

Bill Limiting Dog Ownership Moves Forward

California legislation would limit the number of intact dogs, cats a person could own.

Posted: July 20, 2009, 5 a.m. EDT

California Assembly Bill 241, a bill that would limit the number of intact dogs and cats any person could own for breeding and selling as pets, passed out of the Senate Public Safety Committee Thursday on a vote of 4-0. It now heads to the Appropriations Committee. A hearing date has not been set.

AB 241 would prohibit any person from having more than a combined total of 50 unsterilized dogs and cats that are kept for breeding or raised for sale as pets. Those in possession of more than that would have to spay or neuter the excess animals or sell, transfer or relinquish the animals within 30 days. If necessary, any euthanasia procedures would have to be performed by a licensed veterinarian or other qualified person as pursuant to regulations adopted by the Veterinary Medical Board.

AB 241 authorizes a peace officer, humane officer or animal control officer to take possession of any animal that is kept in violation. Violators would be guilty of a misdemeanor.

Assemblyman Pedro Nava, the bill's author, verbally agreed to amend the bill on Thursday, but the text of those amendments is not yet available, according to the American Kennel Club, which remains opposed to the legislation.

The AKC said it believes that the quality of a breeder is not determined by the number of animals he or she has, but by the care the animals receive.

The AKC also said the legislation "will not improve the lives of cats and dogs, will negatively impact responsible breeders and may result in animals being euthanized or relinquished to shelters. Concentrating animal control efforts on dogs whose behavior demonstrates that they are a problem for the community would be a much better use of taxpayer funds."