LFC Requester:	Sanchez, Scott

AGENCY BILL ANALYSIS - 2026 REGULAR SESSION

WITHIN 24 HOURS OF BILL POSTING, UPLOAD ANALYSIS TO
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(Analysis must be uploaded as a PDF)

SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION
{Indicate if analysis is on an original bill, amendment, substitute or a correction of a previous bill}

Date Prepared: 2/5/26   *Check all that apply:*
Bill Number: SB 227   Original ___   X Correction __
                                                    Amendment __   Substitute __

Sponsor: Sen. Gabriel Ramos

Agency Name and Code Number: AOC 218

Short Title: Cruelty to Animals Registry

Person Writing Kathleen Sabo
Phone: 505-470-3214 **Email** aoccaj@nmcourts.gov

SECTION II: FISCAL IMPACT

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	**FY27**		
None	None	Rec.	General

(Parenthesis ( ) indicate expenditure decreases)

REVENUE (dollars in thousands)

Estimated Revenue			Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
FY26	**FY27**	**FY28**		
Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Rec.	General

(Parenthesis ( ) indicate revenue decreases)

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY26	**FY27**	**FY28**	**3 Year Total Cost**	**Recurring or Nonrecurring**	**Fund Affected**
Total	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Rec.	General

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates/Conflicts with/Companion to/Relates to: None.

Duplicates/Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act: None.

SECTION III: NARRATIVE

BILL SUMMARY

Synopsis: SB 227, Section 1(A) establishes a cruelty to animals and extreme cruelty to animals registry specifying the information that a person registering with the county sheriff must provide, upon conviction pursuant to Section 30-18-1 NMSA 1978, governing cruelty to animals and extreme cruelty to animals, and providing penalties and exceptions. Subsection B requires a county sheriff and the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to maintain a local registry of those required to register pursuant to Subsection A. Subsection D requires DPS to establish and manage a report on the DPS website that provides the public with information regarding who has registered pursuant to Subsection A and specifies the information the website shall provide.

SB 227 requires the court in which the person was convicted to provide the person with a written notice of the person's duty to register pursuant to Subsection A.

The Act defines "person", as used in the Act, to mean a person 18 years of age or older.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS
There will be a minimal administrative cost for statewide update, distribution and documentation of statutory changes. Any additional fiscal impact on the judiciary would be proportional to the enforcement of this law and the burden placed on the court to provide the person convicted under Section 30-18-1 NMSA 1978 with a written notice of the person's duty to register pursuant to SB 227. New laws, amendments to existing laws and new hearings have the potential to increase caseloads in the courts, thus requiring additional resources to handle the increase.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES
1) According to the ASPCA

Animal abuser registries are intended to alert the public to the presence of animal cruelty offenders in the community and to provide heightened scrutiny of individuals perceived to be at high risk of re-offense to animals or people beyond any period of incarceration, probation, or parole. Although we appreciate that animal abuser registry proposals derive from a genuine motivation to take animal cruelty seriously, the ASPCA believes that this approach does little to protect animals or people and can have unintended consequences. Existing strategies, such as well-enforced no-contact orders, mandated psychological assessment and inclusion of pets in orders of protection, provide a response that is more effective in preventing harm to animals and people.

Interest in animal abuser registries has, in part, been driven by a growing body of research indicating that repeated acts of intentional cruelty to animals can be associated with a greater incidence of a variety of other crimes, including acts of interpersonal violence. Although animal cruelty is strongly associated with a variety of other crimes, including assault and drug crimes, it is not necessarily predictive. The main study often cited is the 1999 Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals' survey

of prosecuted animal cruelty offenders who had significantly higher incidence of other offenses when compared to matched controls without an animal cruelty background. However, the other offenses were as likely to precede the animal cruelty offense as to follow it – and thus this data was seen as supportive of a "general deviance" model of animal abusers rather than a "progression" model.

Not all acts that could be prosecuted as animal cruelty are equally predictive of future offenses, and the nature of animal cruelty offenses can vary depending on age, gender, culture and the motivation of the offender. The predictive value of past animal offenses associated with future animal offenses is strongest for animal hoarders, who show extremely high recidivism rates. Hoarding is strongly predictive of future hoarding – however is not necessarily predictive of other offenses in general. This issue is best addressed by community-based long-term monitoring of such cases, rather than by special registration.

See *Position Statement on Animal Abuser Registries*, ASPCA.

The ASPCA notes these specific concerns about animal abuse registries:
- Registries are expensive to institute and maintain
- Registries have limited reach and are rarely utilized
- Registries are limited in scope and do not offer real protections for potential victims of animal cruelty
- Registries may actually decrease the prosecution of serious animal cruelty cases
- Registries do not remove potential access to pets
- Registries can create a "vigilante" mentality in the public
- Registries can put additional burdens on animal sheltering organizations
- Other registries (e.g. sex offender registries) have not been shown to reduce recidivism of the registered offense

Id.

The ASPCA also lists the following effective approaches to responding to animal abusers:
- Strengthen and broaden existing animal cruelty laws
- Make effective use of well-enforced no-contact orders
- Make use of provisions to include animals in domestic violence protective orders

Id.

2) As of January 1, 2026 a statewide animal cruelty database, pursuant to Dexter's Law, was launched in Florida. The law requires the state to create and maintain a public database of abusers.

3) Section 30-18-1 NMSA 1978, creates the crime of Cruelty to Animals and Extreme Cruelty to Animals, providing penalties ranging from misdemeanor to fourth degree felony.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS
The courts are participating in performance-based budgeting. This bill may have an impact on the measures of the district courts in the following areas:
- Cases disposed of as a percent of cases filed
- Percent change in case filings by case type

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

See "Fiscal Implications," above.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP
None.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

ALTERNATIVES

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

AMENDMENTS