



## CALIFORNIA MANDATE TO STERILIZE EVERY DOG POISED FOR FINAL VOTE

### The Issue.

A bill that has been on the “inactive file” was just sent to the Assembly floor for a final vote before the legislature adjourns for the year. Senate Bill 250 has been amended several times, but would still require every owner or “custodian” of a dog, with very limited exceptions, to have the animal spayed or neutered. Cats, too, are required to be sterilized under this bill if they are ever permitted to “roam at large.” **This bill is eligible for an immediate vote. It is critical that citizens of California immediately contact their state Senator and Assembly representative to voice opposition to this radical proposal!**

### The Impact.

For dogs: [SB 250](#) requires any owner or custodian of an unsterilized dog to do one of the following:

- have the animal sterilized at six months of age;
- obtain a certificate of sterility; or
- if required by local ordinance, obtain an unaltered dog license.

For purposes of transferring dogs, an owner or custodian who offers any unsterilized dog for sale, trade, or adoption at four months of age or older or the age required by the local government will be required to include a valid unaltered dog license number with the offer of sale, trade, or adoption. Also, the unaltered dog's license number, and any existing microchip number for the dog, must appear on the document transferring ownership of the dog to the new owner.

**NOTE:** Licensing fees would be determined by the municipal city or county animal control agency in which an owner resides. Localities would also have the right to set penalties for violators.

For cats: [SB 250](#) states that any owner or custodian of an unsterilized cat who permits that cat to roam at large must have the cat sterilized or obtain a certificate of sterility.

An owner or custodian who offers any unsterilized cat for sale, trade, or adoption will be required to notify the local government, if the jurisdiction requires the licensing of cats, with the name and address of the transferee within 10 days after the transfer. Any existing microchip number for the cat must appear on a document transferring ownership of the cat to the new owner.

## **PIJAC Position.**

PIJAC opposes state enacted mandates to sterilize pet animals. There are various reasons, including medical reasons, why pet owners may choose not to sterilize dogs or cats. This is a decision that should be made on a case-by-case basis by pet owners after consultation with their veterinarian, and pet owners should not be subject to punitive fees because spay/neuter is not a desirable course of action in their particular circumstances. Furthermore, mandatory spay/neuter requirements and intact dog permits have often proven to be difficult to enforce, and costly permit fees, as well as high fines, will result in non-compliance that leads to owners or keepers of pets to avoid proper veterinary care and vaccinations in order to avoid detection.

Pet “overpopulation” is a complex issue that cannot be solved with a one-size-fits-all mandate.

## **Recommended Action.**

Because [Senate Bill 250](#) will become law with a favorable vote in a matter of days, it is critical that EVERY member of the California state [Senate](#) and [Assembly](#) receive phone calls and email opposing this measure. This legislation is poorly crafted. It imposes a one-size-fits-all “solution” that penalizes responsible pet owners across the state, and inappropriately delegates enforcement duties to localities which will have unfettered discretion to establish excessive fees. **The bill is unnecessary, will be ineffective in addressing the problem of so-called “pet overpopulation”, and codifies unwarranted intrusions into citizens’ lives.**

Visit PIJAC’s [Legislative Action Center](#) on the Government Affairs page of the PIJAC website ([www.pijac.org](http://www.pijac.org)) to find and contact your representatives. Remember, it is important to contact your elected representative in both the state Senate and Assembly! **Spread the word to friends, neighbors and all lovers of pets!**

Contact PIJAC’s Michael Maddox by phone at 202-452-1525 or via email at [Michael@pijac.org](mailto:Michael@pijac.org).