

California Dog Spay-Neuter Bill on Hold

Proposed dog spay-neuter legislation sent back to the drawing board.

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An ambitious plan in California to make the spaying or neutering of all pet dogs and cats mandatory is going back to the drawing board.

The legislation, Assembly Bill 1634, failed to clear its first hurdle, a California state Assembly committee on April 10 after lawmakers requested a delay so that perceived flaws in the proposal can be fixed.

The bill would force pet owners to spay or neuter nearly all cats and dogs by the time they're 4 months old. Failure to comply would result in a \$500 fine. Cats and dogs used for breeding by licensed breeders would be exempt.

The legislation is aimed at reducing euthanasia of what's been roughly estimated at a half-million animals annually in California.

Opponents said it would impose a financial hardship on hobbyist breeders, who would have to pay for permits.

At the April 10 committee meeting, more than 100 opponents of the bill attacked it, with some owners and breeders saying the legislation places an unreasonable burden on them. At the same meeting, a large number of groups and individuals spoke in favor of the bill.

The Assembly Business and Professions Committee postponed further consideration of the bill until just before an end-of-month legislative deadline.