



LEAGUE OF
CALIFORNIA
CITIES



April 20, 2023

The Honorable Chris Holden
Chair, California State Assembly Committee on Appropriations
1021 O Street, Suite 5650
Sacramento, California 95814

**RE: AB 595 (Essayli): 72-Hour Public Notice of Euthanasia at Animal Shelters
OPPOSE – As Amended April 12, 2023
Set for Hearing – April 26, 2023 – Assembly Committee on Appropriations**

Dear Assembly Member Holden,

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), Urban Counties of California (UCC), the League of California Cities (Cal Cities), and the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) we write to respectfully oppose AB 595, Assembly Member Bill Essayli's measure that would require all animal shelters provide online public notice at least 72 hours before euthanizing any animal. While we agree that euthanasia should only be used as a last resort, AB 595 will not resolve any of the underlying issues that lead to euthanasia. Instead, it will exacerbate shelter overcrowding, creating an unfunded mandate by increasing holding times for animals in shelters and costing valuable resources shelters could otherwise use to help the animals in their care.

AB 595 will require shelters to make significant changes to their current processes in ways that run counter to long-standing best practices in shelter management. Currently, shelters can operate at capacity and only use euthanasia as a last resort in emergent situations. When shelters are presented with new animals they are statutorily required to admit, such as owned strays, victims of hoarding or animal abuse, or animals that require temporary safe keeping when owners are arrested or hospitalized, staff must find ways to make space for all of these animals within their limited capacity. In order to meet the 72-hour requirement in this bill, shelters may end up needing to euthanize animals sooner than they otherwise would have to ensure there is space to accommodate new animals when they arrive, which is obviously an undesirable outcome.

There is no direct state or federal funding to support local animal shelters, leaving shelter staff to make the most with what few resources they have. This is especially true in under-resourced areas of our state where animal shelters see higher animal intake per capita, fewer adoptions, and staffing challenges. These shelters serve residents who are often already struggling with larger

issues, like housing and income insecurity, that increase the likelihood that pets need to be surrendered.

Many animal shelters in California are over capacity, understaffed, and underfunded; the added costs and stress on capacity outlined in AB 595 will only serve to exacerbate shelters' operational limitations. We support and encourage legislation that would lead to increased understanding and support for animal shelters across the state. Unfortunately, this bill, while well-intentioned, will not serve to help the animals most in need. For these reasons, we must oppose AB 595.

Sincerely,



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cc: The Honorable Bill Essayli, California State Assembly
Honorable Members & Staff, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
Joe Shinstock, Assembly Republican Caucus