

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 91

**Introduced by Assembly Member Lieu
(Coauthor: Assembly Member Smyth)**

August 18, 2009

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 91—Relative to pet adoption.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 91, as introduced, Lieu. Adopt a Shelter Pet Month.

This measure would declare September 2009 to be Adopt a Shelter Pet Month and would encourage pet adoption and raise awareness about overpopulation in animal shelters.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, This measure would declare the month of
- 2 September 2009 as Adopt a Shelter Pet Month, in order to
- 3 encourage pet adoption at local animal shelters and raise awareness
- 4 about the strain felt by local animal shelters because of the faltering
- 5 economy and an overpopulation of pet animals; and
- 6 WHEREAS, In 2008, the annual number of dogs and cats
- 7 entering California municipal shelters increased 14.6 percent
- 8 statewide from 2004, an increase from 729,238 to 835,642; and
- 9 WHEREAS, Nearly half of these animals were euthanized
- 10 because the animals were not reclaimed by their owners or adopted
- 11 by new owners; and
- 12 WHEREAS, The State Department of Public Health reported
- 13 that in 2008 the total number of euthanized cats and dogs in
- 14 municipal shelters was 433,512, an already high number that did

1 not reflect the animals that were euthanized in private shelters or
2 rescue groups; and

3 WHEREAS, In most instances these dogs and cats are young,
4 healthy, and friendly animals that are euthanized simply because
5 there are not enough good homes for them, making it more
6 important than ever to help local animal shelters by adopting a pet;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, Pet ownership has been shown to promote a healthy
9 lifestyle. According to the United States Centers for Disease
10 Control and Prevention, a pet can encourage better health, fitness,
11 and mental wellness. Pets have the ability to decrease blood
12 pressure, cholesterol levels, and triglyceride levels, and to reduce
13 depression. Pets can also increase a person's physical activity and
14 improve his or her socializing skills; and

15 WHEREAS, Studies indicate that children who interact with
16 pets have higher self-esteem and enhanced social skills, and can
17 cope better with their emotions. Doctors often use pet animals for
18 therapeutic activities with both children and adults to help them
19 overcome traumatic events, physical handicaps, and psychological
20 illnesses; and

21 WHEREAS, Adopting a pet from a shelter and caring for that
22 animal for the rest of its life is a responsible way to help
23 California's animal population, rather than contributing to its
24 crowding; and

25 WHEREAS, It is important to consider the many benefits of
26 shelter adoption before purchasing a pet from a traditional vendor.
27 Animal shelters are nonprofits and are exclusively focused on the
28 best interests of animals; and

29 WHEREAS, Shelter animals are often healthier, smarter, and
30 have better temperaments. Pets adopted at animal shelters are
31 vaccinated and proper care information is provided at the time of
32 adoption. Animal shelters generally provide spay and neuter
33 services prior to adoption, which are the best ways to help reduce
34 pet overpopulation; and

35 WHEREAS, Animal shelters are focused on animal placement,
36 which is why most shelters provide low-cost adoptions so that
37 everyone can have the opportunity to bring a loving pet into his
38 or her home; and

39 WHEREAS, California and the nation have an enormous
40 problem with animal overpopulation. In California alone, there

1 are hundreds of thousands of animals in shelters needing homes.
2 As the economy declines, more and more people are losing their
3 homes and being left with no other option than to leave their pets
4 at a shelter; and

5 WHEREAS, The State of California, along with numerous cities
6 and counties, is experiencing unprecedented budget deficits. Budget
7 reductions have the potential to add an increased strain on local
8 animal shelter systems, threatening the lives of thousands of
9 animals. One consequence of our budget deficits could be a
10 reduction in the number of days a shelter is required to hold an
11 animal before it is euthanized, resulting in less time for adoption
12 of healthy animals; and

13 WHEREAS, The existing pet overpopulation problem,
14 exacerbated by a spike in animals being turned in due to the
15 challenging economy and a reduction in holding periods in local
16 shelters, will negatively impact California's companion animals;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, Adopting a pet from a local animal shelter is one
19 way Californians can make a difference not only in their own lives,
20 but also in the life of an animal in need; now, therefore, be it

21 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
22 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature declares the month of
23 September 2009 as Adopt a Shelter Pet Month, encouraging all
24 Californians to save a life at a local shelter; and be it further

25 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
26 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.