

Resolution In Support of Animal Welfare

WHEREAS, Texas has the highest rate of vehicular heat stroke”) 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 85R HB 478 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; and

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 from previous sessions lack clarity about the rules regarding dog restraining, and

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, and

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 exit the vehicle without assistance to avoid imminent harm to the animal but only after notifying law enforcement or first responders; and
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 and correct 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...; and
3. Supports the prohibition of companion pet leasing, including similar bills to SB 361 (Huffman)/HB 1097 of the 85th and 86th Legislative Session (not including livestock, legislation limited to companion animals only), and Supports the creation of state grant funding opportunities for anti-animal cruelty efforts for local law enforcement

SIGNED, THIS 15th DAY OF DECEMBER 2020.

KP George
County Judge KP George

County Judge KP George

ATTEST:



Laura Richard

Laura Richard, County Clerk