

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HILDA L. SOLIS

December 17, 2024

Keeping Pets and Families Together: Increasing Pet Equity in Housing

Pets are Family is not only the name of a supportive, pet ownership retainment program from the Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and Control (DACC), it is a growing fact for many people. In a 2024 nationwide survey conducted by USA Today, 67% of the 1,000 random sampled residents across the United States ages 18-26 stated they opted to delay or refrain from having children in favor of owning a dog. According to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health’s Veterinary Public Health division, 1 in every 4 people in Los Angeles County own a dog or cat.

Pet ownership skyrocketed during the pandemic along with social isolation. According to a 2024 national poll by the American Psychiatric Association, 62% of respondents stated their pets reduce stress and anxiety; and 84% stated their pets had a positive impact on their mental health. Despite the benefits of pet ownership, many owners face unexpected changes that have led to their surrender. Keeping families and pets together and reducing the heavy influx of animals entering DACC animal care centers, needs to be addressed as it is a life and death situation for thousands of

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animals each year.

In fiscal year 2023-2024, 19% of dogs were euthanized. Out of the dogs that were euthanized, 1,535 were euthanized due to the amount of time and lack of space in the shelter. Dogs, cats, and other pets have ended up in a County animal shelter for various reasons including- lost, abandoned, unaffordable veterinary bills, and moving/housing. Since 2020, housing has been one of the top two reasons for owner surrender of dogs 23-55 pounds and for dogs 56 pounds and more, it has consistently been the number one reason for owner surrender. Prohibiting pets based on weight restrictions or the banning of pets altogether in rental dwellings has contributed to the overflow crisis and tragically high rates of euthanasia in County animal care shelters.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct Los Angeles County Department of Consumer and Business Affairs, in collaboration with Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and Control, and Los Angeles County Development Authority, and in consultation with County Counsel, to assess the feasibility of a potential pet ownership ordinance applicable to rent-stabilized units within the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County and report to the Board in writing within 180 days. This assessment report shall include the following:
 - a. Stakeholder engagement with renters, landlords, and relevant community-based organizations to assess needs, challenges, and impacts of such an ordinance.
 - b. An analysis of best practices, existing policies, and enforcement mechanisms from other jurisdictions, if any, along with equity

considerations and an evaluation of the feasibility of implementing and enforcing such an ordinance, including needed resources.

c. Recommendations for adopting an ordinance addressing pet ownership for rent-stabilized rental units located in unincorporated Los Angeles County that may include:

- i. Requiring residential rental agreements to allow at least one common household pet in a rental unit. Common household pet as previously defined by Los Angeles County Animal Care and Control.
- ii. Prohibiting monthly "pet rent" for new rental agreements or existing rental agreements with newly acquired pet(s), one-time "pet deposit" for new rental agreements, or similar fees or rent being charged to residents owning a common household pet(s).
- iii. Elimination of pet weight restrictions for common household pets in residential dwelling units.
- iv. Requiring that pets are licensed, as applicable, by Los Angeles County Animal Care and Control prior to the tenant initially moving in or within 30 days if pet is acquired by an existing tenant.
- v. A provision of a clearly written pet policy, in at least English and Spanish, furnished with the housing application to prospective tenants and provided directly to current tenants.
- vi. Allowing landlords to require pet resume detailing the animal's best qualities, behavioral background, and vaccination records,

licensing, spay/neuter, and microchip records as part of the rental agreements.

2. Delegate authority to the Director of the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs or designee to do the following: execute or amend agreements for the purposes set forth in this motion, including but not limited to, stakeholder engagement, public outreach and education, compliance, and related activities; to increase funds to existing agreements for these purposes; and execute additional amendments to such agreements, as needed, provided funding is available.
3. Direct Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and Control in collaboration with Los Angeles County Development Authority and Los Angeles County Department of Consumer and Business Affairs, in consultation with County Counsel, report to the Board in writing within 60 days detailing feasibility of drafting an amendment to the Pet-Friendly Housing ordinance located in Chapter 8.70 within Title 8 (Consumer Protection, Business and Wage Regulations) of the Los Angeles County Code relating to Division 3 (Housing) to include the following:
 - a. Prohibiting monthly "pet rent" for new rental agreements or existing rental agreements with newly acquired pet(s), one-time "pet deposit" for new rental agreements, or similar fees or rent being charged to residents owning a common household pet(s).
 - b. Elimination of pet weight restrictions for common household pets in residential dwelling units.

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