



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Tony Avella

## The Legislative Gazette: Lawmakers want new pet owners to get care instructions

TONY AVELLA June 17, 2015

A new Pet Care Instruction bill that would require pet dealers in New York state to provide pet buyers with instructions about small animal care was passed by the Senate on Tuesday and is awaiting action in the Assembly.

The bill was sponsored by Sen. Tony Avella, D-Whitestone, and Assemblywomen Linda Rosenthal, D-Manhattan.

"Becoming a pet owner is a lifelong commitment that requires the proper information and education on each species and how best to care for them," said Edita Birnkrant, the campaigns director for Friends of Animals. "Making this important information immediately accessible to pet owners is crucial in helping educate the public on the best practices for caring for each animal they bring into their home."

If the bill (S.5946/A.8058-b) is passed, pet stores would have to provide on-the-spot access to written information containing recommended care methods about whatever small animal the customer purchases. The instructions would be compiled by veterinarians, and the format for the instructions would be at the discretion of the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Markets.

As the bill reads, small mammals include, but are not limited to hamsters, chinchillas, gerbils, rabbits, mice, rats or ferrets. The bill also includes smaller amphibians and reptiles, such as frogs, snakes and lizards. Pet retailers do not have to provide care information for animals that are used strictly for feeding purposes.

PetSmart, Inc. had no comment on the pending legislation.

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