

MOTION

Los Angeles is facing compounding housing affordability and animal welfare challenges driven by rising rents and pet related restrictions in the rental housing market. As housing costs escalate, many Angelenos with companion animals encounter blanket no pet policies, breed and size restrictions, and layered pet-related charges that are financial barriers to housing stability. In addition, housing related challenges are now a leading cause of pet surrenders, directly contributing to overcrowding within the City's animal shelter system.

The downstream impacts of these housing barriers place significant operational and fiscal strain on the Department of Animal Services at a time when the City is navigating a persistent budget crisis. Increased intake of owner-surrendered animals exacerbates existing capacity limitations and diverts scarce General Fund resources from other needed services. Each unnecessary surrender represents not only a humanitarian failure but also an avoidable public expense.

In 2019, the City approved Ordinance 186228 to align with a 2018 State law that permits pets and expressly prohibits breed and weight restrictions in publicly financed housing. These policies support the need for pet-inclusive housing as a legitimate and necessary tool to reduce displacement, support vulnerable populations, and prevent avoidable strain on public systems. The City should study the feasibility of reducing or removing barriers, such as breed, weight, and size restrictions, for pets in housing that is not publicly funded, and consider additional protections. Broader rental market protections are necessary as pet-related restrictions and fees have proliferated, often in ways that conflict with existing deposit limits and consumer protection laws. It is necessary and fiscally responsible for the City to identify actionable strategies to reduce unnecessary surrenders, promote housing stability for pet-owning households, and relieve pressure on the city's shelter system and budget.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council instruct the Housing Department (LAHD), in consultation with the Department of Animal Services, the City Attorney, the Chief Legislative Analyst, and the City Administrative Officer, to report back within 90 days. The report shall include an assessment of existing City pet housing policies, including policies around permissible security deposits and non-refundable fees, and findings previously adopted or prepared by Los Angeles County and the Animal Services Commission; best practices and recommendations to expand access to pet-inclusive housing and reduce housing-driven pet relinquishment across all housing units; and an analysis of potential impacts on housing stability, animal shelter intake, and the associated fiscal impacts and projected budget savings to the City.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council request the City Attorney, in consultation with LAHD, the Department of Animal Services, and the Chief Legislative Analyst, to report with recommendations for a new Ordinance, informed by existing state law, City authority, and identified practices, that would reduce or remove breed, weight, and size restrictions for pets in housing that is not publicly funded and provide additional protections as deemed feasible in LAHD's assessment.

PRESENTED BY: 
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