

Communication from Public

Name: Susan Riggs
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Comments for Public Posting: Please find a letter of support on behalf of the ASPCA.



June 22, 2026

Los Angeles City Council
Arts, Parks, Libraries, and Community Enrichment Committee
200 N Spring St, Room 360
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Support for April 16, 2026 Motion on Pets and Housing

Honorable Members of the Committee on Arts, Parks, Libraries, and Community Enrichment:

On behalf of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), we are writing as the Committee is agendized to consider the April 16, 2026 motion to explore solutions to the growing number of housing-related pet surrenders (Motion). The Motion provides a productive first step towards removing barriers for renters that are facing the difficult choice of keeping a roof over their head or surrendering their pet.

Founded in 1866, the ASPCA was the first humane society to be established in North America and is today one of the largest in the world. The ASPCA believes that pets and people belong together and that the strong bonds between people and pets make for healthier and more prosperous communities.

Unfortunately, a shortage of pet-friendly housing conspires to force even the most devoted pet owner to relinquish a beloved pet to a local shelter. Sadly, the lack housing options available in the market that are both pet inclusive and cost appropriate means that lower income households are forced to make this difficult decision far more frequently. In fact, a national study conducted by the ASPCA revealed that those who rent are more likely to need to rehome their pets for housing issues than for any other reason.ⁱ Further, families that relinquish a pet often cite financial eviction from their current housing and a lack of suitable pet-friendly alternatives in the rental market.

While we recognize the complex factors involved in the rental market, it is clear that the implications of restrictions on the keeping of pets in rental housing are many and highly detrimental to both pets, their people, and the City's coffers. While renters in general may have difficulty finding suitable housing options in the market, those households with pets are confronted with an even greater challenge. The tight rental market means landlords can be more discerning in the types of households they rent to and often exclude potential tenants with pets or charge exorbitant fees as a condition of renting. As a result, thousands of dogs and cats are relinquished to City and County animal shelters every year, breaking apart families and adding additional stress to already difficult situations.

Costly pet deposits, pet-related fees, and additional monthly "pet rent" are all roadblocks renters encounter as they attempt to find a place to live with pets. These upfront and ongoing costs can be the breaking point as families struggle to find cost appropriate housing that includes their pets. In particular, market factors have made it increasingly difficult for lower income households to maintain a pet. A recent study found that lower income communities and communities of color are more likely to pay disproportionately higher fees to keep pets in their homes.ⁱⁱ More broadly, there is evidence that there are far fewer pet-friendly housing options available to lower income households. This burden may lead

to both housing insecurity and owners surrendering their pets to local shelters and rescues. Furthermore, it is a primary reason for a growing socioeconomic disparity in households with pets.

In 2019, the Los Angeles City Council took the bold step to become the first city in the country to require its publicly-financed housing to include pets. This was an impactful action that has enriched the lives of the thousands of City-residents that reside in affordable housing. Unfortunately, the requirement only scratches the surface of the current needs for pet-inclusive housing. By moving forward with the motion, the Committee has at its discretion the ability to open up thousands of new pet-friendly housing opportunities, reduce the strain on local animal sheltering and rescue organizations, strengthen communities and families, and improve public health outcomes. We ask for your support for the proposed motion as a first step towards ensuring that fewer Los Angeles renters are faced with the difficult decision of giving up their pet.

To this end, the ASPCA has been actively engaged in developing new pet-friendly policy at all levels of government, including the drafting and adoption of the afore-mentioned pet-friendly affordable housing ordinance. Through our work, we have gained a breadth of knowledge of the best practices for creating more equitable access to cost appropriate housing for families with pets. As such, we humbly offer our assistance as you explore solutions, so that Los Angeles rental housing is more welcoming to pets.

Thank you for your leadership in supporting pet-friendly housing in furtherance of happier and healthier families, better futures for the family pet, and a reduced financial burden to shelters and the public.

Sincerely,

Susan Lea Riggs
Sr. Director of Housing Policy
susan.riggs@aspca.org

Angelique Reynoso
Senior State Legislative Manager
angelique.reynoso@aspca.org

ⁱ Weiss, E., Gramann, S., Spain, V., & Slater, M. (2015). Goodbye to a good friend: An exploration of the re-homing of cats and dogs in the U.S. *Open Journal of Animal Sciences*. 5: 435- 456.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283563524_Goodbye_to_a_Good_Friend_An_Exploration_of_the_Re-Homing_of_Cats_and_Dogs_in_the_US.

ⁱⁱ Applebaum, et al., Pet-Friendly for Whom? An Analysis of Pet Fees in Texas Rental Housing (2021 Nov 8)
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8606550/>.