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City Council Gives Support Of Pet Sterilization Bill

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LOS ANGELES -- The Los Angeles City Council unanimously announced its support Tuesday for a state bill that would require pet owners to sterilize their dogs and cats by the time the cuddly companions reach 4 months of age.

AB 1634 was introduced by Assemblyman Lloyd Levine, D-Van Nuys, as part of an effort to decrease euthanization rates of unwanted pets at animal shelters statewide.

A violator would receive a "fix-it" citation, requiring the pet owner to sterilize their cat or dog within 30 days, or up to 75 days with a note from a veterinarian. Those who fail to comply would face a \$500 fine.

Funds raised from the fines would be earmarked for enforcement and low-cost pet sterilization programs.

The proposed measure would allow local municipalities to make exceptions for breeders who can demonstrate their pets are purebreds listed on one of several registries.

The council vote was 12-0, with Bernard Parks, Jan Perry and Dennis Zine absent from the meeting.

"The Los Angeles City Council's action today should send a clear signal to all Californians that AB 1634 is a huge step forward in the drive to combat pet overpopulation and to reduce the killing of hundreds of thousands of animals in California's shelters every year," Levine said.

"Mandatory spay and neuter programs have proven to be smart, sensible, compassionate and effective approaches wherever they have been tried," the lawmaker said.

Levine's bill is scheduled for consideration by the Assembly's Business and Professions Committee on April 24.

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