



AB 631

ASSEMBLYMEMBER ALEX LEE



SCIL
Social Compassion
in Legislation

THIS BILL

AB 631 would require all animal shelters and rescues to record all categories, as specified, of intake and outcome data and post the data on it's website or a third-party website, while making the data available for at least five years.

BACKGROUND

Current law requires each city, city and county, or county to maintain or provide for the maintenance of an animal shelter system and a rabies control program. Additionally, current law requires the Department of Public Health to collect rabies control program data from each local entity but does not collect data on the categories specified in this bill. (Section 121690 of the California Health and Safety Code).

PROBLEM

From 1995 through 2016, the Department collected all of the categories of data required under this bill from all animal shelters and made that data available to the public.

Starting in 2017, the Department reduced the categories of data to exclude those pertaining to animals received and discharged, leaving stakeholders in the dark on the extent of California's pet overpopulation problem, and where to best direct funding to combat the problem. .

Cities and counties invest over \$400,000,000 annually to operate our state's animal shelters, with much of this money coming from the state's general fund. Additionally, animal rescues pour millions of dollars into supporting shelters when there is lack of space for animals.

Yet, the data these entities and other stakeholders rely on to direct these resources is no longer available. Without proper reporting requirements, it is impossible to get accurate, reliable data on the numbers of animals entering and exiting shelters and rescues, and their outcomes.

This data is important to ensuring that resources are directed in the most impactful manner, optimized to help pets find their forever homes and to help solve the pet overpopulation problem.

Additionally, as we saw with Covid-19 and currently with the avian flu outbreak, a zoonotic disease outbreak can have devastating effects on society. Understanding the flow of animals throughout our state could be critical in the event strict action is needed to contain an outbreak.

SOLUTION

Californians care deeply about the welfare of shelter animals. In fact, the official state pet is the "Shelter Pet." As noted above, the state, local jurisdictions, and nonprofits invest hundreds of millions of dollars on our shelter system to save animals' lives.

AB 631 will ensure that the state and other entities are able to direct funding efficiently to shelters with the greatest need, while giving policy makers a more complete picture of the pet overpopulation problem in order to make informed policy decisions.

Specifically, the bill requires the below data to be collected and posted by category on it's website or a third-party website and kept available for at least five years. The bill also encourages the data to be made available in a downloadable spreadsheet format.

1. The number of domestic dogs, cats, and other animals received by animal shelters and rescues including, but not limited to, those surrendered by owner, taken in as stray, or transferred from other shelters.
2. Total number of dogs, cats, and other animals discharged by animal shelters and rescues separated by categories including, but not limited to, those reclaimed by owner, adopted, transferred to another organization, euthanized, died in care, or dead upon arrival.

SUPPORT

Social Compassion in Legislation (Sponsor)

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