

GREYHOUND CLUB OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Andrea L. Bridges, Secretary

P. O. Box 355

Tracy, CA 95378-0355

June 26, 2009

The Honorable Mary Hayashi
Chair, Business and Professions Committee
California State Assembly
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Oppose SB 250, as amended May 28, 2009.

Dear Assembly Member Hayashi:

The GCNC is writing you to ask you to oppose Senate Bill 250. SB 250, as amended, is still a measure that would require owners of natural dogs to purchase unaltered dog licenses or to sterilize the dogs, would make it easier to deny or revoke licenses for unaltered dogs and would require the mandatory sterilization of pets for a single violation of animal control ordinances. SB 250 is mandatory spay/neuter ("MSN") legislation, and we strenuously oppose this bill.

Our membership is particularly distressed that the California legislature appears to be "fiddling while Rome burns." California is insolvent, cuts to human services are underway and yet our representatives are wasting time considering "animal welfare" bills that will not advance the cause of animal welfare (indeed the legislation may lead to increased killing of pets) and will increase animal control costs. Yet, these bills advance the political agenda of the "Animal Rights" movement, the basic tenets of which are repugnant to a vast majority of voters. In this "guns vs. butter" environment, humans must come before animals.

1. MSN laws simply do not work in practice. (Santa Cruz, Los Angeles)

... the ASPCA is not aware of any credible evidence demonstrating a statistically significant enhancement in the reduction of shelter intake or euthanasia as a result of the implementation of a mandatory spay/neuter law.

– ASPCA Position Statement on Mandatory Spay/Neuter Laws

2. MSN laws cost money and have unintended consequences. The Department of Finance's analysis of AB 1634 concluded, "Requiring owners of dogs and cats to pay . . . for spaying and neutering procedures, regardless of whether the animal was impounded or not, may result in more animals being abandoned or surrendered." More animals abandoned or surrendered means more costs and more dogs killed.

Indeed MSN laws can negatively impact public health in the state.

The AVMA does not support regulations or legislation mandating spay/neuter of privately owned, non-shelter dogs and cats. Although spaying and neutering helps control dog

and cat populations, mandatory approaches may contribute to pet owners avoiding licensing, rabies vaccination and veterinary care for their pets, and may have other unintended consequences.

– AVMA Policy on Dog and Cat Population Control

3. MSN laws unfairly burden low-income voters.
4. MSN laws are not needed. Existing state law already requires owners of intact animals to pay a license fee that is at least double that of the fee for a sterilized animal and provides for enhanced and graduated fines for owners whose intact dogs are impounded. These statutes provide sufficient incentives for owners to sterilize their animals and to address animal control concerns, without the punitive provisions of SB 250.

We believe that the diversity of communities in California suggests animal control issues may be best addressed locally. Clearly, the animal control issues in the state's rural counties are much different than those in our urban centers. The ASPCA in its Position Statement continues, "Each community is unique, however, in terms of the particular sources and causes of companion animal overpopulation No one-size-fits-all solution is therefore possible."

Indeed, there are alternative practices that work without the coercion of mandatory spay/neuter laws. For instance, the "No Kill" practices adopted in a number of communities across the country and highlighted in Redemption: The Myth of Pet Overpopulation and the No Kill Revolution in America by Nathan J. Winograd provides such an alternative. Sadly, the entrenched "Animal Rights" establishment has lost sight of its mission – improving the welfare of animals – and opposes solutions that work, but fail ideological litmus tests.

Why do we care? GCNC represents approximately forty Greyhound owners, breeders and fanciers in California. Each year, GCNC hosts two Greyhound specialty shows, and our members participate in countless other dog events during the year throughout the state. We believe that we provide the public with important and high-profile examples of responsible dog ownership and dog breeding through our various activities. We are concerned about abandoned animals and work hard in our breed information and breed rescue programs to help solve this problem.

We respectfully ask that you consider the extreme shortcomings of this proposed legislation and vote no on SB 250.

Sincerely,



Andrea L. Bridges
Secretary
Greyhound Club of Northern California

cc: Members, Assembly Business and Professions Committee
Staff, Assembly Business and Professions Committee
Senator Dean Florez