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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair  
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

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### AB 1382 (Castillo) - Ethics Over Aesthetics Act

**Version:** May 13, 2026

**Policy Vote:** B., P. & E.D. 6 - 0, JUD. 11 - 0

**Urgency:** No

**Mandate:** No

**Hearing Date:** June 29, 2026

**Consultant:** Janelle Miyashiro

**Bill Summary:** AB 1382 prohibits selling, importing for profit, or offering for sale in California a transgenic pet animal, as defined, subject to certain exceptions.

**Fiscal Impact:** Unknown, potentially significant workload cost pressures to the state funded trial court system to adjudicate any civil cases filed as a result of this bill (Trial Court Trust Fund, General Fund). The fiscal impact of this bill to the courts will depend on many unknowns, including the number of cases filed and the factors unique to each case. An eight-hour court day costs approximately \$8,000 in staff in workload. If court days exceed 10, costs to the trial courts could reach hundreds of thousands of dollars. While the courts are not funded on a workload basis, an increase in workload could result in delayed court services and would put pressure on the General Fund to fund additional staff and resources and to increase the amount appropriated to backfill for trial court operations.

**Background:** Transgenic animals are those that have been subject to genetic modification, which allows for new traits or capabilities which are not natural to the animal. Transgenic animals may be differentiated from genetically modified animals in that genetically modified animals are modifications of existing genetics within the animal, while transgenic animals have insertions of new genetics into the animal's makeup. Transgenic animals are not new, however transgenic animals have primarily been utilized in the science and research space.

### Proposed Law:

- Establishes the Ethics Over Aesthetics Act, which prohibits a person in California from profiting from, selling, or offering to sell a transgenic pet animal that possesses a cosmetic transgenic trait.
- Provides the following exceptions from the Act:
  - The transgenic trait is for the sole purpose of benefiting the health of the transgenic pet animal, including, but not limited to, making the transgenic pet animal resistant to a disease or condition.
  - The transgenic trait is for the sole purpose of enhancing the transgenic pet animal's interaction with humans, including, but not limited to, promoting hypoallergenic traits, and does not alter the natural functions of the transgenic pet animal.

- The transgenic pet animal is a fish species that satisfies all of the following requirements: it is a live tropical marine or freshwater animal that will be maintained in a closed system, kept out of California waters, and not used for research, human consumption, or bait; the person or entity seeking to import, distribute, possess, and sell the animal has submitted an application and fee to the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW); and DFW has determined the animal poses no reasonably foreseeable risk to native fish, wildlife, or plants.
- Provides that each transgenic pet animal imported for profit, sold, or offered for sale in this state in violation of the Act is a separate violation and shall be punishable by a civil penalty of not less than \$5,000.
- Establishes the following definitions for purposes of the Act:
  - “Cosmetic transgenic trait” means a transgenic trait that alters, modifies, or engineers a transgenic pet animal’s appearance or natural functions, which may include, but not be limited to, novel fur, skin, feather, or scale coloring, the removal of claws or vocal cords, or the addition or subtraction of appendages.
  - “Pet animal” means a dog, cat, rabbit, guinea pig, hamster, mouse, reptile, amphibian, bird, fish, or other species of animal kept for the purpose of being a household pet.
  - “Transgenic pet animal” means a pet animal that possesses a transgenic trait, and includes the progeny of a transgenic pet animal.
  - “Transgenic trait” means a trait that has been deliberately altered, modified, or engineered, through means not possible under natural conditions, by insertion of a foreign gene using genetic engineering methods, including, but not limited to, the introduction of chromosomes containing artificially transferred genetic material from any other organism or a laboratory construct, regardless of whether the original source’s genetic material was altered, modified, or engineered before insertion, or whether the originally transferred genetic material was inherited through normal reproduction.

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