

# ANIMAL ISSUES MOVEMENT

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All that is necessary for evil to prevail is for good men to do nothing. Edmund Burke

July 2, 2010

Councilmember Bill Rosendahl  
Councilmember Paul Koretz  
Los Angeles City Council  
200 N. Spring Street  
Los Angeles CA 90012

## PROTEST

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RE: CF No.10-0982 INCREASING ANIMAL LIMITS IN RESIDENTIAL ZONES

Animal Issues Movement hereby submits opposition to any attempt to increase the current dog limits per residential property in the City of L.A. The City of Los Angeles wisely allows only three (3) dogs. Almost every jurisdiction in the country allows only this number or less.

IMAGINE LIVING NEXT DOOR TO FIVE (5) PIT BULLS, OR ANY OTHER ANIMAL-AGGRESSIVE BREED, AND HAVING THEM JUMP OVER FENCES INTO YOUR YARD TO KILL YOUR PETS OR ESCAPING THROUGH GATES INTO YOUR COMMUNITY. FURTHER IMAGINE HAVING FIVE (5) PIT BULLS—OR ANY OTHER BREED OF LARGE or NOISY DOG (even Chihuahuas can create tremendous noise in multiples)—on EVERY PROPERTY IN A BLOCK AND ON BOTH SIDES OF THE STREET. As we know, barking is contagious and the cacophony of barks would make life for the community one of constant, uncontrollable noise.

Also, many of the most popular dog breeds today cannot be safely kept in multiples because of territoriality or animal-aggression. Imagine the lives of cats that might be kept in the same property or on adjacent properties.

- Increasing dog limits has been defeated soundly several times in the past by a large contingent of homeowners' associations, apartment associations, and realtors, who would again unite to oppose it.
- It also was opposed by the Zoning Dept. because of the dangers, noise and enforcement problems it would create and the potential deterioration of residential neighborhoods.

If the Council wishes to have LA Animal Services explore the feasibility of developing a program for microchipping and registering up to five (5) SPAYED/NEUTERED **indoor-only** cats, that should be presented to them for study of the impact on the Department and the increased staffing required to maintain records and perform inspections if necessary. It is still highly unlikely this will make a substantial increase in adult cat adoptions. And there is the possibility that it will create an even greater market for kittens—most of which will not be altered.

The answer to reducing the shelter population is not by merely passing out more animals to people who may potentially abandon them again because the cost is too high to maintain them. AIM can provide current charts regarding the cost per year of maintaining cats and dogs and also animal limits allowed in surrounding jurisdictions.

Although undoubtedly this motion were well-intended, in reality adding more animals to the residential population at this time when Animal Services is reducing its staffing will have a diametrically opposite effect than intended.

- **THE REASON ANIMAL OWNERS ABANDON OR RELINQUISH ANIMALS IS BECAUSE OF POOR JUDGMENT IN THE COST, CARE OR RESPONSIBILITY OF PET OWNERSHIP. TO BELIEVE THAT ALLOWING THEM TO HAVE MORE ANIMALS WILL REDUCE THE PROBLEM IS OBVIOUSLY A FALSE PREMISE.** Those who can least afford animals are the ones most likely to attain more than they can safely and financially handle. Many responsible owners already slightly exceed the current animal limits (3 dogs/3 cats) and LA Animal Services does not investigate unless there is a complaint.
- To allow up to ten (10) animals per residence would merely encourage hoarding and result in more animals suffering, dying in horrific conditions or being ultimate impounded in poor condition. This proposal would allow ten (10) total dogs and/or cats to be maintained per single residential lot. Can you imagine living next door to the noise, waste, odor, fighting/killing and confusion of ten animals in one yard and in EACH yard?

Although we have a spay/neuter ordinance, LA animal Services reported recently that the number of licenses of unaltered dogs has increased at a much higher percentage than those of altered pets. As a matter of fact, because owners who wish to maintain unaltered dogs must first obtain a breeder's permit, the number who could now breed is in the thousands.

Although introduced as a well-intentioned effort to help rescuers or to provide more homes for rescued animals, in reality allowing more than three dogs per household creates serious noise, conflict between both animals and neighbors, sanitation and public health and safety issues.

1. Some residents "take in/rescue" animals from the streets and are given stray and unwanted animals, which they believe they cannot refuse. They often become "hoarders" and lose the ability to care for the animals and do not spay/neuter nor provide appropriate medical care because of the costs. Increasing the limit numbers enables "collecting" animals and encourages them to not relinquish someone's lost pet to the shelter where it can be reclaimed by the owner. It also subjects animals to months—or even years—of living in squalor, dehydration and malnutrition, and living in their own waste because the hoarder is either afraid to place it in trash bins which might reveal the number of animals or does not have the time to clean.
2. Animal control officers have historically **NOT** punished nor harassed individuals in regard to the number of **well-maintained** animals they keep as pets, UNLESS there are complaints by neighbors, in which case the issue must be addressed regardless of zoning or legal limits. (Any attempt to claim otherwise should require proof by the claimant that harassment occurred.)

#### WHO WOULD BENEFIT FROM INCREASED ANIMAL LIMITS?

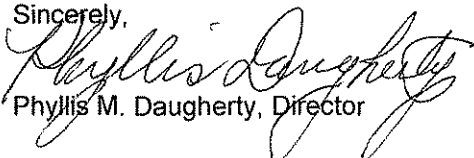
1. **BREEDERS** who usually keep a number of breeding adults and a large number of puppies/kittens on the premises. This would allow them to increase their non-taxpaying business in a residential zone.
2. **DOG FIGHTERS** who keep numerous pit bulls chained on their properties for fighting and breeding purposes. (**Note:** Often the animal limit is the **ONLY** way to gain entry to a property to inspect and curtail this activity.)

#### WHO WOULD NOT BENEFIT FROM INCREASED ANIMAL LIMITS?

1. The residents of the City. **BARKING DOGS IS THE #1 COMPLAINT TO LA ANIMAL SERVICES.** (I know from personal experience how disturbing and how quickly the quality of life can be diminished by neighboring dogs that bark continuously.)
2. Property owners who might have neighbors with a large amount of animals that create a nuisance or health/safety risk and negatively impact the quality of life and property values in the community.
3. The public that already suffers from daily dog attacks on both humans and animals (the Council needs to be more accurately advised of the magnitude of this problem.) **IN FACT, COUNCILMEMBER KORETZ COMMENTED AT A PUBLIC MEETING ON JUNE 2, 2010, TO THE VICTIM OF A DOG ATTACK, "DOG ATTACKS ARE INCREASING AND WE DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT."**
4. The Mayor and Council, who would receive an increasing number of complaints about animal-related issues, including noise, odor and **DANGER.**
5. The animals of this City would not benefit from being adopted by people who have no idea how to control a "pack" of dogs (a mentality that occurs in dogs in multiples.)
6. Police officers who are frequently forced to shoot animals in order to enter properties to assist humans or conduct investigations. (The greater the number of dogs, the more danger to the community and to law-enforcement.)
7. LA Animal Services, which would receive far more calls for dog bites and injuries from dog/cat fights in homes.
8. Also, the children who would no longer be able to walk or play on the streets and the pets who could no longer be safely taken for a walk without threat of attack.

As Councilman Koretz stated at the June 2, 2010, meeting, the City cannot handle the problems it already has because of owners not controlling their dogs. This ordinance would merely create more problems, more danger and more suffering by both humans and animals, and we respectfully enter this opposition.

Sincerely,

  
Phyllis M. Daugherty, Director