

## CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 1137 (Maienschein)

As Amended September 1, 2017

Majority vote

ASSEMBLY: 77-0 (May 11, 2017)

SENATE: 39-0 (September 11, 2017)

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Original Committee Reference: **H. & C.D.**

**SUMMARY:** Requires housing developments financed through the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to authorize a resident of a housing development to own one or more common household pets. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Provides that HCD shall require each housing development financed on or after January 1, 2018 to authorize a resident of the housing development to own or maintain one or more common household pets within the resident's unit, subject to applicable state laws and local government ordinances related to public health, animal control, and animal anticruelty.
- 2) Defines "common household pet" as a domesticated animal, such as a dog or cat that is commonly kept in the home for pleasure rather than for commercial purposes.
- 3) Specifies that nothing in this section shall be construed to limit or otherwise affect other statutes or laws that require reasonable accommodations to be made for an individual with a disability who maintains an animal to provide assistance, service, or support.

**The Senate amendments:**

- 1) Make technical changes.
- 2) Deletes the authority of HCD to adopt pet friendly regulations to implement the provisions of the bill.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, minor and absorbable HCD costs to ensure housing developments allow residents to own one or more household pets. (General Fund)

**COMMENTS:**

*Background:* The high cost of housing has had a growing impact on families with pets. A lack of pet friendly housing options has put some pet owners in a position of choosing between keeping their household pet or keeping a roof over their head. In Los Angeles, county shelters are filled past capacity with approximately 170,000 animals being taken every year. The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) Safety Net program recently found that over 30,000 dogs and cats are in Los Angeles shelters because their families surrendered them due to problems with housing.

Contributing to this problem is the increase in financial evictions across the state. This trend is especially pronounced in high cost housing markets. This puts emotional strain on families and burdens county shelters. A lack of pet friendly housing options is regularly cited as a reason that families relinquish their pet to local shelters.

Pets provide social and health benefits to families and individuals that they live with. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, pets have positive impacts at nearly every stage of life. They influence social, emotional, and cognitive development in children and promote an active lifestyle. They also provide emotional support, improve moods, and contribute to the overall morale of their owners, and promote socialization among the elderly and disabled. Studies have also shown that people with pets tend to have lower blood pressure, cholesterol, and triglyceride levels.

Developers of affordable housing generally strive to address multiple aspects of a household's quality of life. The benefits provided by pets are consistent with goals to holistically address the social, economic, and health outcomes for residents of affordable housing. Not only does pet friendly housing promote happier and healthier families, but it reduces the financial burden to shelters and the public.

*Purpose:* According to the author "AB 1137 would make future housing developments financed by HCD pet-friendly. HCD is responsible for the allocation of the majority of funding provided by the state for the development and rehabilitation of affordable housing. While the housing produced by HCD financing varies annually, in recent years, the Department has financed an average of nearly 6,000 housing units per year. By making this housing pet-friendly, thousands of households wouldn't be faced with the difficult decision of giving up their pet. A pet friendly policy could be implemented with the de minimis cost and disruption, but would have extraordinary benefits for families struggling to keep their pets. The law would build on precedent provided by HUD in providing pet-friendly housing."

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