



California Animal Welfare Association

Promoting Excellence in Animal Care, Sheltering, and Law Enforcement since 1909

April 5, 2021

Assembly Business and Professions Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 379
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Assembly Bill 702 (Santiago) OPPOSE

Dear Assembly Business and Professions Committee,

I am writing on behalf of CalAnimals (California Animal Welfare Association) to represent our oppose position on AB 702 Animal Breeding: Permits.

As a membership organization representing a majority of the state's public and private shelters, **we have accurate data** on what is occurring throughout the state, and this bill misses the mark

AB 702 requires the development and implementation of a new public shelter program. With most agencies reporting that breeding isn't an issue in their City/County, the revenue from this mandated program is feared to be grossly insufficient to offset the costs. In addition, with no penalty provision, the bill lacks any ability for public animal control agencies to actually enforce. The most significant action permitted in the bill's language is to revoke a permit.

Fundamentally, we see this bill as unnecessary and misdirected. Speaking to the sponsors, we understand the intent is to stop the unnecessary over breeding of puppies in CA, and their subsequent demise in animal shelters. Though this may have been a valiant effort 10 years ago, this bill is trying to solve a problem that doesn't exist today. Overall, there is a shortage of adoptable puppies in CA. A single puppy can get nearly 500 community inquiries on a shelter's website. This supply and demand issue is causing greater concern related to consumer protections.

Luckily, California is already in a position to fight puppy mills within our state. Our animal abuse laws are strong, and provide animal control agencies the ability to address multiple issues and effectively stop any overproduction and misuse of animals. This is why California has very few large breeding programs in the state. Our greatest issue, is the lucrative business of puppy brokers, who bring in and sell puppies from outside of California. These puppies are often sick, misrepresented to the buyer and provide no protections to the purchaser. California's law is very weak when it comes to consumer protections for these transactions. Unfortunately, AB 702 addresses the wrong problem.

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Public animal shelters throughout California have worked tirelessly to be a community resource for animals who need assistance. There is great concern that puppies who may need our help won't end up in a shelter because the owner may fear penalties for not obtaining a permit. Most puppies entering the public sheltering system aren't intentionally bred. They are accidental pregnancies, and they tend to occur in communities who lack the resources both in location and money to pay for spay/neuter services. This bill has a significant impact on the underserved in our state.

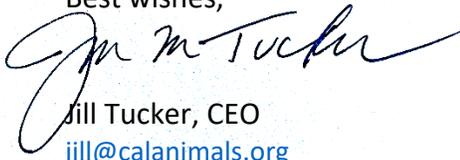
In addition, the onerous requirements to obtain a permit are nearly impossible to meet, especially for accidental pregnancies, and it isn't clear why some are included. The bill creates a statewide age guideline for reproductive health, something a veterinarian should assess. It requires a permanent placement of the breeder on a microchip without even knowing whether all microchip companies can provide that service, or the purpose.

Lastly, this bill won't provide visibility to the "bad players" in breeding. It will just push them further underground. What this bill does, is places greater barriers on those who want to follow the rules and do the right things. These aren't the breeders we are concerned with in California.

As the agency who represents private and public animal control agencies, those who fight to protect animals in our state, we are strongly opposed to this bill, and urge your NO vote.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best wishes,



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