

THE ANIMAL COUNCIL

P.O. Box 168, Millbrae CA 94030

Officers:

Sharon A. Coleman

President

Gayle A. Hand

Secretary

Margaret Kranzfelder

Treasurer

Directors:

Dr. Ronald E. Cole

James S. Daugherty

Karen Johnson

Alice E. Partanen

Emeritus:

Leslie L. Altick, 1991-1996

Judith A. Brecka, 1991-2002

Via Facsimile 916-319-3306

April 10, 2014

Assembly Business, Professions and Consumer Protection Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 383
Sacramento, California 95814
Attention: Bill Consultant

Re: A.B. No. 1809 Maienschein. Dogs: health certificates, OPPOSE

Gentlemen:

Please register our opposition to the above-captioned bill and include our organization on your Committee's Bill Analysis opposition list.

The Animal Council is a non-profit, tax-exempt, IRC Section 501(c)(4) organization founded in 1991 to seek positive, humane solutions to the challenges of ideological animal activists through study, analysis and application of animal husbandry, statistics and law, and to preserve human benefit from all species, breeds and registries.

In 1991, The Animal Council was appointed to the California Department of Health Services Animal Welfare, Public Health and Safety Working Group which met over a period of years. We used this opportunity to develop a broad understanding of scientific, public health and policy issues of rabies. We maintain on our website a record of rabies epidemiology in California. [http:// www.theanimalcouncil.com/Reference.html](http://www.theanimalcouncil.com/Reference.html)

Over the years, we have monitored and participated in many local, state and federal issues involving dogs and health issues. Never have we heard any call for tracking within California of any specific set of dogs brought into California by any class of persons for any purposes. Some local jurisdictions require veterinarians administering rabies vaccinations within the jurisdiction to report these. The basis for doing this is having personal legal jurisdiction over the veterinarian who is doing business locally. This bill imposes a "responsibility of persons importing dogs into this state for the purpose of resale or change of ownership to send the health certificate to the county health department where the dog is to be offered for sale or to the county of residence of the individual purchasing a dog directly from a source outside of California."

Presumably this mandate only applies to “persons” within California receiving or transporting a dog into California. If the “persons” are retail pet stores or humane organizations, they may be able incorporate compliance into their business operations.

However, health certificates filed with airlines are not specifically consumer documents and often copies are not included with the documents that do accompany a dog such as its own veterinarian’s treatment record, feeding instructions, sales contract, etc. Individuals or small rescue operations occasionally obtaining dogs from outside California by any transport methods might not be aware of a requirement to file a document that they may not have with an agency with which they are unfamiliar, and they may be uncertain as to a dog’s final destination or its status while in their possession.

A health certificate issued out of state before entry only certifies that a dog appeared to pose no health risks at the time the dog was seen by the issuing veterinarian. This is of concern to airlines but of rapidly diminishing relevance as the dog arrives in California and of no health relevance for filing with any agency within California.

In a state as large as California, dogs moving intrastate are very similar to dogs coming from outside as to public health risks, yet their movements would not be tracked or recorded. There is no value to local jurisdictions in collecting or maintaining this data for out of state dogs, especially when compliance would be problematic for those required to report it.

Additionally, we do not believe individuals travelling into California with the dogs by vehicle, private aircraft or boats should need to obtain health certificates simply because other states have such requirements, whether enforced regularly or not. If California should have a need, this needs to be demonstrated, weighed carefully against costs and unintended consequence by experienced California interests.

For these reasons, we must respectfully oppose AB 1809

Very truly yours,



SHARON A. COLEMAN
President, The Animal Council

Cc: Author, Committee Members