



Ohio Legislative Service Commission

Bill Analysis

David M. Gold

H.B. 215

131st General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Reps. Sears and Bishoff, Grossman, Hill, Kraus, LaTourette, Leland, McColley, Phillips, Sheehy, Stinziano

BILL SUMMARY

- Adds to the types of activities associated with animal fighting that are criminal offenses and changes the penalty for some of those activities.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Criminal activities associated with animal fighting

The bill adds to the types of activities associated with animal fighting that are criminal offenses and changes the penalty for some of those activities.

Existing law prohibits a person from knowingly doing any of the following:

- Engaging in or being employed at cockfighting, bearbaiting, or pitting an animal against another;
- Receiving money for the admission of another to a place kept for such a purpose;
- Using, training, or possessing any animal for seizing, detaining, or maltreating a domestic animal.

Any person who knowingly purchases a ticket of admission to such a place, or is present there or witnesses such a spectacle, is an aider and abettor. (A person who aids or abets another in committing an offense is guilty of complicity and is subject to the same penalty as a principal.) A violation is a misdemeanor of the fourth degree, for

which a court may impose a variety of sanctions, including a definite jail term of not more than 30 days, a fine of up to \$250, or both.¹

The bill retains as fourth-degree misdemeanors the prohibitions against (1) engaging in cockfighting, bearbaiting, or pitting one animal against another and (2) using, training, or possessing an animal for mistreating another animal.² The bill also prohibits a person, while violating either of those prohibitions, from knowingly doing any of the following:

- Being employed at cockfighting, bearbaiting, or pitting one animal against another;
- Betting on the results;
- Paying for admission to the event;
- Receiving anything of value in exchange for the admission of another person to the event;
- Permitting or causing a minor to be present at the event if anyone present at or involved with the event doing anything in this list;
- Using, possessing, or permitting or causing to be present any device or substance intended to enhance an animal's ability to fight.³

Under the bill, a violation of any of the prohibitions in this list is an unclassified felony punishable by a fine of up to \$10,000.⁴ A person who knowingly witnesses cockfighting, bearbaiting, or an event in which one animal is pitted against another in violation of any of the prohibitions in the list is an aider and abettor and commits an unclassified felony punishable by a fine of up to \$10,000.⁵

¹ R.C. 959.15, 959.99(C), 2923.03, not in the bill, 2929.24(A)(4), not in the bill, and 2929.28(A)(2)(a)(iv), not in the bill.

² R.C. 959.15(A) and 959.99(C).

³ R.C. 959.15(B).

⁴ R.C. 959.99(I).

⁵ R.C. 959.15(C) and 959.99(I).



HISTORY

ACTION

DATE

Introduced

05-18-15

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