

# House Research Act Summary

**CHAPTER:** 292

**SESSION:** 2010 Regular Session

**TOPIC:** Harm to service animals/animal fighting

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## Overview

This act expands the crimes of animal fighting and harming a service animal. A “service animal” is defined as an “animal trained to assist a person with a disability.”

### Section

- 1**     **Harming a service animal.** Expands the crime of harming a service animal to include intentionally rendering a service animal unable to perform its duties. Current law imposes criminal penalties for intentionally causing bodily harm to a service animal.
- 2**     **Penalty.** Provides a gross misdemeanor penalty for rendering a service animal unable to perform its duties. A gross misdemeanor is punishable by a maximum penalty of one year’s imprisonment and/or a \$3,000 fine.
- 3**     **Mandatory restitution.** Provides that a court shall order a defendant to pay restitution for the costs and expenses resulting from a crime in section 1, including loss of income, veterinary expenses, transportation costs, temporary replacement assistance services, and service animal replacement or retraining costs. If the defendant is indigent, the court may reduce the restitution amount or order it paid in installments.
- 4**     **Penalty for animal fighting.** Creates a gross misdemeanor penalty for possessing a device or substance with intent to use it to enhance an animal’s ability to fight.