

# ASSEMBLY, No. 4552

## STATE OF NEW JERSEY 218th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 15, 2018

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblyman RAJ MUKHERJI**

**District 33 (Hudson)**

**Assemblyman KEVIN J. ROONEY**

**District 40 (Bergen, Essex, Morris and Passaic)**

**Assemblywoman CAROL A. MURPHY**

**District 7 (Burlington)**

**SYNOPSIS**

Prohibits leasing dogs and cats.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 1/16/2019)

1 AN ACT prohibiting the leasing of dogs and cats and supplementing  
2 P.L.1960, c.39 (C.56:8-1 et seq.).

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4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State  
5 of New Jersey:

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7 1. a. It shall be an unlawful practice and a violation of  
8 P.L.1960, c.39 (C.56:8-1 et seq.) to enter into a:

9 (1) contract for a cat or dog in which the transfer of ownership  
10 of the animal is contingent on the making of payments over a period  
11 of time subsequent to the transfer of possession of the animal,  
12 unless these payments are on an unsecured loan for the purchase of  
13 the animal; or

14 (2) lease agreement that provides for or offers the option of  
15 transferring ownership of a cat or dog at the end of the lease term.

16 b. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 1 of P.L.1966,  
17 c.39 (C.56:8-13) to the contrary, a person who violates this section  
18 shall be liable for the following penalties:

19 (1) for a first offense, a penalty of not more than \$10,000; and

20 (2) for a second or subsequent offense, a penalty of not more  
21 than \$30,000.

22 c. In addition to any other remedies provided by P.L.1960, c.39  
23 (C.56:8-1 et seq.) or any other applicable law, a consumer taking  
24 possession of a cat or dog pursuant to a contract or lease as  
25 described in subsection a. of this section shall be deemed the owner  
26 of the cat or dog, shall have a civil cause of action in any court of  
27 competent jurisdiction, and shall be entitled to recover all moneys  
28 paid by the consumer, litigation costs, and reasonable attorney's  
29 fees.

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31 2. This act shall take effect immediately and shall apply to any  
32 lease, contract, agreement, or transaction entered into on or after the  
33 effective date.

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#### STATEMENT

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38 This bill makes leasing dogs and cats a violation of the State  
39 consumer fraud law.

40 New Jersey residents are sometimes deceived into signing a lease  
41 for a pet and end up paying more than they intended. This bill  
42 prohibits contracts in which the transfer of ownership of a cat or  
43 dog is contingent on the making of payments over a period of time  
44 subsequent to the transfer of possession of the cat or dog, unless  
45 those payments are on an unsecured loan for the purchase of the  
46 animal. It also prohibits lease agreements that provide for or offer  
47 the option of transferring ownership of a cat or dog at the end of the  
48 lease term.

**A4552 MUKHERJI, ROONEY**

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1       Violations of the bill's provisions are punishable by a monetary  
2 penalty of up to \$10,000 for a first offense and up to \$30,000 for  
3 any subsequent offense. In addition, the bill provides that a  
4 consumer who enters into this kind of contract would be deemed the  
5 owner of the cat or dog and would be entitled to a full refund,  
6 litigation costs, and attorney's fees, to be recovered in a civil court  
7 proceeding.