

HOUSE BILL 438

D3
SB 292/21 – JPR

5lr2325
CF SB 581

By: Delegates Bartlett, Hill, Kipke, Lehman, Ruth, and ~~Nkongolo~~ Nkongolo, Arian, Cardin, Kaufman, Phillips, Sample-Hughes, Schmidt, Simpson, Stinnett, and Williams

Introduced and read first time: January 16, 2025
Assigned to: Judiciary

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments
House action: Adopted
Read second time: February 27, 2025

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Civil Actions – Tortious Injury to or Death of Pet – Compensatory Damages**
3 **(Buddy’s Law)**

4 FOR the purpose of altering the maximum amount of compensatory damages that may be
5 awarded to an owner of a pet from a person who tortiously causes an injury to or
6 death of the pet under certain circumstances; and generally relating to tortious
7 injuries to or death of pets.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
9 Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings
10 Section 11–110
11 Annotated Code of Maryland
12 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

13 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
14 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

15 **Article – Courts and Judicial Proceedings**
16 11–110.

17 (a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



(2) “Compensatory damages” means:

(i) In the case of the death of a pet, the fair market value of the pet before death and the reasonable and necessary cost of veterinary care; and

(ii) In the case of an injury to a pet, the reasonable and necessary cost of veterinary care.

(3) (i) “Pet” means a domesticated animal.

(ii) “Pet” does not include livestock.

(b) (1) A person who tortiously causes an injury to or death of a pet while acting individually or through an animal under the person’s ownership, direction, or control is liable to the owner of the pet for compensatory damages.

(2) The damages awarded under paragraph (1) of this subsection may not exceed ~~[\$10,000]~~ **\$25,000**.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2025.

Approved:

Governor.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.

President of the Senate.