

HOUSE BILL NO. 335

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVE EISCHEID

Introduced: 2/23/26

Referred: Labor and Commerce, Finance

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to veterinarians and veterinarian technicians; establishing a pet and**
2 **service animal disaster emergency plan; relating to the Alaska State Emergency**
3 **Response Commission; and relating to local emergency planning committees."**

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

5 * **Section 1.** AS 08.98.125 is amended to read:

6 **Sec. 08.98.125. Exemptions.** This chapter does not apply to the following:

7 (1) a veterinary medical officer in the military service in the discharge
8 of official duties or as an employee in the federal or state government performing
9 veterinary medical services within the scope of the person's official duties;

10 (2) a veterinarian who is licensed in another state or country, or a
11 person whose expertise a veterinarian licensed in this state believes would benefit an
12 animal, and who provides only consultation to a veterinarian licensed in this state; in
13 this paragraph, "consultation" means advice or assistance provided in person,
14 telephonically, electronically, or by any other method of communication from a

1 veterinarian or other person whose expertise, in the opinion of the veterinarian, would
2 benefit the animal; [AND]

3 (3) a veterinarian licensed and residing in another state who provides
4 assistance, as requested by and under the supervision of a veterinarian licensed in this
5 state, for the purpose of providing skills not otherwise available in this state in
6 conducting research or other practice of veterinary medicine on captive or free-ranging
7 wildlife; however, that assistance is limited to not more than three events in a calendar
8 year for not more than a total of 60 days in the year and may not be on a regular or
9 recurring basis, as defined by the board; **and**

10 **(4) a veterinarian or veterinary technician licensed and residing in**
11 **another state who provides assistance under the pet and service animal disaster**
12 **emergency plan established under AS 26.23.040(h).**

13 * **Sec. 2.** AS 26.23.040 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

14 (h) As part of the state emergency plan required under (a) of this section, the
15 Alaska division of homeland security and emergency management shall prepare and
16 maintain a pet and service animal disaster emergency plan. The plan must

17 (1) establish a process for the evacuation, transportation, and
18 temporary sheltering of pets and service animals during a disaster emergency;

19 (2) identify evacuation shelters designed to accept and temporarily
20 house pets and service animals during a disaster emergency;

21 (3) establish an identification system to ensure that an owner of a pet
22 or service animal who is separated from the pet or service animal during an evacuation
23 is provided with all information necessary to locate and reclaim the pet or service
24 animal;

25 (4) implement a public information program that provides owners of
26 pets and service animals with disaster emergency resources relating to pets and service
27 animals; the program must, at a minimum,

28 (A) provide guidance to owners of pets and service animals to
29 help owners create an evacuation plan for the pets and service animals;

30 (B) create an emergency checklist for owners of pets and
31 service animals; and

1 (C) identify local organizations whom the owner of a pet or
 2 service animal may contact for further support in a disaster emergency,
 3 including for temporary housing and food assistance;

4 (5) allow the transport of pets and service animals on public
 5 transportation during a disaster emergency if the pet or service animal is in a cage or
 6 carrier that safely and securely confines the pet or service animal; if a pet or service
 7 animal is unable to be transported in accordance with this paragraph, the commission
 8 may arrange for transportation for the pet or service animal; and

9 (6) establish procedures for a veterinarian or veterinary technician,
 10 including a veterinarian or veterinary technician licensed and residing in another state,
 11 to provide assistance with pets and service animals during a disaster emergency.

12 * **Sec. 3.** AS 26.23.071(b) is amended to read:

13 (b) The commission consists of the commissioners of commerce, community,
 14 and economic development, environmental conservation, fish and game, health, labor
 15 and workforce development, natural resources, public safety, and transportation and
 16 public facilities, or the designees of the commissioners, the adjutant general of the
 17 Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs or a designee, and **eight** [SEVEN]
 18 members of the public appointed by the governor, two of whom must be members of a
 19 local emergency planning committee for an emergency planning district that is
 20 predominantly rural in character and two of whom must be members of a local
 21 emergency planning committee for an emergency planning district that is
 22 predominantly urban in character. Two of the other **four** [THREE] members of the
 23 public who are appointed to the commission must be members of the governing body
 24 of, or the mayor of, a political subdivision that has a local emergency planning
 25 committee or a person who, in the opinion of the governor, is otherwise appropriate to
 26 represent the political subdivision. **One of the other two members of the public who**
 27 **are appointed to the commission must be a member of a statewide association of**
 28 **animal control officers, animal shelter staff, and animal welfare professionals**
 29 **that operates in the state.** The United States Department of Defense - Alaska
 30 Command, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the United States
 31 Environmental Protection Agency, and the United States Coast Guard may each

1 appoint a representative to serve on the commission in an ex-officio, nonvoting
2 capacity. To the extent practicable, the commission must include members with
3 expertise in the emergency response field.

4 * **Sec. 4.** AS 26.23.073(d) is amended to read:

5 (d) The commission shall appoint the members of a local emergency planning
6 committee for each emergency planning district established under (a) and (b) of this
7 section. In making appointments for a district that contains only one political
8 subdivision, the commission shall follow the recommendations of the political
9 subdivision if those recommendations would constitute a committee that meets the
10 requirements of this subsection. In making appointments for a district that contains
11 more than one political subdivision, the commission shall consider the
12 recommendations of each political subdivision and follow the recommendations to the
13 extent that the political subdivisions are in agreement and their recommendations
14 would constitute a committee that meets the requirements of this subsection. To the
15 extent required under regulations that may be adopted by the commission, the political
16 subdivisions in a district that includes more than one political subdivision shall follow
17 a process under which they develop coordinated recommendations to submit to the
18 commission under this subsection. In making appointments for a district that includes
19 some area that is not contained within a political subdivision, the commission shall
20 consider the recommendations of emergency response organizations in the district. In
21 making appointments for the district formed under (b) of this section, the commission
22 shall attempt to achieve equitable geographical representation on the committee.
23 Except as provided in (e) of this section, each committee must include, at a minimum,
24 representatives of each of the following **eight** [SEVEN] categories:

- 25 (1) elected local officials;
26 (2) law enforcement, civil defense, fire fighting, first aid, health, local
27 environmental, hospital, and transportation personnel;
28 (3) broadcast or print media;
29 (4) community groups;
30 (5) owners and operators of facilities subject to the requirements of 42
31 U.S.C. 11001 - 11005;

1 (6) representatives of a local or interjurisdictional disaster planning
2 and service area if one has been established that includes part of the district;

3 **(7) animal care and control personnel;** and

4 **(8)** [(7)] members of the public that are not described in **(1) - (7)** [(1) -
5 (6)] of this subsection.

6 * **Sec. 5.** AS 26.23.073(e) is amended to read:

7 (e) If advertisement and the commission's own initiative do not result in the
8 acceptance of appointment to a committee by at least one person from a category
9 under **(d)(1) - (8)** [(d)(1) - (7)] of this section, the requirement of (d) of this section
10 that there be representation of that category on that committee is suspended until
11 sufficient willing appointees become available.

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE,
CO-CHAIR

HOUSE MILITARY & VETERANS' AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE, CHAIR

HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE,
MEMBER

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE,
MEMBER



REPRESENTATIVE TED J. EISCHEID

WHILE IN SESSION
STATE CAPITOL
120 4th St.
JUNEAU, AK 99801
(907) 465-2095

WHILE IN ANCHORAGE
1500 W. Benson Blvd.
ANCHORAGE, AK 99503
(907) 269-0240

Sponsor Statement **House Bill 335: Disaster Animal Rescue** **34-LS1531\A**

I am proud to sponsor HB 335 to strengthen Alaska's emergency preparedness by ensuring the safety, care, and reunification of pets and service animals during disasters. Pets and service animals are integral members of many Alaskan households; their welfare is a public-safety concern that affects evacuation success, sheltering logistics, and the mental and physical well-being of their owners. This bill advances practical, humane, and coordinated measures so communities and responders are better equipped to protect animals and people in times of crisis.

Key provisions

1. Limited licensure exemption for out-of-state veterinarians and veterinary technicians. HB 335 extends a narrowly framed licensure exemption to veterinarians and veterinary technicians who are a) licensed and b) reside in another state when they assist under the pet and service animal disaster emergency plan. This allows qualified professionals to provide timely, supervised medical and triage support during declared emergencies without adversely impacting Alaska's licensing standards or public-safety protections.
2. Creation and maintenance of a statewide Pet and Service Animal disaster Emergency Plan. The Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management will prepare and maintain a comprehensive plan that: (a) sets an operation process for evacuation, transport, and temporary sheltering of pets and service animals; (b) identifies shelters able to temporarily house animals and establishes an identification system to facilitate reunification with owners; (c) authorizes properly contained animals on public transportation during evacuations; (d) establishes procedures to enable out-of-state veterinary professionals to assist; and (e) implements a public information program to guide owners in evacuation planning, provide an emergency checklist and identify local organizations for assistance.
3. Representation for animal-welfare professionals on the Alaska State Emergency Response Commission. HB 335 increases the Commission from seven to eight members to include an appointee from a statewide association of animal control officers, a shelter staff member, or another animal welfare professional operating in Alaska. This ensures the Commission benefits from direct expertise in animal handling, sheltering, and reunification logistics.

Recent emergencies in rural Alaska have demonstrated the need for more advance planning for animals and have illuminated confusion about the implementation of current plans, delaying evacuations, increasing danger to responders, and resulting in unnecessary suffering and long-term displacement for animals and their owners. HB 335 aligns Alaska with best practices in emergency management by integrating animal welfare considerations into overall response planning, improving sheltering and reunification outcomes, and enabling rapid, professional veterinary support when needed.

I urge my colleagues to support HB 335 to protect Alaskans and their animals, enhance operation readiness, and strengthen our state's compassionate, coordinated emergency response.

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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CO-CHAIR

HOUSE MILITARY & VETERANS' AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE, CHAIR

HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE,
MEMBER

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE,
MEMBER



REPRESENTATIVE **TED J. EISCHEID**

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Sectional Analysis **House Bill 335: Disaster Animal Rescue** **34-LS1531\A**

“An Act relating to veterinarians and veterinarian technicians; establishing a pet and service animal disaster emergency plan; relating to the Alaska State Emergency Response Commission; and relating to local emergency planning committees.”

Section 1:

Amends AS 08.98.125 to include a section extending exemption to licensure for veterinarians and veterinary technicians who are licensed in and reside in another state and provide assistance under the pet and service animal disaster emergency plan established by AS 26.23.040(h).

Section 2:

Amends AS 26.23.040 to add a new subsection directing the Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management to prepare and maintain a pet and service animal disaster emergency plan. This plan must establish a process to be followed during an emergency for evacuation, transport and temporary shelter of pets and service animals; to identify evacuation shelters designed to accept and temporarily house pets and service animals and to establish an identification system to facilitate reunification of pets or service animals and owners. The plan must implement a public information program that at a minimum provides guidance to owners to help create evacuation plans, create an emergency checklist for evacuation and identify local organizations owners can contact for help. This plan will also authorize properly contained animals to be transported on public transportation and establish procedures for out of state veterinarians and veterinary technicians to provide assistance within Alaska during a disaster.

Section 3:

Amends AS 26.23.071 to change the makeup of the Alaska State Emergency Response Commission, adding one position that must be a member of a statewide association of animal control officers, a staff member of an animal shelter or other animal welfare professional operating in Alaska, changing the number of Commission members from 7 to 8.

Section 4:

Amends AS 26.23.073 to reflect changes made in Section 3.

Section 5:

Amends AS 26.23.073(e) to reflect changes made in Section 3.

Fiscal Note

State of Alaska
2026 Legislative Session

Bill Version: HB 335
Fiscal Note Number: _____
() Publish Date: _____

Identifier: HB335-DEC-EH-04-03-26
Title: DISASTER EMERGENCY PLAN FOR PETS
Sponsor: EISCHEID
Requester: (H) LABOR & COMMERCE

Department: Department of Environmental Conservation
Appropriation: Environmental Health
Allocation: Environmental Health
OMB Component Number: 3202

Expenditures/Revenues

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below. (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY2027 Appropriation Requested	Included in Governor's FY2027 Request	Out-Year Cost Estimates					
			FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031	FY 2032
OPERATING EXPENDITURES								
Personal Services	171.8		171.8	171.8	171.8	171.8	171.8	171.8
Travel	7.5		7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5
Services	10.3		10.3	10.3	10.3	10.3	10.3	10.3
Commodities	7.5		3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Capital Outlay								
Grants & Benefits								
Miscellaneous								
Total Operating	197.1	0.0	193.1	193.1	193.1	193.1	193.1	193.1

Fund Source (Operating Only)

1003 GF/Match (UGF)	197.1		193.1	193.1	193.1	193.1	193.1	193.1
Total	197.1	0.0	193.1	193.1	193.1	193.1	193.1	193.1

Positions

Full-time	1.0		1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Part-time								
Temporary								

Change in Revenues

None								
Total	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimated SUPPLEMENTAL (FY2026) cost: 0.0 *(separate supplemental appropriation required)*

Estimated CAPITAL (FY2027) cost: 0.0 *(separate capital appropriation required)*

Does the bill create or modify a new fund or account? No
(Supplemental/Capital/New Fund - discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS

Does the bill direct, or will the bill result in, regulation changes adopted by your agency? No
If yes, by what date are the regulations to be adopted, amended or repealed?

Why this fiscal note differs from previous version/comments:

Not applicable, initial version.

Prepared By: Shaundy Perry, Director
Division: Environmental Health
Approved By: Megan Kohler, Administrative Services Director
Agency: Environmental Conservation

Phone: (907)269-7645
Date: 04/03/2026
Date: 04/03/26

FISCAL NOTE ANALYSIS

STATE OF ALASKA
2026 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. HB335

Analysis

House Bill 335 amends statutes related to veterinary licensing and emergency management to establish a statewide pet and service animal disaster emergency plan and expand representation of animal care interests within emergency planning structures.

The bill exempts out-of-state veterinarians and veterinary technicians from Alaska licensure requirements when providing assistance under the disaster plan. It requires the Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) to prepare and maintain the pet and service animal disaster emergency plan as part of the State Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). The bill also expands membership of the Alaska State Emergency Response Commission and requires local emergency planning committees to include animal care and control personnel.

Although DHS&EM holds statutory responsibility under House Bill 335, the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), Division of Environmental Health, Office of the State Veterinarian holds primary functional responsibility for pet evacuation and sheltering under the EOP framework. The bill formalizes and expands pet evacuation, sheltering, reunification, and veterinary response planning requirements, creating increased coordination, preparedness, training, and implementation workload for DEC.

Personal Services: *Assistant Veterinarian, \$171.8:* An Assistant State Veterinarian is required to fulfill ongoing preparedness, coordination, and implementation responsibilities associated with pet and service animal disaster planning under the State Emergency Operations Plan. The bill formalizes continuous planning, training, responder coordination, and program oversight functions that necessitate dedicated, full-time veterinary capacity in addition to disaster activation duties.

Travel: *Community outreach, \$7.5 annually:* Travel costs for five trips (*\$1.5 per trip*) for statewide community outreach and training, to include participation in local emergency response planning, drills, and exercises.

Services: *Allocated annual common costs, \$10.3.*

Commodities: *Office and Program Supplies, \$7.5 (FY27; \$3.5 thereafter):* Minimal supplies necessary to support one new staff position and basic program administration.

Funding: *Unrestricted General Funds \$197.1 (FY27; \$193.1 thereafter).*

Fiscal Note

State of Alaska
2026 Legislative Session

Bill Version: HB 335
Fiscal Note Number: _____
() Publish Date: _____

Identifier: HB335-MVA-HLS-4-3-26
Title: DISASTER EMERGENCY PLAN FOR PETS
Sponsor: EISCHEID
Requester: (H) LABOR & COMMERCE

Department: Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs
Appropriation: Military and Veterans' Affairs
Allocation: Homeland Security and Emergency Management
OMB Component Number: 2657

Expenditures/Revenues

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below. (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY2027	Included in	Out-Year Cost Estimates					
	Appropriation Requested	Governor's FY2027 Request	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031	FY 2032
OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2027	FY 2027						
Personal Services								
Travel								
Services	400.0		175.0		175.0		175.0	175.0
Commodities								
Capital Outlay								
Grants & Benefits								
Miscellaneous								
Total Operating	400.0	0.0	175.0		175.0		175.0	175.0

Fund Source (Operating Only)

1004 Gen Fund (UGF)	400.0		175.0		175.0		175.0	175.0
Total	400.0	0.0	175.0		175.0		175.0	175.0

Positions

Full-time								
Part-time								
Temporary								

Change in Revenues

None								
Total	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimated SUPPLEMENTAL (FY2026) cost: 0.0 *(separate supplemental appropriation required)*

Estimated CAPITAL (FY2027) cost: 0.0 *(separate capital appropriation required)*

Does the bill create or modify a new fund or account? No
(Supplemental/Capital/New Fund - discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)

ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS

Does the bill direct, or will the bill result in, regulation changes adopted by your agency? No
If yes, by what date are the regulations to be adopted, amended or repealed? n/a

Why this fiscal note differs from previous version/comments:

Initial Version of Fiscal Note

Prepared By: <u>Angela Laflamme</u>	Phone: (907)428-6003
Division: <u>Office of the Commissioner</u>	Date: 04/03/2026 09:00 PM
Approved By: <u>Bob Ernisse</u>	Date: 04/03/26
Agency: <u>Department of Military and Veterans Affairs</u>	

FISCAL NOTE ANALYSIS

STATE OF ALASKA
2026 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. HB335

Analysis

This legislation implements requirements for the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management related to disaster emergency plans for pets in Alaska. While the State of Alaska already has an emergency operations plan that takes animals into consideration during a response to a disaster or emergency, there are additional requirements included that would require the division to implement two new programs.

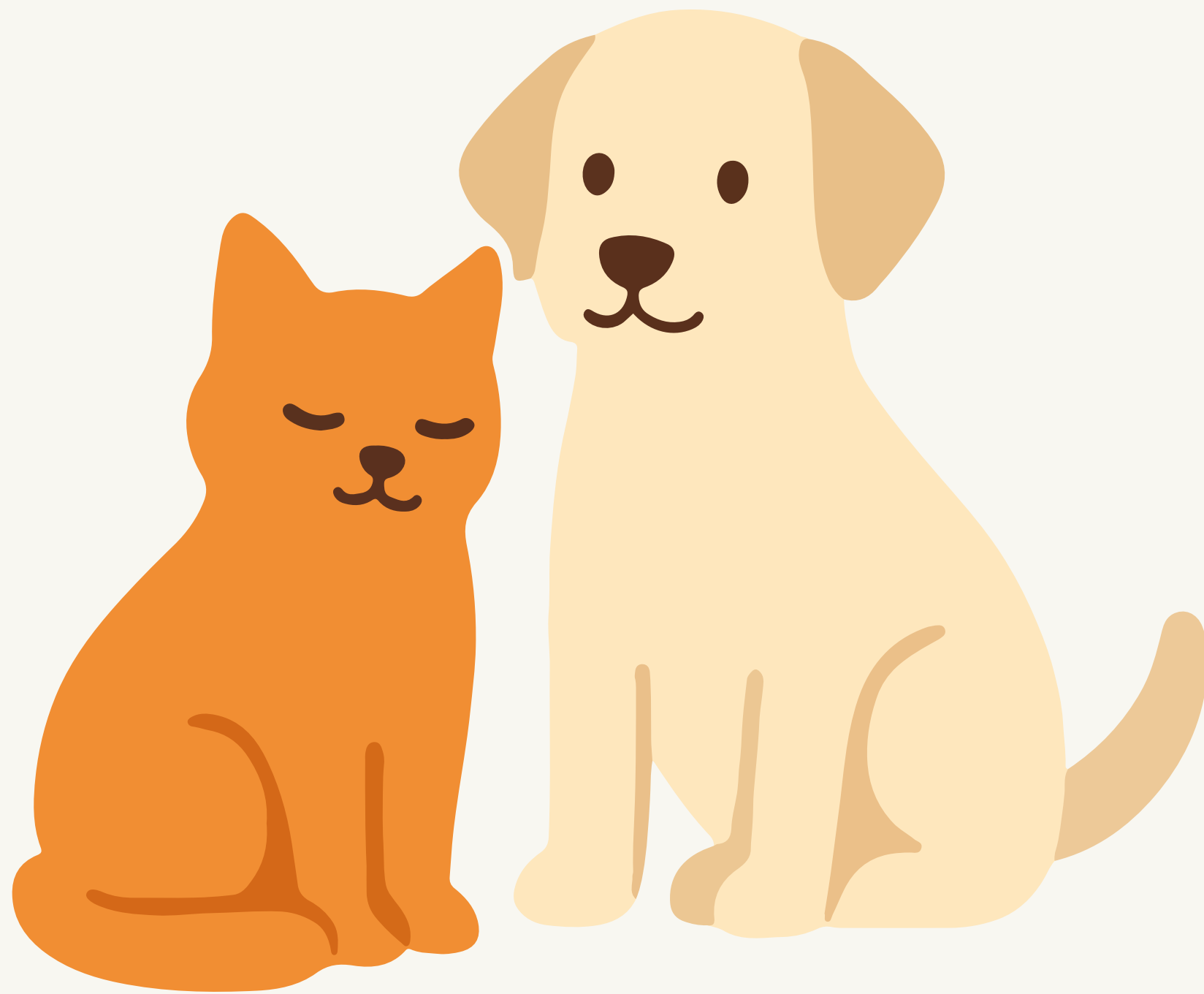
Implementing this legislation will impact the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM), and require funding to successfully address the new requirements.

The first requirement consists of establishment of an identification system to ensure that an owner of a pet or service animal who is separated from the pet or service animal during an evacuation is provided with all information necessary to locate and reclaim the pet or service animal. This would require a contract to develop a system that would be meet the needs of the department during an emergency or disaster that could take place anywhere in the state. The cost for this contract is based off the average costs for software and application development, 350.0, and a continuing operating cost into future years of 150.0 to accommodate for the need to make changes/modifications, and contractors to assist with management of the system during an emergency or disaster.

The second requirement consists of implementation of a public information program that provides owners of pets and service animals with disaster emergency resources relating to pets and service animals; and includes several minimum requirements for the program. This would require a contract to develop a program that would meet the requirements of this section for successful implementation by division preparedness staff. The estimated cost for a contract to develop this public information program is 50.0, and a continuing operating cost into future years of 25.0 to accommodate for the need to make changes/modifications, and costs for production and distribution of materials to communities and organizations.



House Bill 335 - Disaster Emergency Plan for Pets



What is HB 335?

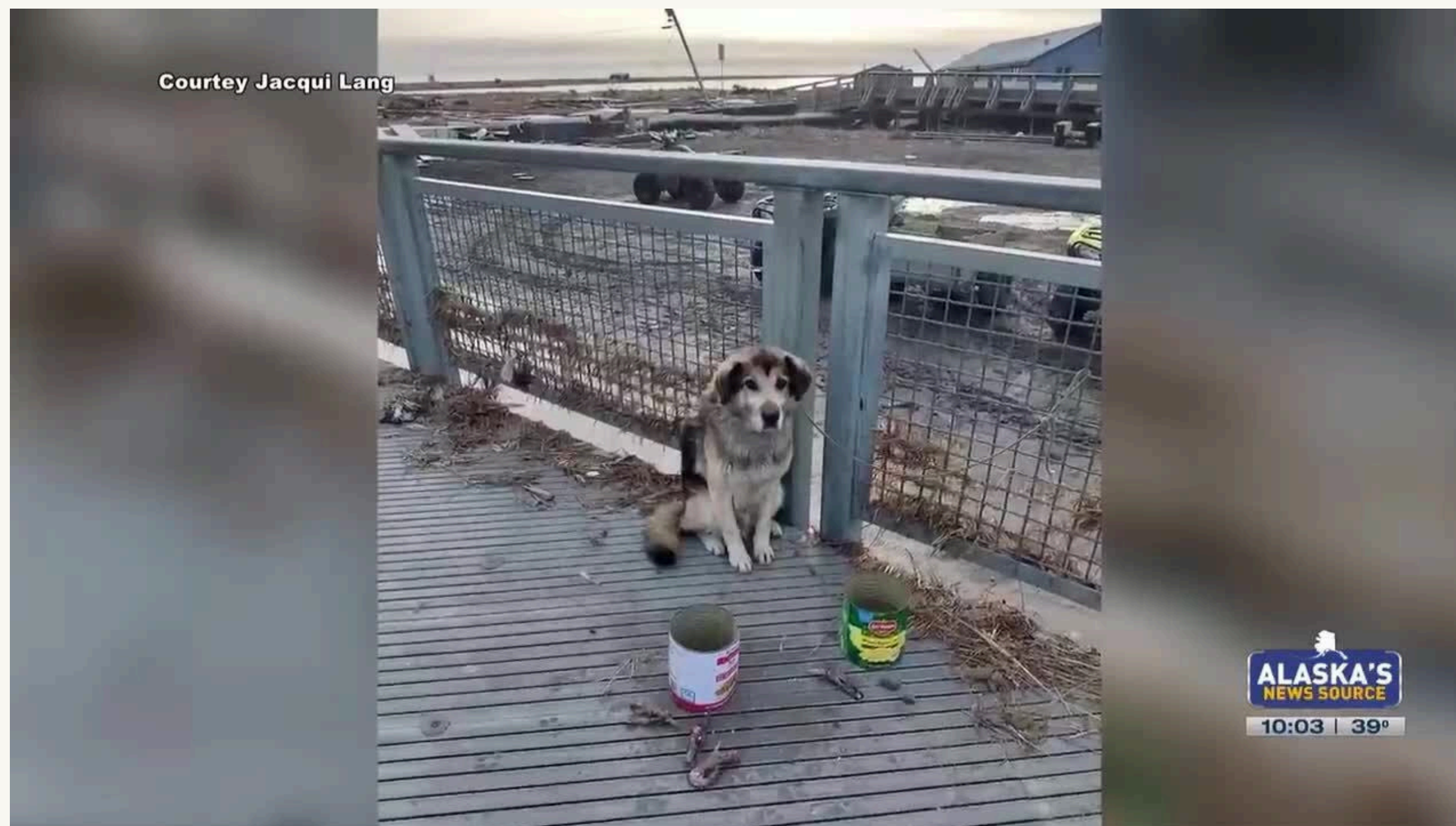
A revision and clarification of current laws to streamline the rescue of pets and service animals.

Why It Matters?

Recent emergencies have shown that Alaska's disaster response plans are unclear as related to pets and service animals, leading to confusion and disorganization.

How does HB 335 solve the Problem?

- Disaster response plans are clearly defined and detailed
- Animal rescue is planned
- Veterinary response abilities are strengthened
- Reunification is easier



Alaskans' lives are intertwined with companion animals, we owe it to them to rescue and safeguard them.


Human victims of natural disasters recover more quickly and have better outcomes when reunited with their pets.



Sectional Analysis

Questions?





H.B. 335 Disaster Emergency Plan for Pets

REPRESENTATIVE EISCHEID

CONTACT:

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208-724-2266

PURPOSE

Amends state law by requiring Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management to develop a formal, comprehensive pet and service animal disaster plan.

FISCAL IMPACT

NONE

PUBLIC & STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

- Developed bill language in collaboration with local shelters that responded to the October 2025 Typhoon, to address gaps observed during response operations.
- Many families consider pets part of the household, and reluctance to evacuate without animals is a documented barrier to public compliance with emergency orders.

WHAT THE BILL DOES

- Establishes requirements for the evacuation, transportation, and temporary sheltering of pets during disasters to enhance public and animal safety.
- Authorizes out-of-state veterinarians and veterinary technicians to provide emergency assistance during declared disasters pursuant to the state emergency plan.
- Adds an animal welfare representative to the Alaska State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) to serve as a liaison between SERC and local animal shelters housing displaced animals.
- Adds animal care and control personnel to each district's local emergency planning committee.
- Requires the development of pet and service animal evacuation plans.
- Requires identification of pet-friendly evacuation shelters.
- Authorizes the transport of pets in carriers on public transportation during declared evacuations.
- Requires the establishment of a pet identification and reunification system.
- Requires the development of a public information program for pet owners on disaster preparedness, response, and evacuation.