

Communication from Public

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Comments for Public Posting: Please see attached letter, thank you!



**AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB®**

September 21, 2023

Re: American Kennel Club Comments on Proposed Breeder Permit Suspension

Dear Chair Hernandez and Members of Neighborhoods and Community Enrichment Committee:

The American Kennel Club (AKC) writes today on behalf of our local Los Angeles based kennel clubs and the many responsible dog owners in the city to respectfully ask you to not proceed with any proposal that would lead to a suspension of animal breeding permits. This proposal, while well-intentioned, would have a significant negative impact on dog owners and the local community.

We respectfully ask that you consider AKC's concerns:

- A moratorium on breeding permits would also punish responsible owners who simply choose to keep an unsterilized dog. Under current law, such an owner is required to obtain a breeder's permit, even if they are not breeding a dog. Many choose to keep a dog intact for health reasons, as scientific studies are demonstrating the many potential impacts that sterilization- particularly at a young age – can have on the health of a dog. In addition, many may choose to keep an intact dog for participation in AKC events or other humane and reasonable purposes. These owners should not be punished for keeping an unsterilized dog – especially as they are keeping their dogs in a responsible manner.
- Responsible breeders are models for their communities. They raise healthy dogs and work to ensure that puppies are placed with appropriate owners, even agreeing to take dogs back if a home does not work out, instead of placing them in a shelter where they are cared for at the taxpayers' expense. These breeders are in a unique position to support new pet owners and teach them to be responsible dog owners. In addition, many breeders are providing quality dogs not just to be wonderful family pets, but also to act as service, working, and search and rescue dogs.

Breeders have worked for decades to establish quality breeding programs that produce well-bred, healthy dogs. We encourage you to not overregulate and further burden responsible breeders who have been providing quality, well-bred pets to the community for many years because, unfortunately, as the Department of Animal Services has acknowledged, there are already a number of unlicensed breeders in the city. The city does not need more unlicensed, lower quality breeders at the expense of community-minded, responsible breeders.

- Breeders have a positive influence and economic impact on the community. The AKC estimates that the economic impact of dog shows is vast. Surveys demonstrate that exhibitors at AKC conformation dog shows spend an average of \$982 per show weekend. This means spending by AKC dog show exhibitors for a show weekend could inject more than \$2.15 million into the local economy – and this amount does not include spending for events such as Agility, Rally, Obedience, and similar competitions.
- AKC believes inclusive public outreach and education are key to promoting and instilling a culture of responsible pet ownership. If the Los Angeles Department of Animal Services seeks to increase the prevalence dog owners spaying or neutering their dogs, resources should instead be directed toward making sure low-cost spay/neutering programs are both fully funded, and the service is known to city residents. Nothing will ease the strain on the shelter system more than a culture of responsible pet ownership.

The AKC understands the issues facing Los Angeles' animal shelter system. To lessen the strain on the system, improve the working conditions for staff and volunteers alike, and to promote the welfare of all animals in the system, AKC proposes the following recommendations:

- Ensure good data collection to determine where issues are originating and allow for arising problems to be adequately addresses.
- Require all animals received in the shelter system to be checked for microchips so lost pets don't languish in shelter system taking up valuable space and resources.
- Make sure low-cost spay and neuter funds are available to all who need it and ensure that program availability is widely known through community outreach.
- Consider offering tax credits or other programs to incentivize greater acceptance of pets in residential housing to address issue of pets ending up in shelter system only because of housing issues.
- Develop a plan to manage "dangerous dogs" taken in and kept in the shelter system.

We appreciate the Neighborhoods and Community Enrichment Committee's attention to this issue and for their passion for the welfare of animals. Thank you for reviewing and considering our concerns and recommended amendments on this proposed ordinance.

Regards,



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