

Bill Seeks Euthanasia Change in N.C.

Davie's Law would mandate euthanasia by injection for shelter animals.

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A shelter puppy that survived a gas chamber and was later discovered alive in a Davie County dumpster inspired a bill that would put a stop to the use of gas chambers to euthanize dogs and cats in North Carolina shelters.

Davie's Law, or the Humane Euthanasia in Shelters Act, calls for euthanasia by injection or an oral ingestion of sodium pentobarbital, or the equivalent of sodium pentobarbital as approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration or the American Veterinary Medical Association. The bill was introduced by state Rep. Cary Allred and Sen. David Hoyle.

The bill's endorsers include the North Carolina Coalition for Humane Euthanasia and American Humane Association. American Humane commissioned a study on the costs associated with euthanasia by injection and by gas. According to data from a North Carolina animal sheltering organization, the number of dogs and cats euthanized in 2007 was 5,427.

The study found that the cost to use carbon monoxide poisoning is \$4.98 per animal or \$4.66 per animal when no tranquilizer is used. The cost to use euthanasia by injection is \$2.29 per animal.

Thirty-two shelters in North Carolina use gas as a means of euthanizing impounded animals. If passed, the bill becomes effective Jan. 1, 2011.