

Public Policy Position SB 17

The Animal Law Section is a voluntary membership section of the State Bar of Michigan, comprised of 267 members. The Animal Law Section is not the State Bar of Michigan and the position expressed herein is that of the Animal Law Section only and not the State Bar of Michigan. To date, the State Bar does not have a position on this item.

The Animal Law Section has a public policy decision-making body with 15 members. On June 14, 2023, the Section adopted its position after an electronic discussion and vote. 12 members voted in favor of the Section's position, 0 members voted against this position, 0 members abstained, 3 members did not vote.

Support

Explanation:

The Animal Law Section supports SB 17, which amends the Michigan Fireworks Safety Act to expand the days and times during which some local units of government, depending on population density, may regulate the ignition, discharge, or use of consumer fireworks. Local units of government should be able to protect the people and animals in their communities by restricting the use of fireworks. Fireworks pose a threat to wildlife. According to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, "The shock of fireworks can cause wildlife to flee, ending up in unexpected areas or roadways, flying into buildings and other obstacles, and even abandoning nests, leaving young vulnerable to predators. The threat to wildlife doesn't stop at startling lights and sounds; fireworks also have the potential of starting wildfires, directly affecting wildlife and destroying essential habitat. Litter from firecrackers, bottle rockets and other explosives can be choking hazards for wildlife and may be toxic if ingested." Domestic animals, such as dogs and cats, can also have very negative reactions to fireworks, as the ASPCA explained: "[F]or many pets, [fireworks] can be a sensory overload. Some dogs and cats will have a fight-or-flight response to fireworks. This is a very real adrenaline rush, causing their blood pressure and heart rate to rise. Some pets can panic and cause injury to themselves while trying to escape, some may run away, and some may react with aggression." Animal shelters often see a rise in intakes after a holiday where fireworks are displayed.

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