



MATT HANEY
Assemblymember, District 17

AB 2344 – Stop Animal Cruelty

SUMMARY

AB 2344 creates a California animal abuse registry for adults convicted of felony animal cruelty. If someone is convicted of serious animal abuse, they would be required to register with local law enforcement for 10 years, and the California Department of Justice would post key information on a public website. Rather than allowing repeat cycles of cruelty to happen and only catching animal abusers after the fact, this bill will keep animals out of the hands of known abusers and make it harder for repeat offenders to slip through the cracks.

BACKGROUND

Over the last five years, California has recorded hundreds of animal cruelty arrests statewide each year. California has laws against animal cruelty, but once a felony conviction is entered, there is still no simple statewide system to help shelters, rescues, law enforcement, and the public identify known abusers before another animal is placed at risk. That leaves a major gap between punishment and prevention. A convicted abuser can move from one community to another, and there is no clear public tool to help stop repeated harm.

California is also not stepping into untested territory. Several other states have already adopted animal abuse registries or offender lists, reflecting a growing recognition that serious animal cruelty needs to be documented more closely. California should not fall behind when it comes to protecting vulnerable animals and giving communities a practical way to identify repeat abusers before more harm is done.

EXISTING LAW

California already requires registration in other high-risk situations. People convicted of arson and certain sex crimes must register with law enforcement, and the Department of Justice already maintains a public website with information about certain sex offenders. But California still has no comparable statewide registry for people convicted of felony animal abuse

PROBLEM

Right now, if someone is convicted of felony animal cruelty, there is no simple statewide tool for shelters, rescues, law enforcement, or the public to check before placing another animal in that person's hands. That leaves a major gap in accountability, leading to further incidents of abuse: roughly 85% of people arrested for animal abuse have had multiple past arrests, with 70% having prior felonies. Because of the lack of accountability in state law, known abusers can move, change communities, and stay hidden. California has strong penalties for animal cruelty, but without a registry there is no clear statewide system to track convicted felony offenders after the case is over.

SOLUTION

AB 2344 protects animals from experiencing abuse and cruelty even before it happens by creating a statewide animal abuse registry for adults convicted of felony animal cruelty. The bill creates a clear statewide tracking system so convicted abusers cannot quietly move and regain access to



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more animals without oversight. People on the registry would provide identifying information, and the Department of Justice would publish key information through a public website. This gives law enforcement, animal welfare organizations, and the public a practical tool to identify known abusers and help prevent repeat cruelty.

The bill also includes enforcement measures to ensure the registry works as intended and creates an Animal Protection Fund to support implementation and local spay-and-neuter programs. AB 2344 is about accountability for animal abusers, transparency, and giving California a real tool to better protect vulnerable animals.

SUPPORT

- Social Compassion in Legislation (Sponsor)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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