

# Comment Report

HF 78

A bill for an act relating to fees charged to a prisoner in the custody of a county sheriff or municipality for administrative costs, room and board, and medical aid.(See HF 249.)

Subcommittee Members: Wilz, H.-CH, Levin, Wheeler

Date: 02/01/2023

Time: 04:30 PM

Location: House Lounge

**Name:** Betsy Fickel

**Comment:** This bill is very troublesome for the following reasons. The scenarios presented are very real based on various court cases within the U.S. Some of which I had personal involvement. Naturally, the perspective of those involved in animal production will differ from a pet owner or non animal owner. You are unable to care for your animals. If there is no other caretaker or trusted party to care for them, you can easily be charged with neglect, cruelty, mistreatment. The state can then seize and sell them without your rights of judicial process. (Licensees; administrative law, which is unconstitutional) The fines and jail time will be levied.If someone else is caring for the animals, wages may have to be paid. Along with feed costs and vet care.Imprisoned you MUST pay for any and all charges, including execution of claims. That is over and above the operational costs paid for by our tax dollars. Easy to pad by a less than honorable party. If you owe anyone for your property, you are still responsible for making those payments, even though your income source has been seized. How are you going to pay when incarcerated and your livelihood has been taken from you? How will this affect one's ability to be self supporting with so many burdens of debt heaped on them?How does this violate Amendment 8 of the Constitution regarding excessive fines?This is being hit with a sledgehammer and pounded into the ground. Some have been ounded into the six foot level. You read that right. Due to the stress involved in several 'extrapolated' animal seizures it has led to physical and mental issues with some committing suicide. Does that also bring to mind farmer suicides?Now some of you may think it's tin foil hat time. that's ok. Go ahead and think that. I will reiterate that the above is based on actual cases. Please strongly consider a NO vote on this bill.Thank you.

**Name:** Betsy Fickel

**Comment:** In addition to the above comments, this is another scenario not out of the realm of possibility.<https://fee.org/articles/howamassachusettsownseizedafarmers370kpropertytocovera60ktaxdebtandkeptthechange/>Unable to pay property taxes, so another hammer whack, as may be unable to raise the funds if incarcerated and unable to pay those additional costs. Easy potential to lose everything one ever worked for.Not saying they will happen, but one also needs to look down the road for future unintended consequences.