

The Motor Vehicle Extreme Heat Protection Act

The Motor Vehicle Extreme Heat Protection Act, introduced in the state Senate by Senator Andy Dinniman, and introduced in the state House by Representatives Frank Farry and Dom Costa is legislation aimed to protect pets left unattended in hot cars.

STATUS: HB 1216 unanimously passed the Full House and SB 636 is in Senate Judiciary Committee.



SB 636 AND HB 1216 WILL:

- Make it a summary offense to confine a dog or cat in a car under conditions that jeopardize the pet's health.
- Allow a police officer, humane officer, or other public safety professional to remove a dog or cat from an unattended motor vehicle if they believe the dog or cat is suffering and is endangered after a reasonable search for the owner or operator of the vehicle.
- Protect police officer, humane officer, or public safety professional who removes a dog or cat from an unattended vehicle from liability of any damages.
- Require an officer who removes a dog or cat from an unattended vehicle to take it to a veterinary hospital or animal care clinic for a health screening and treatment. A conspicuous note will be left for the owner stating the officer's information and the information for where to pick up the pet.

FACTS ABOUT DOGS AND CATS LEFT IN HOT CARS

Do only bad pet owners leave their pets in hot cars?

The citizens of Pennsylvania value their pets as family members, yet some mistakenly believe an animal can be comfortable or safe left unattended in a vehicle. This Act will raise awareness of the dangers of leaving pets in parked cars and prevent needless suffering.

How do animals tolerate extreme temperatures?

Pets' normal body temperature is already higher than humans, and humidity of just 35% can slow or shut down their ability to evaporate moisture and control their body temperature. On a 72 degree day, a car's internal temperature can heat up to 116 degrees within an hour. On an 80 degree day, a car's internal temperature can shoot up to a sweltering 99 degrees in just 10 minutes. Lowering the window has been shown to have little effect on a car's temperature.

Under what circumstances can an officer enter a vehicle?

Law enforcement should be empowered to take humane action to protect animals' lives. This Act adds vehicle entry to an already existing law that allows police officers to enter a property to provide care or impound an animal believed to be a victim of neglect or living below minimum care standards. Officers should feel comfortable making a decision on behalf of an animal's welfare.

Is this an issue everyone can support?

Protecting animals from a prolonged, suffering death due to organ failure or heatstroke in a hot car is a problem we can all agree to prevent. Municipalities and state legislatures are taking action to empower law enforcement to protect animals in cars, and initiating campaigns to encourage citizens to make other choices about taking their personal pets in a vehicle that will be unattended. This Act is an important, non-partisan step toward achieving a more humane Pennsylvania.

**For more information
on this joint effort:**



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY
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DID YOU KNOW?

1. The temperature inside a car is significantly higher than the temperature outside. For example: If it's **85°** outside, it can reach **104°** in just **10 minutes**.

Estimated Vehicle Interior Air Temperature v. Elapsed Time

Elapsed time	Outside Air Temperature (F)					
	70	75	80	85	90	95
0 minutes	70	75	80	85	90	95
10 minutes	89	94	99	104	109	114
20 minutes	99	104	109	114	119	124
30 minutes	104	109	114	119	124	129
40 minutes	108	113	118	123	128	133
50 minutes	111	116	121	126	131	136
60 minutes	113	118	123	128	133	138
> 1 hour	115	120	125	130	135	140

Courtesy Jan Null, CCM; Department of Geosciences, San Francisco State University via AVMA.org

2. Rolling down windows **DOES NOT HELP** to decrease the temperature inside the vehicle.
3. It only takes 5-10 minutes for a heatstroke to affect your pet.
4. A dog can only withstand a high body temperature for a short time before suffering nerve damage, heart problems, liver damage, brain damage, or even death.
5. Even if you're parked in the shade, the temperature in a vehicle can soar to high temperatures.
6. It only takes 6 minutes for your dog to die in a hot car.
7. If it's too hot for you, it's too hot for your pet.

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