

July 29, 2015

Hon. Kamala D. Harris
Attorney General
1300 I Street, 17th Floor
Sacramento, California 95814

Attention: Ms. Ashley Johansson
Initiative Coordinator

Dear Attorney General Harris:

Pursuant to Elections Code Section 9005, we have reviewed the proposed initiative (A.G. File No. 15-0034) related to the ownership of domestic ferrets.

BACKGROUND

California law makes it illegal to own ferrets as pets without a state permit. Some reports estimate that there are probably hundreds of thousands of domestic ferrets currently owned as pets in California despite this ban.

PROPOSAL

This measure makes it legal for Californians to own ferrets as pets. The measure also requires that domestic ferrets over the age of six months be vaccinated annually for rabies and that any pet ferret sold in a retail store be spayed or neutered before sale. The measure authorizes counties to assess a license fee of up to \$100 upon sale of pet ferrets. Under the measure, revenue from the fee would be used to support local animal control enforcement activities related to domestic ferrets.

FISCAL EFFECTS

Local animal control agencies would experience additional costs associated with enforcing laws related to ownership of pet ferrets, such as requirements for vaccinating, spaying, and neutering ferrets. These costs could total a few million dollars annually statewide. Most or all of these costs likely would be funded by the license fee authorized by this measure.

Summary of Fiscal Effects. This measure would have the following major fiscal effect:

- Likely additional local government costs of a few million dollars annually for animal control enforcement activities, which could be largely or entirely offset by the license fees authorized by the measure.

Sincerely,

Mac Taylor
Legislative Analyst

Michael Cohen
Director of Finance