



THE CAT FANCIERS' ASSOCIATION, INC.

World's Largest Registry of Pedigreed Cats

George J. Eigenhauser, Jr. Director-at-Large, Legislative Information Liaison
P. O. Box 6089 • Marysville • California 95901
530-742-6153 (Work) • 530-329-8658 (Home) • geigenhauser@allmail.net

January 8, 2009

The Honorable Roy Wilson
Riverside County Board of Supervisors
5th Floor Administrative Center
4080 Lemon Street
Riverside, CA 92501

FAX 951-955-2194

RE: **MEETING 1/13/2009**
Adoption of Ordinance 630.12 relating to Dogs and Cats OPPOSITION

Dear Supervisor Wilson;

I am writing on behalf of The Cat Fanciers' Association, Inc.¹ to express our concern and **opposition** to the proposed Ordinance No. 630.12. This proposal does nothing to solve the real problems in Riverside County. Programs to target the free roaming/unowned/feral cats are necessary. Services for those of low income are needed, not punishment and fines.

Under the proposed ordinance, mandatory spay/neuter of pets (MSN) for any technical violation of any state or local law related to animals will be required. Forced sterilization will have many unfortunate consequences. A violation of the ordinance or any other law may mean sterilization of a valuable breeding animal with no provision for an appeal. Complaint based enforcement invites neighborhood disputes. Animal Control officers will be called in to deal with the vigilantism that will arise in the county with neighbor complaints. The County will face the expenses of additional impounds and resultant hearings from people whose animals were impounded. No provision is made for innocent impounds through disasters (such as wildfires) and other reasons. The age limit of 4 months is too young and decisions regarding sterilization should be made by the owner and

¹ *CFA is a non-profit organization founded in 1906. Part of CFA's mission is to enhance the well-being of all cats. CFA participants, who breed and show pedigreed cats, are active in cat health promotion, cat breed rescue, shelter support and other animal related programs throughout California. CFA is a positive force that has helped to educate the general public about proper cat care, spay/neuter and responsible pet ownership. CFA is proud of its self-regulation programs to encourage high standards of care for cats in multi-cat breeding environments. A voluntary "Cattery of Excellence" program and a newly introduced breeder mentoring program are part of ongoing efforts to ensure responsible breeding programs and good standards of care.*

their veterinarian. It should be noted that the American College of Theriogenologists (ACT) and the Society for Theriogenology (SFT) recently issued a formal position statement against MSN laws². Mandatory sterilization programs and breeder licensing have failed elsewhere, such as San Mateo, CA, the City of Los Angeles, CA and King County, WA. In Santa Cruz County, CA animal control costs skyrocketed after a MSN law was passed.

While CFA supports voluntary microchipping, microchipping has its drawbacks as the primary means of identification. For most pets, especially an indoor pet, a visible collar or tag may be the only identification needed. If the pet should accidentally get out of the home any neighbor can read the tag and return it. Most people don't have scanners at home, so a lost pet with a microchip as its sole means of identification will be taken to the shelter instead of home.

Microchip technology has other limitations. Studies suggest that chip migration is still an issue, increasing the possibility of shelter workers missing the chip. Injection site inflammation has been noted and the long term dangers are still unknown. Different frequencies among brands of chips, or even older versions of the same brand, make errors common. It may take two, three or even more passes with a scanner to find a microchip. Hurried shelter workers may miss microchips, leading to lawsuits. For animal services to keep track of thousands of dog/cat microchip numbers when they can't offer an efficient recovery program as well as keep the names and addresses for every transfer of a cat/dog is a waste of limited resources.

Current economic conditions have made it more difficult for many people to keep their pets. Reasons include owners being unable to afford their pets or keep their pets when relocating or divorcing, pets having behavior or medical problems that owners are not able to deal with, etc. Mandatory microchipping only adds to the costs of keeping your pet. Forced sterilization adds more costs.

Mandatory microchipping of all cats over 4 months of age is a burden and extra expense for those doing TNR (trap, neuter and return) of freeroaming/feral cats to reduce this population. Will everyone feeding a stray cat be considered an "owner" who must comply with the County microchip program? If so these cats will simply be ignored and continue to reproduce adding to the shelter burden. This could lead to more abandonment and alienates the people currently working to solve the problem.

Community based approaches, such as spay/neuter outreach or trap/neuter/return (TNR) programs for free roaming cats will have the best results. Positive cooperative approaches have proven to be

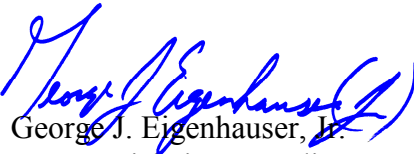
² *These are the leading animal reproductive experts. A copy of the position statement from their web site is enclosed.*

The Honorable Roy Wilson
January 8, 2009
Page 3

successful in other areas. With this ordinance Riverside Animal Services will destroy any hope of community collaboration to build volunteers, provide education, breed rescue and shelter support from breeders. CFA participants have often worked with their communities to help solve animal problems and we hope Riverside County will draw upon their expertise and experience in developing future plans.

We respectfully urge you and the Board to investigate solutions and programs that are positive and will not unjustly harm individuals who contribute to the well-being of animals. Please vote NO on Ordinance 630.12.

Very truly yours,



George J. Eigenhauser, Jr.
CFA Legislative Coordinator

Enclosure as stated.
