

HB 251-FN - AS INTRODUCED

2025 SESSION

25-0256
08/02

HOUSE BILL

251-FN

AN ACT

allowing the ownership of certain squirrels and raccoons.

SPONSORS:

Rep. Spillane, Rock. 2; Rep. B. Boyd, Hills. 12; Rep. Cole, Hills. 26; Rep. Edwards, Rock. 31; Rep. Notter, Hills. 12; Rep. Avellani, Carr. 4; Rep. Corcoran, Hills. 28; Rep. McFarlane, Graf. 18; Rep. J. Aron, Sull. 4; Sen. Murphy, Dist 16; Sen. Innis, Dist 7

COMMITTEE:

Environment and Agriculture

ANALYSIS

This bill allows the ownership of squirrels and raccoons deemed unable to survive in the wild.

Explanation:

Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.

Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough.]~~

Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Five

AN ACT allowing the ownership of certain squirrels and raccoons.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 New Paragraph; Wildlife Division; Animals Allowed to Be Owned Without Permit. Amend
2 RSA 207:14 by inserting after paragraph III the following new paragraph:

3 III-a. Raccoons and gray squirrels may be possessed as companion animals without a permit
4 from the department if a wildlife rehabilitation facility makes the determination that the animal
5 cannot survive in the wild and such animal is up to date on any vaccines required. If an owner of a
6 raccoon or gray squirrel cannot satisfy the requirements of this paragraph, the fish and game
7 commission may charge them with a fine set in rules adopted under RSA 541-A and the animal shall
8 be examined and, if necessary, vaccinated. The raccoon or gray squirrel shall not be confiscated or
9 euthanized without the permission of the owner. Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed as
10 enabling the trapping, breeding, and sale of raccoons and gray squirrels. If a person relocates from a
11 state where it is legal to keep a raccoon or gray squirrel, such person can keep such raccoon or gray
12 squirrel so long as such animal is up to date on any vaccines required.

13 2 Effective Date. This act shall take effect January 1, 2026.

**HB 251-FN- FISCAL NOTE
AS INTRODUCED**

AN ACT allowing the ownership of certain squirrels and raccoons.

FISCAL IMPACT: This bill does not provide funding.

Estimated State Impact				
	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028
Revenue	\$0	Indeterminable - Less than \$10,000 Increase Per Year		
Revenue Fund(s)	Fish and Game Fund			
Expenditures*	\$0	Indeterminable - Increase of \$10,000 - \$100,000 Per Year		
Funding Source(s)	Fish and Game Fund			
Appropriations*	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Funding Source(s)	None			

***Expenditure = Cost of bill**

***Appropriation = Authorized funding to cover cost of bill**

METHODOLOGY:

This bill allows the ownership of squirrels and raccoons deemed unable to survive in the wild. The Fish and Game Department assumes this bill could lead to a significant increase in enforcement actions to ensure these wild animals were obtained legally and met the statutory requirements. The Department states it would need to develop a system to document and track animals that were determined by a wildlife rehabilitator to be unable to survive in the wild, who the rehabilitator was, the reasoning for why the animal could not be released to the wild, what type of animal it was, and who the animal was turned over to. The Department states this will result in an indeterminable increase in state expenditures for the development and maintenance of a reporting/tracking system as well as the increase in staff hours for enforcement. The overall fiscal impact is calculated as being between \$10,000 and \$100,000. Lastly, the Department estimates any impact on fine revenue collected would be less than \$10,000 in any year.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Fish and Game Department