

Press Release



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Humane Society Silicon Valley Urges California State Lawmakers to Approve The California Healthy Pets Act (AB 1634)

SANTA CLARA, Calif., July 9, 2007 – Humane Society Silicon Valley (HSSV) has joined several other animal welfare groups in urging California State Lawmakers to pass the California Healthy Pets Act (AB 1634). The measure would require cats and dogs ages six months and older in California to be spayed or neutered. The bill has passed the full Assembly and is scheduled for a hearing on July 11 before the Senate Local Government Committee.

“The California Healthy Pets Act will greatly reduce the estimated 400,000 dogs and cats – many of them healthy and adoptable – that are euthanized each year in California’s shelters that do not have the space or resources to care for these unwanted pets,” says Christine Benninger, president of Humane Society Silicon Valley. Benninger says the measure will also greatly reduce the estimated \$250 million spent each year by local jurisdictions to house and euthanize unwanted dogs and cats.

Benninger says AB 1634 provides a reasonable solution to California’s pet overpopulation problem by targeting the biggest contributors to pet overpopulation: pet owners who allow their intact animals to have unplanned litters. It will not, as many opponents argue, put an end to purebred dogs and cats. “This law will ensure that only those people who have a legitimate reason for having an intact dog or cat will be exempt from the spay/neuter requirement,” Benninger explains.

Under the bill, exemptions will be available for certain duly-licensed breeders of purebreds; owners of certain purebred show and competition dogs and cats; owners of certain purebred and mixed-breed dogs and cats used for law enforcement and rescue; owners of purebred and mixed-breed guide, service, and signal dogs; and owners of purebred and mixed-breed dogs and cats too old, unhealthy, or ill to be safely spayed or neutered. An owner who qualifies for an exemption may obtain an intact permit from his or her local jurisdiction or animal-control agency. All others must spay or neuter their dogs and cats within a reasonable period of time (30 days) or be subject to a civil penalty of \$500.

Funds raised by the intact-permit fees, together with penalties for noncompliance, will help fund much-needed spay and neuter programs accessible to – but not limited to – low-income people, as well as important outreach efforts and enforcement activities.

HSSV’s medical center offers affordable spaying/neutering for dogs, cats and rabbits and free altering for male pit bulls/pit bull mixes and special discounts for female pit bulls/pit bull mixes. In 2006, the shelter’s spay/neuter clinic altered more than 4,300 animals.

Other organizations that support AB 1634 include the Humane Society of the United States, State Humane Association of California, in Defense of Animals, Animal Protection Institute, The Association of Veterinarians for Animal Rights, spcaLA, Inland Valley Humane Society & SPCA, City of Sacramento Animal Care Services, Santa Cruz SPCA, SPCA of Monterey County and Central California SPCA.

About Humane Society Silicon Valley

Humane Society Silicon Valley (HSSV) is an independent, non-profit agency offering quality adoptions, medical care and education programs to enhance the human-animal bond. Established in 1929, HSSV has served Silicon Valley for 78 years and grown into one of the largest animal shelters on the West Coast, caring for nearly 9,000 animals in 2006. To date, HSSV has adopted more than 500,000 animals into permanent, loving homes. HSSV is an “open door” shelter and accepts animals 24-hours a day, seven days a week, regardless of any temperament or health related problems. HSSV’s medical center offers affordable spaying/neutering, vaccinations and microchips to the public. More information about HSSV can be found at our website at www.hssv.org.