

California Spay-Neuter Bill Fails in Senate

The legislation, SB 250, would require sterilization of most dogs and cats.

Posted: June 3, 2009, 5 a.m. EDT

The California State Senate on Monday rejected SB 250, a measure that seeks to require pet sterilization for most of the state's cats and dogs, with a vote of 16-15. It needed 21 votes to pass.

A "Reconsideration" vote took place on Tuesday, but the vote has not yet been announced.

SB 250, by Senate Majority Leader Dean Florez, calls on cat owners to spay or neuter their cats at 6 months of age if the cats are allowed to roam at large. The bill also requires the sterilization of all dogs at 6 months of age, unless the owner gets an unaltered dog license.

The bill has been amended to authorize local governments to use existing procedures to issue the intact dog licenses or to charge a fee for procedures related to the issuance, denial or revocation of unaltered dog licenses. In addition, unaltered dogs used in legal hunting activities would be exempt from being cited.

The sterilization of dogs found to be at-large continues to be a requirement under the bill.

SB 250 is backed by the Social Compassion in Legislation, which says the bill would reduce euthanasia rates and save taxpayer dollars, as well as various humane societies.

The American Kennel Club sent out an alert Tuesday stating that continued opposition of the bill is needed. AKC is asking fanciers, responsible breeders and concerned dog owners to contact Senate members and encourage them to either abstain or vote no on the measure.