

STATE OF NEW YORK

10399

IN ASSEMBLY

May 4, 2020

Introduced by M. of A. L. ROSENTHAL -- read once and referred to the Committee on Agriculture

AN ACT to amend the agriculture and markets law, in relation to prohibiting the operation of establishments where animals and/or fowls are slaughtered and butchered for food

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Legislative intent. The legislature hereby finds that
2 emergency measures must be enacted to help prevent the spread of zoonotic
3 and other infectious diseases. Experts throughout the world have
4 concluded that the COVID-19 crisis is likely attributable to a live
5 animal market. Inspection reports from the department of agriculture
6 and markets indicate ongoing health, safety and welfare problems at New
7 York's markets. Hundreds of thousands of human lives have already been
8 lost and millions of people have been sickened during the COVID-19
9 pandemic. The purpose of this law is to eliminate one potential vector
10 for the transmission of zoonotic diseases, live animal markets, and the
11 suffering it causes therefrom at least until there is further examination
12 by infectious disease experts of the nexus between zoonotic
13 diseases and live animal markets.

14 § 2. The agriculture and markets law is amended by adding a new
15 section 96-ee to read as follows:

16 § 96-ee. Prohibition of the operation of establishments where animals
17 and/or fowls are slaughtered for food. 1. Notwithstanding any provision
18 of law to the contrary:

19 (a) the commissioner shall not license any person, firm, partnership
20 or corporation to operate any place or establishment where animals
21 and/or fowls are slaughtered or butchered for food;

22 (b) the commissioner shall immediately suspend the license of any
23 person, firm, partnership or corporation that currently holds a license
24 issued by the commissioner to operate any place or establishment where
25 animals and/or fowls are slaughtered or butchered for food; and

26 (c) no person, firm, partnership or corporation that currently holds a
27 license issued by the commissioner to operate any place or establishment

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 where animals and/or fowls are slaughtered or butchered for food shall
2 operate such establishment after the effective date of this section.

3 2. (a) A task force on public health risks and animal welfare concerns
4 of slaughterhouses is hereby established. Such task force shall conduct
5 and complete a thorough examination of facilities heretofore licensed by
6 the department under this article and their effect on public health and
7 safety and animal welfare.

8 (b) Such task force shall consist of seven members, to be appointed as
9 follows: one member to be appointed by the governor; two members to be
10 appointed by the temporary president of the senate; two members to be
11 appointed by the speaker of the assembly; one member to be appointed by
12 the commissioner or his or her designee; and one member to be appointed
13 by the commissioner of health or his or her designee. Appointees shall
14 have expertise in infectious diseases, and, in particular, the potential
15 spread of diseases between animals raised or slaughtered for food and
16 humans. At least one such representative shall be from a duly incorpo-
17 rated animal welfare organization, and at least one such representative
18 shall be a licensed veterinarian who is not employed by a government
19 agency.

20 (c) No member, officer or employee of such task force shall be
21 disqualified from holding any other public office or employment, nor
22 shall he or she forfeit any such office or employment by reason of his
23 or her appointment pursuant to this section, notwithstanding the
24 provisions of any general, special or local law, ordinance or city char-
25 ter.

26 (d) The members of such task force shall receive no compensation for
27 their services, but shall be allowed their actual and necessary expenses
28 incurred in the performance of their duties pursuant to this section.

29 (e) Such task force shall make a report of its findings to the gover-
30 nor, the temporary president of the senate, and the speaker of the
31 assembly within one year of the date of the first meeting of the task
32 force, which shall take place within thirty days of the appointment of
33 the task force representatives. Such report shall include recommenda-
34 tions for further action and legislation.

35 § 3. This act shall take effect immediately.