

THE STATE OF TEXAS §

COUNTY OF FORT BEND §

Resolution In Support of Animal Welfare

WHEREAS, Texas has the highest rate of vehicular heat strong in the country, claiming the lives of 107 children from 1998 to 2016; and

WHEREAS, on 90 degree days, temperatures inside a car with the windows rolled up can reach 116 degrees in fewer than 10 minutes; and

WHEREAS, current law stipulates a Class C Misdemeanor to leave a child under seven alone in a car more than five minutes; and,

WHEREAS, the Texas Legislature passed HB 810 providing civil immunity to people who break into vehicles to rescue children in harm's way; and,

WHEREAS, current state law leaves "Good Samaritans" open to a civil suit for property damage if they act quickly to rescue domestic animals trapped in hot cars.

WHEREAS, Fort Bend County animal control and cruelty officers receive calls from citizens concerned about dogs being tethered by cruel and inhumane means causing neglect, abuse, and severe malnourishment requiring significant medical attention; and,

WHEREAS, the clauses of SB-295/HB-940 lack clarity about the rules regarding dog restraining

WHEREAS, during the first 10 months of 2020, Fort Bend County received 224 calls reporting animal cruelty; and,

WHEREAS, pet leasing is an unethical concept using companion animals as commodities to enact financial schemes

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF FORT BEND COUNTY, TEXAS, THAT:

This 15th day of December 2020, the **Fort Bend County Commissioners Court**, meeting as a body in Richmond, Texas:

1. Supports efforts to remove civil liability from Good Samaritans for rescuing a domestic companion animal on a hot day if they reasonably determine the vehicle is locked or there is no reasonable option for the animal to exist the vehicle without assistance to avoid imminent harm to the animal but only after notifying law enforcement or first responders.
2. Supports efforts to modify existing laws against dog restraining by removing the allowed limit on tethering, pushing for adequate shelters with access to water & right temperatures, and the prohibition of using chains with exceptions when the animal may be left unattended such as when the owner is camping, fishing, etc
3. Supports the prohibition of companion pet leasing including similar bills to SB 361 (Huffman)/HB 1097 (not including livestock, legislation limited to companion animals only).
4. Supports the creation of grant funding opportunities for anti-animal cruelty efforts for local law enforcement

SIGNED, THIS 15th DAY OF DECEMBER 2020.

County Judge KP George

Commissioner Vincent Morales, Precinct 1

Commissioner Grady Prestage, Precinct 2

Commissioner Andy Meyers, Precinct 3

Commissioner Ken DeMerchant, Precinct 4

ATTEST:

Laura Richard, County Clerk