

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, rules, regulations or policies proposed or pending before a local, state or federal governmental body or agency must first have been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council with the concurrence of the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, Animal cruelty and abuse are serious crimes which can be injurious or fatal for animals of all kinds and violence against animals has been found to be a predictor for many people who later commit acts of violence against humans, including domestic violence, child abuse or more heinous acts; and

WHEREAS, Nikolas Cruz, the perpetrator of the February 14 shooting in Parkland, Florida that took the lives of 17 students and faculty after having previously tortured and killed squirrels, chickens and toads and tormented rabbits, dogs and pigs is only the most recent highly visible example of this connection; and

WHEREAS, state Penal Code Section 597 includes the current statutes dealing with these crimes and specifying punishments including fines, jail time, probation, forced animal surrender and, in the case of intentional and passive animal cruelty, mandatory counseling; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement and human behavioral professionals alike have stated that the perpetrators of crimes against animals not only deserve stiff punishment but also need to have the underlying causes of their criminality examined and addressed; and

WHEREAS, legislation is needed to address the concerns of the law enforcement, mental health and animal welfare communities that current penalties are neither restorative nor rehabilitative and that those penalties do not sufficiently address the root causes of these crimes, nor do they adequately reduce recidivism among offenders or the potential for escalation of violent behavior by those offenders; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 1024 (Wilk) focuses on retaining and enhancing appropriate punishments while adding provisions to Penal Code Section 597 that require convicted offenders under animal abuse statutes to complete an approved animal abuse education course; and

WHEREAS, SB 1024 also requires that all convicted animal abuse or cruelty offenders undergo a mental health evaluation and, if deemed beneficial, ongoing up to one year of therapy from a mental health professional; and

WHEREAS, the bill allows for an increase in fines levied for convictions to support the state's costs relating to its provisions.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, with the concurrence of the Mayor, that by the adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes in its 2018 State Legislative Program SUPPORT for Senate Bill 1024 to amend Penal Code Section 597 to add provisions regarding animal abuse and cruelty.

PRESENTED BY: Paul Koretz
PAUL KORETZ

Councilmember, Fifth District

SECONDED BY: [Signature]

MAR 20 2018

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