

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2020 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 4023

BY DELEGATE HOWELL

BY REQUEST

[Introduced January 08, 2020; Referred to the Committee
on Political Subdivisions then Finance]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new section,
2 designated §19-20-2a, relating to allowing county commissions to require the registration
3 of cats; and removing head tax on dogs when registration of cats is required.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 20. DOGS AND CATS.

§19-20-2a. Registration of cats.

1 (a) The county commission of a county may require that cats owned, kept, or harbored in
2 the county be registered. If the county commission imposes the requirement, the provisions of
3 this section control notwithstanding any other provision of this code.

4 (b)(1) At the same time as the assessor is making assessment of the personal property
5 within the county the assessor shall require the owner, keeper or harborer of every cat to register
6 the cat with the assessor, on forms prescribed under §19-20-4 of this code, and provide the age,
7 sex, color, character of hair (long or short) and breed (if known) and the name and address of the
8 owner, keeper or harborer. When the registration is complete the assessor shall issue a certificate
9 of registration and a registration tag for the cat.

10 (2) Whenever a cat either is acquired or becomes six months of age after the assessment
11 of the personal property of the owner, keeper or harborer thereof, the owner, keeper or harborer
12 of the cat shall, within 10 days after the acquisition or maturation, register the cat with the
13 assessor.

14 (c) All certificates of registration and registration tags issued pursuant to the provisions of
15 this section shall be issued for the fiscal year and are valid from the date on which issued until
16 June 30 of that fiscal year, or until reissued by the assessor or his or her deputy in the regular
17 performance of his or her duties, but in no case shall previous registration tags be valid after
18 September thirtieth of the next ensuing fiscal year.

19 (d) Every cat shall at all times wear a valid registration tag issued as provided in this
20 section. The failure to have displayed or worn on any cat, at any time, a valid tag is prima facie

21 evidence that the cat is not registered and the cat shall be, impounded, sold, or destroyed using
22 the procedures provided in this article for unregistered dogs.

23 (e) If the county commission of a county elects to require the registration of cats under this
24 section any head tax imposed by the state on dogs is no longer required to be paid for dogs in
25 the county.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to allow county commissions to change pet registration.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.