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Los Angeles City Council votes for pet sterilization law championed by Bob Barker

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LOS ANGELES - Urged on by retired "The Price is Right" host Bob Barker and a throng of supporters, the Los Angeles City Council has taken steps to require spaying and neutering of most pet cats and dogs by 4 months of age.

So much applause erupted Friday when Barker stood to endorse the idea that council President Eric Garcetti urged just a quick clap because time for public comment was limited.

Barker replied: "Councilman Garcetti, that's the most beautiful sound I've heard in months since I left 'Price is Right.'"

Barker noted that for decades he closed his show by urging viewers to help control the pet population and that the audience was filled with people who had worked on the problem for years.

"Now I'd like to think that all of us working together have made a difference," he said. "But it's not enough, and the only answer is legislation. And to be more specific, the only answer is this ordinance."

Barker said 4 months is important because animals can breed at very young ages, but he noted that under the law it would only take a letter from a veterinarian to delay surgery to 5 or 6 months of age.

Other advocates said the law would have plenty of exceptions, including for licensed breeders and show animals.

Minus four members, the council voted 10-1 in favor of the ordinance. A second vote on the measure is required before it can become a city law.