

PALO ALTO DAILY NEWS

Powered by  Topix.net

Jun 24, 2007

- [Local News / Home Page](#)
- [Region/State News](#)
- [World News](#)
- [Business News](#)
- [Sports - Professional](#)
- [Announcements](#)
- [Arts & Entertainment](#)
- [Columnists](#)
- [Death Notices](#)
- [Letters & Opinion](#)
- [Society](#)
- [Sports - Local](#)
- [Style](#)

[Local Classifieds](#)

Daily News Services

- [Contact Information](#)
- [Jobs at the Daily News](#)
- [Staff](#)
- [Report delivery problems](#)

Do you have a calendar item, brief or newstip? Please contact us.

Daily News Publications

- [Burlingame Daily News](#)
- [East Bay Daily News](#)
- [Los Gatos News](#)
- [Redwood City Daily News](#)
- [San Mateo Daily News](#)

Sunday Jun 24

Pet lovers flock to City Hall

Residents speak out on proposed spay/neuter law

By **Melanie Carroll / Daily News Staff Writer**

Hundreds of impassioned animal lovers crowded into Palo Alto's council chambers Saturday to voice support for and opposition to a proposed state law that would force most pet owners to spay or neuter their pets.

The controversial California Healthy Pets Act, or AB 1634, would require the spaying or neutering of pets by the time they are 4 months old in order to reduce the number of unwanted animals. Dog or cat owners who fail to get their pets fixed would face fines of \$500 per animal.

The Saturday morning forum was sponsored by state Sen. Joe Simitian, D-Palo Alto, whose office has been inundated with thousands of e-mails, phone calls and letters concerning the legislation narrowly passed by the Assembly last month. The bill, introduced by Assemblyman Lloyd Levine, D-Van Nuys, is now slated to go to the Senate Business, Professions, and Economic Development Committee, on which Simitian serves.

Palo Altan Beth Guislin, who argued in favor of the measure, said 435,000 animals are euthanized each year in California.

"Californians discard their animals like garbage," Guislin said. "The supply of cats and dogs outstrips the demand."

Guislin also invoked Mahatma Gandhi, who said that "The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated."

Others said the bill amounts to bad policy that would increase the number of animals surrendered at shelters and euthanized.

"AB 1634 will cost local agencies more at their shelters," said Cathie Turner of Concerned Dog Owners of California. "California can do better than AB 1634."

Amy Strickland, who has helped operate animal shelters in Santa Cruz County for years, said similar legislation that was passed there has greatly reduced the number of animals euthanized.

"It's about not allowing animals to be born," Strickland said. "I've seen it work in Santa Cruz County."

Peggy Prater of Skyline Dog Fanciers of San Mateo County said the key is to educate people about responsible dog breeding and caring for their animals -- not to pass new laws.

People are passionate about their animals because many people think of their pets as family members, Prater said.

Additional police officers were on duty at City Hall for the forum, which was initially scheduled to last two hours but went on for more than four while dozens of speakers waited for their turn in front of the microphone.

"I would die for my animals," dog owner Vicki Jones said.

E-mail Melanie Carroll at mcarroll@dailynewsgroup.com.

 [Read 8 comments](#)

Recent Comments 

890 comments in [josh hutcherson](#)

8 comments in [Pet lovers flock to City Hall](#)
 "I had hoped to retire to California when the time comes but if this bill passes, I'll c..." — **J Black**

1434 comments in [Tongans and Samoans : Where is the Love?](#)

2 comments in [Psychiatrist pleads not guilty to molestation](#)
 "The next court date is July 5, 2007. This will be to set the date for the preliminary..." — **George**

[Start a discussion »](#)

Ads by 

[Eichler Homes - Realtor](#)
 Eichler Home Specialist - Nil Erdal Top Eichler Home Realtor-Specialist
www.NiiErdal.com

[Palo Alto CA Homes](#)
 Instantly View Thousands of Homes Search the Palo Alto CA MLS
www.ZipRealty.com

[Homes Palo Alto Ca](#)
 See current home listings & MLS in Palo Alto, CA. Free!
homegain.com

[Palo Alto Ca Real Estate](#)
 Buying & selling of luxury homes. Proven results and expertise.
www.KerwinAssociates.com

[Discount Sale Real Estate](#)
 Cupertino, Mountain View, Los Altos Discount Listing and Buyers Rebate
www.aracz.com