



THE CAT FANCIERS' ASSOCIATION, INC.

World's Largest Registry of Pedigreed Cats

LEGISLATIVE ALERT

Issued: July 2, 2009

SB 250 -- Mandatory Sterilization of Cats and Dogs CALIFORNIA

BRIEF SUMMATION: This bill mandates sterilization of most dogs and all outdoor cats in California. It also mandates sterilization of owned cats if found in violation of the bill's provisions, if impounded, or if found at large.

CURRENT STATUS: The bill has passed the California Senate and is now scheduled to be heard by the Assembly Committee on Appropriations on July 15, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. **IMMEDIATE ACTION IS NEEDED.**

IF YOU WROTE IN OPPOSITION WHEN SB 250 WAS IN THE CA SENATE **YOU NEED TO WRITE AGAIN.** THE BILL IS NOW IN THE ASSEMBLY AND YOU NEED TO WRITE TO THE ASSEMBLY MEMBERS AND THE GOVERNOR.

WHAT THIS LEGISLATION WILL MEAN TO YOU AND ARGUMENTS AGAINST THIS LEGISLATION:

See the previous CFA Action Alerts dated March 12, 2009; April 2, 2009; April 24, 2009; and May 29, 2009: <http://www.cfa.org/exhibitors/alert-CA-SB250-031209.pdf>
<http://www.cfa.org/exhibitors/alert-CA-SB250-040209.pdf>;
<http://www.cfa.org/exhibitors/alert-CA-SB250-042409.pdf>
<http://www.cfa.org/exhibitors/alert-CA-SB250.html>

ACTION TO TAKE:

ORGANIZATIONS/INDIVIDUALS (clubs, rescue groups, etc.) must write to the committee consultant, Julie Salley-Gray and all of the committee members immediately –

there is not much time!! Send your opposition letters as follows:

Assembly Committee on Appropriations
ATTN: Julie Salley-Gray
State Capitol Room 2114
Sacramento, CA 95814.
[Fax: (916) 319-2181]

If possible, please also copy the sixteen Appropriations Committee members and as a courtesy copy the bill's author, Senator Dean Florez.

Now is the time to begin writing to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger urging that he oppose, and if necessary **VETO** SB 250.

Please also write your own assembly member and as many assembly members as you can to express your opposition should it pass the committee and go to the entire assembly.

1) Send your individual letters or Organization/Clubs letters by mail or fax - hard copy is important.

2) Reference the title - " Re: OPPOSE SB 250 as amended 5/28/09
(and as proposed to be amended)

3) Begin your letter by stating that you and/or your club (state name) is OPPOSED to SB 250 as amended May 28, 2009 (as well as opposed to the current amendments). If you are an out of state breed clubs with members in California, please be sure to note that fact.

4) Please focus your concerns on the costs involved in creating this new boondoggle.

NEW: The California Department of Finance "...is opposed to this measure because it would increase costs..." Their analysis notes that: "Given the current economic climate, requiring the owners of dogs and cats to pay for sterilization procedures would result in more animals being abandoned or surrendered because of the owners' inability to finance the sterilization procedure and pay additional fines."

5) Put comments in your own words so the letters do not appear to be "form". You may use the samples below - make only a few brief points. If you would like more suggested points please look at the previous CFA Action Alerts.

6) Conclude your letter by again stating your opposition to the Bill; thank the assembly member for his/her time and ask for a NO vote on SB 250.

Please visit their district offices [in you area] call, fax and write them. To find out your state assemblyman, visit: <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/yourleg.html> This link can be used

George Eigenhauser, CFA Legislative Coordinator

To correspond with the CFA Legislative Committee, please email: legislation@cfa.org

to find the names of your representatives as well as contact information. To write to all the assembly members their contact information can be found at:

<http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/asm-addresses.html> Contact information for the Assembly Committee on Appropriations and the Governor can be found at the end of this alert.

SUGGESTED POINTS:

** A person feeding a stray or feral cat not yet trapped would be its "custodian" subject to all of the punitive effects of the bill. Imposing fines or other punitive measures tends to discourage otherwise caring individuals from coming to the aid of unowned/feral cats. SB 250 will increase the number of stray and feral cats taken to the shelters and increase the costs to local animal control.

** SB 250 is an unfunded mandate on local government. Feral cats and unweaned kittens make up the majority of cat intakes at many shelters. If casual feeders are forced to surrender stray cats to animal control, this will increase euthanasia and costs for local shelters. It will only further burden the counties and municipalities and divert limited resources that would be better utilized elsewhere and increase the costs to local animal control.

**The California Department of Finance bill analysis for SB 250 notes that:

"This bill would result in a substantial increase to the General Fund cost of the Animal Adoption mandate."

"The Department of Finance is opposed to this measure because it would increase costs for an existing state-mandated local program, potentially create a new state mandated local program, and result in General Fund costs that are not included in the 2009-10 Budget Act."

"Mandatory spay and neuter provisions have failed throughout California at the local government level."

"Expanding local animal control efforts would likely increase local agencies' budget demands; however, there is no conclusive evidence that these efforts would result in additional revenue to the state or counteract animal overpopulation."

"...the most probable outcome is that owners and custodians of dogs and cats will be forced to either pay for the cost of the sterilization procedure or abandon the animal to the licensing agency."

"Specifically, the term "custodian" may reduce the legal status and value of dogs and cats and restrict the rights of owners, veterinarians, and government agencies to protect and care for animals."

"The term "custodian" would also discourage volunteers from participating in trap/neuter/release programs for feral cats, also resulting in increased rates of impounded cats."

**Every local jurisdiction in California; 58 counties and 478 cities; would have to create, administer and enforce a complex and burdensome mandate diverting resources from programs that are working to reduce the numbers of homeless cat and dogs in California.

George Eigenhauser, CFA Legislative Coordinator

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** No mandatory spay/neuter bill will impact the reproduction of the unowned or loosely owned cats. TNR (trap-neuter-return) with free or low cost sterilization is the best way to reduce the feral cat population and save money for local animal control agencies.

Please feel free to quote liberally from the Department of Finance analysis. It can be found on the CFA web site at: <http://www.cfa.org/exhibitors/CA-SB250-bill-analysis.pdf>

PLANNED MEETINGS: The Assembly Committee on Appropriations is scheduled to act on SB 250 on July 15, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. in Room 4202. Please act promptly.

CONTACT LIST: Contact information for the Committee on Appropriations, the committee consultant, the bill's author, and Governor Arnold are as follows:

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Phone: (916) 445-2841
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Online contact form:
<http://gov.ca.gov/interact#email>

California State Assembly Committee on Appropriations
contact information follows on next two pages.

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