

Dog-Friendly Landlords May Get Tax Break

A proposed law in San Francisco would offer a reduction in tax to landlords who rent to people with pets.

San Franciscos animal welfare commission is taking up the idea of giving landlords who rent to people with pets a tax break.

As an incentive to allow pets in rental units, a proposed ordinance would offer a reduction in tax of either 5 percent of the monthly rent or \$200 per month, whichever is less.

One of the primary reasons pets end up in San Francisco's animal shelter is landlord disapproval, and that's also one of the biggest barriers to finding them new homes.

The commission began initial discussions about the issue on April 13 at its monthly meeting. Commissioner Richard Schulke introduced the proposal, which is believed to be a first for any city in the country.

The seven-member commission has jurisdiction to address issues of animal abuse, cruelty, nuisance or any conditions that may directly or indirectly affect animals in the city.

As an advisory body, the commission makes recommendations to the board of supervisors regarding animal issues. The board is responsible for all policy decisions and development.

Two-thirds of San Francisco residents rent, according to San Francisco Rent Board data. And an estimated 120,000 dogs and at least that many cats live in San Francisco, according to the city's SPCA.

Posted: April 18, 2006, 5 a.m. EST