

What California AB 1634 Means for Breeders of Pedigreed Cats

It is apparent that many veterinarians, almost all shelter professionals, and most among the general public have no idea how devastating AB 1634 would be to the future of the historic and rare breeds of cats.

This bill is not just a matter of breeders objecting to paying unknown/high fees for "intact permits". The bill does not provide an exemption for breeders. AB 1634 punishes breeders. It would end the cat fancy in California and seriously harm the gene pools of beautiful healthy well bred pedigreed cats. These pets are ideal for those families or individuals who want the predictable characteristics of cats like the sweet gentle Persian, the lap-sitting Burmese or the high energy Abyssinian.

The conditions in AB 1634 for "exemptions" from mandatory spay/neuter mean that **THOSE BREEDING PEDIGREED CATS COULD NOT COMPLY AT ALL.**

Here is the problem;

ALL kittens/cats over the age of 4 months must be sterilized.

a. To get an "intact permit" - only allowed for those cats/kittens meeting various conditions:

1. **You need to have a business license** - Home breeders are not in "business" and may not meet zoning or other requirements to operate as a "business" as these vary with each community. **AND be licensed as a breeder by the local jurisdiction or animal control.** But there is no requirement that the local jurisdiction **MUST** set up a breeder license program. Breeders, like anyone else, would resent having government inspectors in their bedrooms looking for a litter of kittens. Breeder licensing is a money loser for jurisdictions that do not want to set up or enforce a breeder license scheme especially where there are few home breeders.

OR

2. **You have to meet ALL of three conditions**

A. The cat has competed in at least one show within the last two years. This is **IMPOSSIBLE** for a kitten since they can't be in a showhall until at least 4 months of age by CFA rules and they are supposed to be sterilized before that age. All kittens would be in noncompliance. Most breeders wait to evaluate kittens for breeding potential until they are much more mature. Others do not like early age altering as some breeds develop more slowly. When to sterilize a kitten should remain a choice.

AND

B. The cat is of a "valid" breed recognized by an "approved" registry. (Any local entity we hope would approve The Cat Fanciers' Association, CFA, but who knows.)

AND

C. The cat has earned, or is in the process of earning, a **TITLE** (conformation, obedience, etc.) from an approved "purebred" registry or association. (If a cat doesn't like to show - too bad. If the cat is a tailed Manx and can't be shown - too bad. Many cats are valuable in breeding programs but cannot be shown for a variety of reasons or a breeder may not want to show for a variety of reasons including personal. Perhaps CFA will have to start awarding "Obedience Titles" for cats.)

OR

3. the dog is a guide dog, etc. (No way to meet this one.)

OR

4. the dog is trained and used by law enforcement, etc. (No way to meet this one.)

OR

5. the owner provides a veterinarian's letter stating due to age, poor health or illness it is unsafe to spay/neuter the cat and saying when the cat will be spayed/neutered. (This does not help a healthy breeding cat.)

b. In addition – if an unaltered cat for which an intact permit was issued ceases to meet the requirements (i.e. if the cat is no longer shown) the cat must be spayed/neutered.

If a cat were to somehow be able to get an "intact permit", and after winning "Cat of the Year" is no longer being shown he would have to be sterilized. When cats are proven to be of high quality by their show achievements then that is when they are valuable in a breeding program and should not be spayed/neutered ! Cats after showing normally do not go back to show competition in the following years - they pass on their genes to offspring and then they become neutered pets. Male cats once used for breeding often are too excitable to be shown. ALL SHOW CATS must be sterilized after they no longer meet condition A above.

c. In addition -

1. The fee for an "intact permit" shall be "what is reasonably necessary" to fund the administration of this complicated, bureaucratic nightmare program. There is no tested law to know how much this might cost. Several jurisdictions are already proposing \$150/cat/year. It could be an even higher excise tax.

2. The jurisdictions MAY adopt a differential license fee that would qualify for an intact permit. (Some may do this, others may have a higher license fee and charge an additional fee for an "intact permit" that allows the cat to be used for breeding. There is great uncertainty.)

d. The worst of all -

No jurisdiction is prohibited from adopting a MORE restrictive spay/neuter "program". There will be jurisdictions unable to implement the complicated proof of show career, registry approving, title checking plan for dogs and cats. Others may not want to administer an expensive breeder license program. Many would simply say all cats must be sterilized - NO EXCEPTIONS.

The well known agenda of the animal rights organizations in support of this bill is to eventually end all purposeful breeding. It is difficult to understand why the California Animal Control Directors Association (CACDA) would support diverting resources to a complicated breeder-hunter law. We wonder why the California Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) would choose to see the historic, beautiful well tempered breeds of cats with rich history, like Persians, Siamese, Maine Coons, Russian Blues and so many others become EXTINCT. The cat fancy helps to educate and raise the value of all cats. AB 1634 would end this positive force in California yet there would be no impact on reducing shelter cat populations.