



Home	Bill Information	California Law	Publications	Other Resources	My Subscriptions	My Favorites
------	------------------	----------------	--------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------

ACR-86 Animals: overpopulation: spay and neutering services. (2023-2024)

SHARE THIS:  

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 86

CHAPTER 51

Relative to animals.

[Filed with Secretary of State April 19, 2024.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 86, Kalra. Animals: overpopulation: spay and neutering services.

This measure would encourage the state and local municipalities to develop and fund high-volume spay and neuter clinics across the state to provide sterilization services, and would encourage other actions relating to pets, including actions to control animal breeding and encourage spaying and neutering, as specified.

Fiscal Committee: yes

WHEREAS, There is a pet overpopulation crisis in California; and

WHEREAS, California's private and public shelters and the private rescue organizations that support them are overwhelmed with animals; and

WHEREAS, California's private and public shelters are chronically underfunded while tasked with tackling many of the state's animal needs, such as fighting animal abuse, addressing mental health issues, including hoarding, providing safekeeping for pets when owners are arrested or placed in the hospital, supporting public safety, including rabies control, assisting first responders during emergencies and natural disasters, reunifying pets with their people, and providing life-impacting veterinary interventions and care, animal behavioral support, and adoptions; and

WHEREAS, Due to breeding and lack of access to spaying and neutering services, the state's shelters are experiencing overcrowding, leading to higher rates of illness, euthanasia, and operational hardships; and

WHEREAS, Due to shelter overcrowding, shelters are turning away animals from intake, leading to higher rates of animals procreating and struggling to survive on the streets; and

WHEREAS, There has been an influx of rabbits, horses, pigs, and other agricultural animals into shelters whose higher level of care puts further strain on shelter resources; and

WHEREAS, The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the challenges that shelters face due to shelter closures or highly reduced hours, staffing shortages, and functional interruptions; and

WHEREAS, Californians adopted pets at record numbers during the COVID-19 pandemic and many Californians underestimated the time that was needed to care for pets and then returned to work, leading to higher rates of owner relinquishment; and

WHEREAS, Due to the brief spike in demand for pets during the pandemic, many Californians, seeing an economic opportunity, began breeding dogs for monetary gain, thereby contributing to the pet overpopulation crisis; and

WHEREAS, Californians are currently not adopting pets from shelters and rescues at the level needed; and

WHEREAS, Californians are buying unaltered "purebred" animals from both in-state and out-of-state breeders; and

WHEREAS, There is a shortage of pet-friendly housing in California, leading to increased owner relinquishment; and

WHEREAS, Due to the pandemic, veterinary clinics and shelters were not able to perform routine spay and neuter surgeries, which has resulted in more unwanted litters; and

WHEREAS, There is insufficient community access to low-cost or free spay and neuter clinics, as well as a lack of resources needed to fully enforce state and local laws concerning licensing, breeding, spaying, and neutering; and

WHEREAS, There is a lack of affordable veterinary services available to Californians and their companion animals, which contributes to animal suffering and increased owner relinquishments; and

WHEREAS, There are only two veterinary schools in California, both with limited seating, which fail to meet the state's demand for licensed veterinarians, and there are not enough academic faculty at those institutions to teach veterinary students; and

WHEREAS, There are not enough licensed veterinarians and registered veterinary technicians, particularly those trained to perform high-volume spay and neuter surgeries, to meet the service demands of California's shelters, leading to shelter animals being adopted unaltered, thus adding to the pet overpopulation crisis; and

WHEREAS, There is a mental health crisis among veterinarians and shelter and rescue volunteers and staff due to occupational stress, leading to reported suicide rates four to five times higher than the general population; and

WHEREAS, Local jurisdictions spend over \$400,000,000 per year in operating the state's shelters to house, adopt out, and euthanize homeless animals; and

WHEREAS, The only annual state funding for shelters is the roughly \$500,000 allocated through the Pet Lover's Fund funded by the Pet Lover's specialized license plates program, and a tax check-off program for low-cost spay and neuter; and

WHEREAS, Millions of private and philanthropic dollars are spent every year to assist California's shelter animals; and

WHEREAS, The Legislature has failed to appropriate ongoing funds to carry out the mandates of Senate Bill 1785 (Chapter 752 of the Statutes of 1998), authored by Senator Tom Hayden; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Veterinary Medical Board, with support from the Governor, other state boards and agencies, and interested stakeholders, should encourage out-of-state licensed veterinarians and registered veterinary technicians to become licensed in California to perform or assist with the necessary spay and neuter surgeries and other medical services in order to address pet overpopulation; and be it further

Resolved, That the state and local municipalities, in cooperation with public and private shelters, nonprofit rescue organizations, and private foundations, are encouraged to develop and fund high-volume spay and neuter clinics across the state to provide sterilization services; and be it further

Resolved, That allocation of adequate funding for statewide spay and neuter programs and resources for broader enforcement of state and local licensing, breeding, and spay and neuter laws is urgently needed; and be it further

Resolved, That the state is encouraged to conduct a public relations campaign urging Californians to adopt shelter animals rather than buying an animal from a breeder, and to always spay and neuter them; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.