

From: zoey.knittel@campLA.org

Name: LAAS shelter clinic operators and advocates

Date Submitted: 08/06/2025

Council File Number: 23-0452

Comments:

August 6, 2025 Statement on the Los Angeles City Voucher Increase: Our City is Leaving Animals and Clinics Behind The Community Animal Medicine Project (CAMP), along with the undersigned Los Angeles Animal Services (LAAS) shelter spay/neuter clinic operators, animal rescues, and animal welfare partners, are stunned and disheartened by the City Council's decision to pass a watered down and insufficient spay/neuter voucher increase for FY 2025-26. Despite months of advocacy, collaboration, and an indisputable urgent need voiced by providers, advocates, and data alike, the City Council has deprioritized its commitment to caring for Los Angeles' vulnerable animals. The City Council passed an increase to the spay/neuter voucher reimbursement rates for Free Vouchers only, for one year, applicable only to owned dogs and cats – leaving behind tens of thousands of animals in need of care. Isolating a funding increase to this single voucher leaves our most effective large-scale spay/neuter models under-funded: the Citywide Cat Program (Trap-Neuter-Return) vouchers, Shelter Pet (On-site) vouchers, mobile clinics, rabbit vouchers, and Discount vouchers. This will have a chilling effect on access to services for the animals and families who need it most. Let us be clear: there has been no increase to the voucher reimbursement rates since 2015 – more than ten years. Without increased rates across all voucher types, clinics like CAMP and our co-signatories will be forced to severely limit the number of animals we are able to serve because we cannot continue to subsidize spay and neuter vouchers out of pocket. Finally, insufficient funding of the voucher programs places an unnecessary burden on taxpayers: it costs an average of \$40 per day, per animal to live at an LAAS shelter. At the South Los Angeles Shelter, the City spends about \$12,000 per day to care for its animals - more than \$4,000,000/year. Now multiply that across six LAAS shelters. Every dollar invested in spay and neuter saves an estimated four dollars for the City by reducing shelter intake and euthanasia costs. A fully funded voucher program is the humane and fiscally responsible choice.

Ultimately, spay and neuter voucher rates must align with the true cost of care to encourage veterinarian participation and ensure this essential surgery is accessible to all cats, dogs and rabbits. Signed,
- CAMP (Harbor Shelter, Northeast Valley Shelter, Jefferson Park Shelter) Dr. Elaine Lukic, DVM; Dr. Zach Deegan, DVM; Dr. Jennifer Artinian, DVM; Dr. Michelle Lopez, DVM; Dr. Kristina Naef, DVM - CAMP veterinarians - CAMP Wellness Waggin' (mobile spay/neuter serving North Central Shelter, East Valley Shelter, West Valley Shelter) - Shelter Vet

Spay Neuter Clinic (West LA Shelter) - Heaven On Earth Spay Neuter Clinic (West Valley Shelter); Dr. Nicole Petschauer, DVM - Dr. David Forster, DVM, Director of WesternU Spay and Neuter Center (North Central Shelter) - Dr. David Clark, DVM, Director of Clinical Services CVM, WesternU - Dr. Casey Connors, DVM (South LA Shelter) - FixNation - Spay4LA - Best Friends Animal Society - Greater Los Angeles Animal Spay Neuter Collaborative - Latino Alliance for Animal Care Foundation - Paws For Life - Kitty Bungalow - Peter Zippi Memorial Fund - Better Together Forever - Tipped Ears - Pals N Pets - Purrfect Partners - LA Rabbit Foundation

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you!

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