone who knowingly witnesses cockfighting, bearbaiting, or an event in which one animal is pitted against another in violation of the above prohibited activities is an aider and abettor and has committed a violation of the aiding and

³ R.C. 959.15(B).

abetting provision.⁴ Violation of any of the above prohibitions is a felony, and a violator must be fined not more than \$10,000.⁵

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE
Introduced	05-27-14

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⁴ R.C. 959.15(C).

⁵ R.C. 959.99(I).

