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**(S.D.)- SD Senate Panel Rejects Animal Cruelty Measure**



By: Jeremy Anderson Posted at: 02/12/2013 11:28 AM

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) - A South Dakota legislative panel has rejected a measure that sought to make aggravated cruelty to dogs, cats and horses a felony.

The Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee voted 7-1 to kill the bill after state officials and representatives of agricultural groups said it would conflict with animal abuse laws that already work.

Animal rights groups say South Dakota and North Dakota are the only states without felony penalties for animal mistreatment.

The bill would have made it a felony carrying a maximum penalty of two years in prison and a fine of \$4,000 to mistreat, torture or be cruel to a dog, cat or horse.

The measure would not have applied to hunting, fishing, trapping, branding and any activities that are customary in farming and ranching.