



December 5, 2017

Members of the Personnel and Animal Welfare Committee

Via e-mail: sharon.dickinson@lacity.org

RE: PETA's Opposition to Council File 17-1237

Dear Council Members,

PETA *opposes* **Council File 17-1237 (CF 17-1237)**, which seeks to remove the definition of "kennel" from Section 12.03 of the city's zoning regulations. Section 12.02 is clear: "The purpose of this article is to consolidate and coordinate all existing zoning regulations and provisions into one comprehensive zoning plan." CF 17-1237 seeks to remove the planning department's regulatory authority over "kennels" and open the door to widespread animal hoarding throughout the community in a bid to reduce populations at Los Angeles Animal Services.

This proposal is being pursued at the same time as another code amendment to remove sensible limits currently placed on the number of animals allowed at an individual's residence without a permit, which can be approved and issued after an inspection has established that animals are receiving humane care and the permittee maintains adequate sanitation levels. As currently written, the kennel regulations also outline a process by which permits can be revoked or suspended if the permittee fails to provide animals with adequate care, has been convicted of cruelty to animals, or allows conditions at the property to become a health hazard. These are all vital safeguards for basic animal welfare, and there's no benefit whatsoever to losing them.

When enforced, animal limit ordinances protect animals and ensure the rights of property owners, including the right to quietude and freedom from nuisance (e.g., smells from accumulated animal excrement, noise from barking and yowling, and property damage from animal companions allowed to roam outdoors). They can also be an effective means of curbing animal hoarding.

Animal hoarders accumulate dozens or even hundreds of animals they cannot care for humanely, and these situations ultimately require the intervention of law-enforcement agencies and the courts. Consider the following examples:

- Authorities had to seize nearly 100 dogs who had been **adopted from local shelters** after they were found abandoned at a home in Arleta. They were found suffering from "highly contagious illnesses," some were "trapped in crowded cages that were stacked like cargo boxes," and some were "so racked with life-threatening ulcers they dragged their limbs."¹

¹Veronica Rocha, "Arleta Couple Charged With Cruelty in Hoarding of Nearly 100 Dogs," 7 Nov. 2014, LATimes.com <<http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-arleta-couple-accused-of-hoarding-more-than-90-dogs-20141107-story.html>>.

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- In Santa Ana, authorities had to seize more than 20 cats from a home where the animals were found sick and having trouble breathing because of the high urine ammonia levels. Authorities secured a warrant after a neighbor found a dead cat in her yard.²
- Authorities in Antioch seized 50 cats from a home after a kitchen fire alerted them to the horde.³ (A review by the Hoarding of Animals Research Consortium found that **70 percent** of animal-hoarding cases reviewed included fire hazards.⁴)

The city's current ordinance, which can be found [here](#), doesn't prohibit anyone from owning four or more dogs and/or cats. However, it quite sensibly requires that anyone who chooses to do so be inspected and approved through a permit process to ensure that animals at such residences receive adequate care and are supplied with humane, sanitary living conditions, and it allows local neighbors to retain their right to the peaceful enjoyment of their properties. **We urge you to vote no on Council File: 17-1237.**

Thank you for your consideration and hard work for the citizens of Los Angeles.

Respectfully,

Diana Mendoza
L.A. Companion Animal Coordinator
PETA

cc: Los Angeles Planning Commission (cpc@lacity.org)

²Irene Moore and Vikki Vargas, "Squalid Conditions Found at Alleged Cat Hoarder's Home," 17 Mar. 2015, NBCLosAngeles.com <<https://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/Squalid-Conditions-Found-at-Alleged-Cat-Hoarders-Home-Santa-Ana--296603991.html>>.

³Sam Richards and Rowena Coetsee, "Dozens of Cats, Other Animals Confiscated From Antioch Houses," 21 July 2017, EastBayTimes.com <<http://www.eastbaytimes.com/2017/07/21/dozens-of-cats-other-animals-taken-from-antioch-houses/>>.

⁴Amanda I. Reinisch, "Understanding the Human Aspects of Animal Hoarding," *Canadian Veterinary Journal* 49.12 (Dec. 2008) <<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2583418/>>.