

November 6, 2007

Hon. Edmund G. Brown Jr.  
Attorney General  
1300 I Street, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, California 95814

Attention: Ms. Krystal Paris  
Initiative Coordinator

Dear Attorney General Brown:

Pursuant to Elections Code Section 9005, we have reviewed the proposed initiative entitled "Animal License Law" (A.G. File No. 07-0057).

### **Background**

State law authorizes local governments to issue licenses to owners of dogs and cats for a fee. It also requires local governments that choose to issue dog and cat licenses to provide the license at a reduced fee for animals that have been spayed or neutered. Most local governments have adopted ordinances requiring pet owners to obtain a license, and have implemented a two-tiered fee schedule with one fee (or set of fees) for animals that have been spayed or neutered and another higher fee (or set of fees) for unaltered animals.

### **Major Provisions**

This measure would prohibit local governments from charging individuals more than \$50 per animal per year to obtain a pet license or permit. Senior citizens and individuals receiving certain public assistance benefits (Medicare and MediCal) would be entitled to a 50 percent discount on licensing or permit fees.

### **Fiscal Effect**

The pet license fees vary across local jurisdictions. Currently, most, if not all, local governments charge less than \$50 for spayed and neutered cats and dogs. Some jurisdictions, however, currently charge more than \$50 for unaltered dogs and cats. Many local governments offer discounts for seniors.

The fiscal effect of this measure is unknown. On the one hand, some local governments could experience a loss of revenue since fees for unaltered dogs and cats would have to be lowered. On the other hand, lowering the fees could result in the licensing of

a higher number of unaltered dogs and cats which could increase local revenue. The net fiscal effect of these factors is unknown.

**Summary**

This measure would result in the following fiscal effect:

- Unknown net revenue loss or gain to local governments depending on the number of animals licensed under the measure.

Sincerely,

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Elizabeth G. Hill  
Legislative Analyst

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Michael C. Genest  
Director of Finance