

THE ANIMAL COUNCIL

P.O. Box 168, Millbrae CA 94030

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July 6, 2007

FAX: 916-445-0128

The Honorable Gloria Negrete-McLeod
Chair, Senate Committee on Local Government

Re: AB 1634, "California Healthy Pets Act" amended July 3 – OPPOSITION

Dear Ms. Negrete-McLeod :

We oppose AB 1634 mandating sterilization of dogs and cats and ask that this bill, based on the flawed concept of unwarranted local mandate rejected in 4 prior bills in a decade, not move forward from your Committee.

THE ANIMAL COUNCIL (TAC) was founded in 1991 to combat San Mateo County's (California) action to enact legislation forbidding cat and dog breeding, and mandating sterilization of all cats and dogs. The actual "San Mateo County Pet Overpopulation Ordinance" – enacted for the unincorporated area after a lengthy citizen task force process, only added to the unaltered license a signature requirement that the owner would not breed the animal before obtaining a breeding permit. Only two of the 20 cities enacted the ordinance (1995), but by 2002 the county no longer euthanized healthy dogs and cats. This success was achieved through programs and services implemented within the shelter and included targeted community outreach while Peninsula Humane Society, that had originated the "mandatory" concept, has deemed the ordinance results "disappointing". Similar results have been achieved elsewhere with no legislation and total focus on effective programs. It is also imperative to understand that animal shelter intakes declined SO steeply over the 20 years prior to any legislation that attributing further declines to legislation rather than other concurrent factors defies logic.

We oppose AB 1634 not only because it would require local jurisdictions, like ours, that are already successful to use unnecessary, unwanted "intact permits" that will disrupt and burden the lives of local residents but also create unrealistic expectations that this approach can be successful elsewhere. It cannot be. The logic is flawed, the approach infeasible and will impose direct and indirect costs and revenue losses plus confusion and needless antagonistic confrontations on local government, businesses and other entities and individuals. AB 1634 would merely impose a new, permanent bureaucracy on California's 58 counties and 476 municipalities with no recognition of the previously successful, no incentives for others to use non-legislative proven approaches, no future review of the results including mandated data tracking based on epidemiological standards and no specific sunset date – in effect, a disincentive to local innovation and accountability.

We respectfully ask that AB 1634 not move forward.

Very truly yours,

SHARON A. COLEMAN
President, The Animal Council

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