

ANIMAL ISSUES MOVEMENT

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

April 19, 2011

Councilmember Greig Smith, Chair
Public Safety Committee and
All Members, Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles CA 90012

PROTEST

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Honorable Members:

CF 09-1064 and CF 10-1230 Omnibus Dog Licensing Ordinance (Los Angeles Animal Services)
OPPOSITION TO REDUCING PENALTIES AND OTHER LATE-PERIOD CHANGES CONTAINED IN APRIL 4, 2011 LETTER FROM
GENERAL MANAGER, DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SERVICES TO PROPOSED ORDINANCE APPROVED BY PUBLIC SAFETY
COMMITTEE (LAAS LETTER DATED APRIL 4, 2011)

On April 4, 2011, a letter from the Department of Animal Services was sent to the Mayor, requesting that the actions of the Public Safety Committee be changed to reduce the late fees on dog licensing Sec 53.15(h) from 100% (\$20/\$100) to 25% (\$5/\$25) and allowing 45 days after the due date. This should NOT be approved.


Animal Issues Movement is adamantly opposed to this proposal. A \$5 late fee would not assure that license renewals are paid on time because it is insignificant and also because there is no cost-effective way to enforce it. This would encourage late payment and result in additional enforcement and accounting costs to the City. (Unaltered dog license late fee would be reduced to \$25.) Additionally, the 30-day period for late payment should not be extended to 45 days. No government agency allows 45 days late period to obtain/renew a license, and especially not without a substantial penalty.

The purpose of dog licensing is to assure that rabies vaccinations are current and that the health of the public and other animals is insured. There should not be a lapse of 45 days before this assurance is required. Also, there was a proposal at the Commission meeting to extend the period of initial licensing to 90 days. Most countries do not allow entry of non-rabies-vaccinated dogs without a six-month quarantine. Any new dog in the City of Los Angeles over the age of four months MUST be required to be licensed and rabies shots verified within 30 days for public health.

A one-time amnesty regarding penalties (before July 1, 2011) would coincide with programs which have been effective by Los Angeles County Animal Care and Control; and increasing the amount paid to veterinarians for first-time licenses would promote greater licensing. However, the administrative penalties for those who refuse to license dogs in compliance with State law should be left as approved by the Public Safety Committee (\$250/\$500/\$1,000).. It is hoped that LA Animal Services will be required to initiate this program promptly.

Thank you for maintaining the same strict requirements for compliance with City dog licensing law as jurisdictions that surround Los Angeles. This assures we will not have a major rabies epidemic and also provides a census of animals for emergency evacuation purposes. Licensing of dogs must be done with the same seriousness and enforcement of penalties as the registering of vehicles or paying property taxes—with substantial penalties to ensure compliance.

Sincerely,


PHYLLIS M. DAUGHERTY, Director

cc: M. Santana, CAO
G. Miller, CLA