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PUBLIC SAFETY

MOTION

Pet shops selling live animals have traditionally been a sales outlet for young dogs and cats bred in "puppy mills" and "kitten mills," both within the United States and abroad. These mills are medium- and large-sized "factory farms" where breeders have been known to produce hundreds or thousands of puppies and kittens annually under conditions that lend themselves to a variety of abuses, from straightforward cruelty to inbreeding- and abuse-inspired health and personality issues.

The result is a very lucrative interstate and international market in these innocent animals that provides pet shops with very profitable stock. The puppies and kittens that aren't placed with shops or sold to consumers unfortunately all too often end up being dumped in animal shelters where they become statistics in an ongoing tragedy. Their overworked, abused parents often suffer comparable fates.

Growing sentiment nationally against puppy and kitten mills has led a number of states and communities to adopt legislation regulating the mills and the stores that provide an outlet for the dogs and cats bred in their substandard conditions. Curbing the market for these unfortunate animals can also play a role in addressing the problem. With thousands of dogs, cats and rabbits euthanized in the City's animal shelters annually, there is growing sentiment in Los Angeles to find ways to break the link between the mills and pet shops.

In recent years the City's efforts have included establishment of the Animal Cruelty Task Force, strengthening laws against various forms of animal abuse and illegal street sales of animals, and more rigorous requirements for the granting of performing animals, kenneling and pet shop permits. A survey conducted by LA Animal Services volunteers early in 2010 found approximately 100 retail outlets selling live animals, many of which are obtained from puppy and kitten mills. The City should now look at what it can do to combat the abuses associated with the mills and the ways they negatively impact the humane treatment and pet overpopulation of animals in our community.

I THEREFORE MOVE, that the Los Angeles Department of Animal Services (LA Animal Services, or, LAAS), with the assistance of the Chief Legislative Analyst, the City Attorney and the Los Angeles Police Department, study and make recommendations (including the definition of terms and identification of other Code sections and statutes that may need to be addressed) to the Board of Animal Services Commissioners and the City Council on the following proposals:

1. The establishment of a ban on the sale of commercial animal mill-bred dogs, cats, chickens and rabbits within the city limits.
2. The creation of a program whereby LAAS can work with licensed pet stores to make shelter animals available for adoption at those stores on a regular or periodic basis.



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3. The creation of a program whereby LAAS, as a part of its normal pet store licensing procedures, publicly and visibly identifies stores that excel in meeting rigorous humane requirements and conditions in the kenneling and sale of animals consistent with all City, state and federal laws, or which do not sell live animals.

4. The prohibition of the establishment and/or operation of puppy, kitten, chicken and rabbit mills within the City of Los Angeles.

I FURTHER MOVE, that LA Animal Services be instructed to propose ordinances and institute programs that accomplish these enumerated proposals to the fullest extent possible.

PRESENTED BY:



PAUL KORETZ,  
Councilmember, 5th DISTRICT

SECONDED BY:

